SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA PhD, CON, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE CONFLICT PREVENTION, CRISIS RESPONSE, AND RESILIENCE (CPCRR) PROJECT AND INAUGURATION OF THE CPCRR STEERING COMMITTEE

Protocol:

It is with profound humility, deep gratitude, and a strong sense of purpose that I welcome you all to this historic moment the official launch of the Conflict Prevention, Crisis Response, and Resilience (CPCRR) Project in Katsina State.

Today, we are not merely inaugurating a development programme. We are launching a new era of hope, partnership, and collective action, one that is rooted in peace, driven by community ownership, and anchored in the resilience of our people.

This gathering is more than a ceremonial event. It is a powerful affirmation of our shared commitment to heal wounds, restore dignity, rebuild communities, and secure a lasting peace for the people of Katsina State.

Before I proceed, I must pause to honour the unsung heroes of our state, our farmers, traders, women, youth, and children who, despite years of insecurity, displacement, and hardship, continue to rise each day with courage and faith.

To those who have lost loved ones, homes, and livelihoods your pain is not invisible. Your suffering is not forgotten. And today, this project stands as a solemn promise: we will walk with you from trauma to recovery, from fear to safety, and from despair to hope.

Your Excellency, Ambassador of the European Union to Nigeria, it is both an honour and a privilege to have you here today. Your presence is not just diplomatic it is symbolic of solidarity, compassion, and shared humanity. On behalf of the Government and people of Katsina State, I extend our deepest appreciation to the European Union for your generous funding and unwavering support for peace and stability in our region.

The EU's commitment to conflict prevention, human security, and sustainable development is not new. But your decision to invest in Katsina at this critical juncture speaks

volumes about your confidence in our leadership and our people's capacity to overcome adversity.

I also extend our profound gratitude to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mercy Corps, and the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) our implementing partners in this noble cause. Your technical expertise, field experience, and grassroots engagement have been indispensable in shaping this project to meet the real needs of our communities.

To our partners: this is not your project alone. It is our joint mission, a partnership built on trust, transparency, and mutual accountability.

Let us be honest: Katsina State, like many parts of our great nation, has faced unprecedented security and humanitarian challenges in recent years. The convergence of armed banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping, and inter-communal conflicts has disrupted lives, displaced families, and undermined development.

In Jibia, Batsari, Dan Musa, Kankara, Safana, Sabuwa, Faskari, and Dandume, our frontline communities schools have been closed, farms abandoned, and markets shut down. Children have missed education. Parents have buried their children. Elders have fled their ancestral homes.

Beyond security, we face climate-induced pressures drought, desertification, and shrinking farmland that exacerbate resource competition and deepen vulnerability. Economic stagnation and youth unemployment have further fueled discontent. These are not isolated issues. They are interconnected crises that demand integrated, holistic, and community-driven solutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Conflict Prevention, Crisis Response, and Resilience (CPCRR) Project is that solution. Funded by the European Union and implemented by IOM, Mercy Corps, and CDD, this 18-month initiative is specifically designed to address the root causes of conflict and strengthen the resilience of our most vulnerable communities. Spanning eight high-risk Local Government Areas, the project has three core pillars:

i) Peace building and Conflict Mitigation

ii) Livelihood Support and Economic Recovery

iii)Governance and Institutional Strengthening

This project is not a top-down intervention. It is community-owned, locally led, and culturally sensitive. From the outset, we have ensured that community voices, especially those of women, youth, and persons with disabilities are central to planning and implementation.

We are not starting from zero. The CPCRR Project builds on the successes of the Conflict Mitigation and Community Reconciliation (CMCR) Project, also supported by IOM and the EU. That earlier initiative helped restore peace in several communities, facilitated the return of displaced persons, and strengthened inter-communal trust.

Today, we are scaling up what worked, expanding geographical coverage, deepening impact, and institutionalizing best practices.

But more importantly, we are shifting from short-term relief to long-term resilience. This project is not just about stopping

violence. It is about preventing it before it starts, healing trauma, and creating conditions for sustainable peace.

To ensure accountability, coordination, and sustainability, the Katsina State Government is fully taking the lead in this initiative. Today, I am proud to officially inaugurate the Katsina State CPCRR Project Steering Committee.

This high-level body comprises senior officials from key Ministries, Departments, and Agencies including the Ministry of Security, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Environment, and the Office of the Head of Service. The mandate of this Committee includes:

- Overseeing project implementation and alignment with state development plans
- Ensuring transparency in fund utilization and procurement
- Facilitating inter-agency collaboration and information sharing
- Engaging traditional and religious institutions as peace partners
- Monitoring progress and reporting to the public

This is not a ceremonial committee. It is a working structure with real authority and responsibility. Its existence underscores our government's commitment to local ownership, leadership, and sustainability. We are not passive beneficiaries. We are active co-creators of peace and development.

To our traditional rulers and religious leaders: You are the custodians of our culture and moral compass. Your influence in promoting peace, reconciliation, and unity is irreplaceable. I call on you to continue using your platforms to preach tolerance, mediate disputes, and protect the vulnerable.

To our youth and women: You are not just victims, you are agents of change. This project will empower you with skills, resources, and leadership opportunities. Rise to the occasion. Be peacebuilders, entrepreneurs, and advocates for justice.

To our security agencies: Your bravery is appreciated. But security alone cannot bring lasting peace. We must combine force with development, dialogue, and trust-building. Work hand-in-hand with communities. Listen to their concerns. Protect their rights.

To our development partners: Thank you for standing with us. Let us continue to work in synergy, avoid duplication, and maximize impact. Transparency and accountability must remain our guiding principles.

Let me be clear: this project is not a magic wand. But it is a critical step toward a future where every child can go to school without fear, every farmer can till his land in peace, and every family can live with dignity.

Our vision is a Katsina where peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice, opportunity, and inclusion.

We will integrate successful models from this project into our state peacebuilding framework. We will mobilize additional resources local and international to scale up impact. And we will ensure that the gains made are sustained long after the project ends.

In closing, I once again thank the European Union, IOM, Mercy Corps, CDD, and all our partners for your trust and support.

To the people of Katsina: Hope is returning. Recovery is possible. Peace is within reach.

It is now my honour and privilege to officially launch the Conflict Prevention, Crisis Response, and Resilience (CPCRR) Project in Katsina State and to inaugurate the Katsina State CPCRR Steering Committee.

May God bless Katsina State.
May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
And may God bless our partners in peace.

Thank you all.