

ADDRESS BY HON. JUSTICE S. A. MAHUTA, OFR, CHIEF JUDGE OF KATSINA STATE
AT THE OFFICIAL COMMISSIONING OF THE JUDICIAL RESEARCH CENTRE OF
KATSINA STATE JUDICIARY HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2009 AT THE STATE
HIGH COURT AUDITORIUM, KATSINA.

Protocol,

It gives me profound joy to welcome you all to this auspicious occasion which is another land mark the collective efforts at reforming the justice sector in the State. It is indeed a great honour for me to have His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Katsina State, Barr. Ibrahim S. Shema, fnim accepting to personally commission this important project. Also of delight is the presence of His Excellency, Mr. Dennis Thieulin, Head of Delegation of European Community, who co-funded this project. I wish to specially welcome Ms. Dagmar Thomas, the Country representative of UNDOC in Nigeria and her team as well as other dignatories who are here to rejoice with us on this achievement

The Judicial Research Centre (JRC) about to be officially Commissioned is a component of a project tagged "***Strengthening Integrity and Capacity of the Nigerian Judiciary***" being funded jointly by the European Union and Katsina State Government and implemented and coordinated by the United nations Office of Drugs and Crime Country Office in Nigeria. Ten State Judiciaries were selected as Pilot States for the project and Katsina State is privileged to be among the selected States. The broad objective of the project is to facilitate an efficient and transparent justice delivery which will in turn induce confidence in the court system.

Efficiency, transparency and integrity are important components of justice delivery. It is well known that our justice delivery system is bedeviled with the problem of delays, inefficiency and corrupt practices. While efforts have been intensified to improve these deficiencies and timeliness and efficiency of justice delivery by the Courts, lack of effective tools for research and dearth of research materials have remained a serious impediment in the realization of quick dispensation of justice.

✧ The establishment of this centre will definitely provide succor to Judicial Officers and their research and access to materials. In addition, the centre will provide the basis for an eventual E-judiciary which appears to be inevitable in the nearest future. I therefore call on my brother judges, the management and support staff to make best use of the state of art facilities provided by the centre. ✧

Though the life span of the project is coming to an end, I must confess that we have realized a lot from the project. Various trainings were undertaken and others are in the pipeline. We have also held 2 town hall meetings of stake holders at Katsina and Daura and the meetings of the other Judicial Divisions are being planned before the end of the year.

It is pertinent at this stage to plead with the State Government on the sustenance of this project. The EU and UNDOC have initiated and facilitated the first stage of the project. These organizations cannot come down to continue implementation. It is now our responsibility to build upon and sustain what has been achieved in the process of the reforms in justice sector. I am not unaware of the enormous challenges posed by the reforms but we have no option than to continue if we want deliver justice to all.

While thanking the development partners for all you have done to facilitate the reforms in the justice sector, let me assure you that we are determined to sustain and build upon the achievements.

Once again I welcome you all to this occasion and wish you journey mercies to your respective destinations.

Wassalamu Alaikum,