THE INAUGURAL SPEECH OF MAL DIKKO UMARU RADDA, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE, ON 29TH MAY 2023. TURAJI COPY

Protocol.

All praise and gratitude are due to the Almighty Allah, the Lord of Power, The One that gives power to whom He wishes and in whose hands is all good.

My fellow people of Katsina State, I stand here before you grateful for the confidence you placed in me, mindful of the challenges at hand, and confident about the future. I thank you for all your support.

My special appreciation to H.E. Rt. Hon. Aminu Bello Masari for his leadership and commitment to serving the people of Katsina State in the last eight years. I sincerely thank members and stakeholders of our great political party, the All Progressive Congress (APC), for all your sacrifice and support. And to all the people of Katsina state, Thank you very much.

It is with great honor and a sense of responsibility that I accept and undertake to sincerely serve the people of Katsina State. The oath I took today is a promise and a sacred responsibility to give my best in serving our dear state, Katsina. I know that God Almighty will hold me accountable for this responsibility. And I am still strong, knowing that God is by our side and will guide us through.

This is the 7th governorship inauguration since the return of democracy in Katsina state. In each of these investitures, the people of Katsina state renew their hopes for a better future by installing a new leadership mandate. This one is exceptional because it comes at one of the most trying times in our history.

However, I am hopeful as the torch fell on my hand today, I will use it as a source to lighten the path of a new vision for building our future. Every day for the next four years, I will commit myself 100% to making Katsina state and its people peaceful and great. As I assume this enormous responsibility, I seek not to be the first in anything but to make Katsina State first in everything. I don't want to only make history for the position I occupy but for what we can do for our dear state in this position. I can only excel and be addressed as excellency if I can make Katsina State a better state.

Today is a beginning of a new chapter in the history of the greatness of Katsina State. The authors of this new chapter are you, the good citizens of Katsina State, and that's why I invite every Katsina State citizen to join me in the writing of this great chapter of progress. Many generations will read

this chapter, and we will all be proud to be the co-authors of the new chapter in the story of Katsina state's greatness.

I am assembling a team of competent people from across the state and the nation for the daunting tasks ahead. The quest for overcoming our challenges requires capable hands at every level. There is an urgent need to tackle insecurity, poverty, and unemployment in our state. That's why competence must be the yardstick for recruiting the team that will join me and my deputy in facing those challenges.

However, you do not have to be appointed or hold any position in government before you can contribute to help address these challenges. I may not be able to appoint everyone I deem competent because the size of the government is limited. But instead, I will operate an open government to allow everyone to contribute their ideas to build a better future for Katsina state. So, I invite everyone to feel and be part of this government, which is why I consider every Katsina state citizen my adviser.

From today, we will all get to work. I and my deputy, Hon. Faruk Lawal Jobe, should not be the only ones under obligation; we are all as citizens of Katsina State. There is no time to waste; I will activate my plans for the state and immediately put them to work. I will focus more on fixing insecurity, job creation, education, and skills development. In the last five years, I have worked in building and developing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, and I know the significance of these enterprises in fighting poverty and building our economy. I will invest more in the development of MSMEs and our Local Economy. I want to be the Katsina State Job and Employment governor.

I will also prioritize agricultural development so that we can have a strong economic base. My ambition is to make Agriculture not just a source of food for Katsina state citizens but a source of great wealth.

One of my top priorities is healthcare development. Modern and efficient healthcare systems and facilities must be accessible and affordable to Katsina State citizens. We will also invest in social welfare programs to lift many Katsina State people out of extreme poverty.

All these programs may only be effective with sufficient revenue for the government. That's why we will create new strategies for internally generated revenues and encourage private-public partnerships.

The politics are over for now. Now, we are all on the same team, Team Katsina State, and every team member will benefit from our programs, and I equally expect every team member to give their best in building the team further. Whether you voted for me or not, I will be your advocate, a reformer, a friend, and a fighter for you. We are all in this together, and we will make it together.

As we mark the beginning of new greatness, I would like to look back and thank my predecessors who have served this state to their best abilities to this day. I draw my inspiration from them and would like to build on their successes.

I want to particularly thank my leader and mentor, His Excellency Rt. Hon. Aminu Bello Masari for his exemplary leadership and for all he has achieved under his leadership. Thank you, sir, for your service and achievements. I also want to acknowledge the service and achievements of His Excellency Bar. Ibrahim Shehu Shema during his leadership. Thank you, sir, for your sacrifice and outstanding leadership for the state.

My story and the story of Katsina State will never be complete without mentioning a great reformer, visionary leader, father, and mentor, His Excellency, Late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, who inspired and mentored me in politics. I draw my inspiration from him. We will continue to cherish his simple lifestyle and leadership. We are forever grateful for his service and achievements in Katsina State and Nigeria at large.

I will adopt Mal Umaru's zero tolerance for corruption and establish a culture of the rule of law in Katsina State. President Umaru Yar'adua once said, "Corruption is itself central to the spread of poverty." That is why we will fight against corrupt individuals and practices to reduce poverty.

Again, inspired by Mallam Umaru's transformational leadership principles, we will embark on many public sector reforms to make government work more effective and efficient.

My fellow Katsina State citizens, I also seek your understanding and patience. I understand the expectations are high, and some of the results may not come when we expect them, but I promise you we will do our best to meet those expectations. With us in the government, you should always hope and believe there will be a light at the end of the tunnel.

It was by the grace of Almighty Allah that I got elected into this office, I was not the most likely candidate at the beginning of this journey, but God has chosen me for this trust, and on Him we will continue to depend for guidance and support. My motivation for this service is to help make life better for an average Katsina State citizen. That's why I will never do anything against the interest of the people of Katsina State. In the end, as we embark on immediate action, I want to thank the people of Katsina state for giving us this opportunity to serve the state we love so much. I seek your support and prayers as we embark on this journey to more greatness.

I want to thank my family, friends, the party faithful, and well-wishers for their continued support. We pray to almighty Allah to guide us and give us the ability to discharge our duties diligently.

May God give us everlasting peace and greater economic prosperity. Ameen

Thank You.