KEYNOTE ADDRESS PRESENTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, PhD AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF 15TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT HELD ON MONDAY 6TH NOVEMBER, 2023 AT BELLO KOFAR BAI CONFERENCE HALL, STATE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX KATSINA

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It is with great pleasure and gratitude to Allah (SWT) that I stand before you to deliver this address at this important occasion, the Opening Ceremony of 15th Meeting of the National Council on Industry, Trade and Investment organized by the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment in collaboration with Katsina State Government.

The choice of Katsina State for this meeting is a testimony of the fact that Katsina State is blessed with various agricultural potentials ranging from different soil types and textures, variable rainfall pattern, vegetation and large arable land mass that are essential and relevant to support the growth and production of various industrial and food crops.

It is always our pleasure to invite investors to Katsina State, the Home of Heritage and Hospitality and also Home of Investment opportunities. The State is known for, namely, agriculture, solid minerals, tourism and hospitality. It is my belief that, this year's theme of the Meeting; ***"Digitalization of Industry, Trade and Investment Sector for National Development"*** is very apt as it captures the cardinal objectives and commitment of my government to collaborate with the Federal Government

and other States to develop our commonwealth in order to solve our common challenges, especially in the development of our industries and economics at large. I have the firm belief that digitalization can open new avenues of innovation for today's businesses, in turn improving their products and services while significantly boosting returns. It will also help the industries evolve and create a competitive ecosystem, thereby enhancing the quality and timeliness of the offerings.

Apart from pervasive and inclusive wealth creation such approach engenders, with its attendant friendly resolution of insecurity and poverty challenges in the Northern region, it has the added an important advantage of reinvigorating our youth with all the capacities to live in prosperity and to become leaders of an emerging prosperous nation. In order to achieve or realize the

benefit behind the digitalization initiative, Katsina State has set to establish KATDICT, tasked with spearheading and fast tracking the process across the State. The Agency will use technology to empower our people, improve service delivery as well as drive economic growth. I am happy to note that we have already started reaping benefit of the process through reducing cost in governance. Initiative such as Treasury Single Accounts, Budget and Planning System, healthcare and Education Management Systems are underway.

There is no better strategy to develop the wealth and worth of our people and communities more than through commerce and industry. The North in particular is filled with natural resources; arable and expanse of land; and industrious and peace loving people. Until the recent insecurity challenges whose genesis could be traced to

the neglect or inability to develop these resources. The Policy of the Federal Government of looking inwards to develop our industrial capacities can only be viewed as a product of foresight and vision. We have no other option but to engage all stakeholders, interested parties and friends of development to chart a course that would launch our Country towards home grown prosperity. We are therefore in full support of the Federal Government in its quest to turn around the economy of our dear nation.

Distinguish invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, in specific terms, Katsina State Government is focusing on the development of the necessary infrastructure for making our State a real hub for industrialization and commerce. In an effort to fast-track Commercial and Industrial Development as well as encourage economic activities in the State, the Government, in response to an

invitation from Saemual Movement under Gyeongsangbuk-do Province/State of Korea Republic, nominated 5-man delegate under my able leadership to undertake the visit to Korea Republic with a view to explore possible partnerships in the areas of Rice Production as well as irrigation projects. In order to maximize the benefits of the trip, we intend to visit four additional organizations namely: Korea International Organization for Cooperation, Korea Trade – Investment Promotion Agency, Samsung Group and Any suitable Agro Allied Industrial Park.

The present Administration has recently requested for partnership between Katsina State Enterprises Development Agency (KASEDA) and SMEDAN Industrial Development Centre, Katsina in order to fully implement as well as utilize the potential and objectives of the Centre

for the economic benefit of the teeming population of the State. I have no doubt that the Centre will help Small Scale Business Entrepreneurs gain awareness into aid in terms of finance, managerial and technical assistance in the attainment of successful business ventures and wealth creation in the State.

Our commitment to commerce and industry is resolute until we fully set the machinery for the development of value chains. In this regard, we are committed to opening windows of opportunities in International trade that will take advantage of International trade relationship in Africa and the world at large.

I wish to welcome the private sector participation in our efforts to invigorate the socio-economic development of our dear State. This is therefore an offer for you to take advantage of the programme instituted by our government

for the achievement of the industrial and commercial objectives of the State.

Let me finally reiterate my earlier declaration that, to achieve the many outlined programmes for commercial and industrial development, the public sector is well sensitized to be passionate, responsive and ready to attend to investor's enquiries at all times beginning with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism and the Katsina State Investment Promotion Agency (KIPA). I therefore have the singular honour and privilege to invite prospective investors to Katsina State, the Home of Heritage and Hospitality and also the Home of unlimited Investment Opportunities. Our hope and prayers are for continued wisdom, courage and unflinching ability to continue organizing this event annually.

I wish to thank all our friends and partners and all those who came from far and near in order to be with us in our moment of joy and renewed commitment to our commercial and industrial objectives and wish everyone safe journey back to your respective destinations

May God bless you all.

Thank you