SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MALLAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, Ph.D., THE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE, ON THE OCCASION OF INAUGURATION OF STEERING COMMITTEE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RELATED ISSUES AND CEREMONIAL ASSENT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSON (PROHIBITION) ACT (VAPP) INTO LAW ON FRIDAY; 22ND DECEMBER 2023 AT KATSINA STATE GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

Protocol

Today marks a significant moment in the relentless pursuit of justice, equity, and safety for the citizens of Katsina State. As we gather to Inaugurate the Steering Committee on Gender-Based Violence and witness the ceremonial assent of the Violence against Person (Prohibition) Act into Law, I am profoundly honored to address you all.

The establishment of this committee reflects our unwavering commitment to eradicating the scourge of gender-based violence within our state. Gender-based violence is a menace that knows no bounds, and it is our collective responsibility to stand united against it. I charge each member of the committee to rise to the occasion, to stand up to the expectations placed upon you, and to be the vanguards of change in the fight against gender-based violence.

In our pursuit of justice, let us be guided by the principles of our religion, Islam, and the rich cultural heritage of the Hausa/Fulani people. Gender- based violence has no place in our religious teachings and, or cultural values. It is a violation that tarnishes the fabric of our society, and together, we must work tirelessly to uproot it. I implore the committee to collaborate and work closely with religious and traditional leaders, media and civil society organizations. Their influence is profound, and their endorsement of our cause will amplify our message. In the battle against gender-based violence, we need to engage the hearts and minds of our communities, and the involvement of these leaders is pivotal.

The state is hereby guided by National Gender Policy formulation on Steering Committees where the Ministry of Women Affairs, will coordinate and oversee all Gender-Based Violence related matters, I trust in your ability to lead in this capacity and to carry along all relevant stakeholders

as you establish essential bodies, including the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Sexual Assault Referral Center (SARC), State Response Team for SARC, Child Right Protection Law Implementation Committee, and Surveillance Committees at the local government levels. Your leadership is crucial in ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated approach towards addressing this issue.

Consequently, I extend my deepest gratitude to the members of the Katsina State House of Assembly for their swift and decisive action in passing the Violence against Person (Prohibition) Act. Today, as we witness its ceremonial assent, we recognize the importance of this law in our fight against all forms of violence against individuals. Let this be a testament to our collective resolve to create a society where every person can live free from fear and harm. In conclusion, let it be known that my government maintains a zero- tolerance policy toward all forms of gender-based violence. Together, with unwavering determination and collaborative efforts, we shall build a Katsina State where the rights and dignity of every individual are sacrosanct.

May this committee, through its dedication and hard work, become a beacon of hope for those who have suffered in silence. Thank you, and may our collective endeavors yield a future free from the shadows of gender-based violence.