REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MAL. DIKKO UMARU RADDA, Ph.D., CON (THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE), AT THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU) ON THE LIFE PROJECT KATSINA GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 19th FEBRUARY 2025

Protocols:

- The Honourable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Prof. Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda,
- The Country Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mr. Arjun Jain,
- The Executive Director of Tropical General Investment (TGI), Mr. Farouk Gumel,
- Distinguished members of the Katsina State Government, representatives of our development partners, members of the press, ladies and gentlemen.

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that I welcome you all to this historic occasion, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the **Livelihoods for Improved Futures for Everyone (LIFE) Project.** This moment marks a first-of-its-kind intervention in Katsina State, a

project that is set to redefine how we support displaced populations and vulnerable communities by transitioning them from dependency to self-reliance.

Katsina State has long been home to resilient and hardworking people, but the impact of displacement and economic vulnerabilities has made it imperative for us to rethink our approach to humanitarian response. Today, we are not just signing an agreement, but we are laying the foundation for a future where our people can regain their dignity through sustainable livelihoods.

The LIFE Project is the first of its kind in Katsina State, representing an innovative, structured approach to integrating internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host communities into the economic fabric of our state.

Through this initiative, we are ensuring that displaced populations are not just beneficiaries of aid but active contributors to our agricultural economy. The 600 hectares of farmland allocated for this project is not just land, it is an opportunity for growth, stability, and long-term prosperity.

By leveraging agricultural value chains, cooperative farming models, financial inclusion, and social integration, we are creating a comprehensive pathway for our people to rebuild their lives in a dignified and sustainable way.

This initiative is a testament to what can be achieved when government, international organizations, and the private sector come together to co-create impactful solutions.

I want to acknowledge the critical role of our partners:

- **The Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction**, whose leadership in national social protection policies ensures that this project is aligned with broader federal initiatives.
- **The UNHCR**, whose expertise in sustainable solutions for displaced populations has been invaluable in shaping this initiative.
- **TGI,** whose private-sector innovation will bring modern agricultural practices, market linkages, and financial empowerment to the beneficiaries.

Through this collaboration, we are providing not just farmland but also access to irrigation, quality inputs, cooperative

structures, financial services, and market opportunities a holistic approach that guarantees long-term impact.

Katsina as a Model for the Northwest

While this project begins in Katsina State, it is only the beginning of a larger vision. As Chairman of the North West Governors Forum, I see this as a pilot that will serve as a model for other states in the region.

Our goal is to scale up this initiative across other North West States, ensuring that our region becomes a hub for inclusive, agriculture-driven economic growth. Katsina State lead by example, demonstrating that with the right partnerships and strategic planning, we can empower our people and strengthen our economy.

The signing of this MoU is a defining moment, but what matters most is the commitment to implementation. The Katsina State Government is fully dedicated to ensuring that this initiative succeeds, and we will:

1. Provide continued institutional support and policy alignment to facilitate smooth execution.

2. Ensure that all beneficiaries receive the necessary resources and training to maximize productivity.
3. Establish strong monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure progress and ensure accountability.
4. Work with our partners to expand financial access and market integration for the farmers involved.

Conclusion

Today, we reaffirm our commitment to building a future where no one is left behind. The LIFE Project represents more than just an agricultural initiative it is about empowerment, resilience, and a vision for a self-sufficient Katsina State.

To our partners, I extend my deepest appreciation for your dedication and collaboration. To the good people of Katsina State, I assure you that this is only the beginning of a transformation that will benefit generations to come.

Together, we will build a stronger, more prosperous, and more resilient Katsina State. Thank you all, and may this partnership bring lasting success.

God bless Katsina State.
God bless The Federal Republic of Nigeria.