

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, BARRISTER IBRAHIM SHEHU SHEMA, FNIM, EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR, KATSINA AT THE OFFICIAL COMMISSIONING OF THE KATSINA STATE JUDICIAL RESOURCE CENTRE HELD ON TUESDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2009 AT THE HIGH COURT COMPLEX, KATSINA.

*Protocol,*

All praise and glory be to Allah, who has made our gathering here today possible. I am highly delighted that this project of providing the State Judiciary with a modern Research Centre has come to fruition and we are here today to witness its official commissioning. To the Government of Katsina State, this is yet another mile stone in our quest to ensuring a functional and responsive and vibrant Judiciary which is a strong pillar in a democratic set up.

2. When the Hon. Chief Judge first briefed me that Katsina State had been selected among the 10 pilot states to benefit from the "*Strengthening Integrity and Capacity of the Nigerian Judiciary*" I was so excited that I promised him every support towards realizing the objectives of the programme. Again, when I received in audience the then National Project Co-ordinator, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime who briefed me on the objectives of the project and the funding obligation expected on the part of the benefiting States,

I assured him that Katsina State was going to be ahead of all other Pilot States. I am happy that we have discharged our counter-part funding obligations with all components of the project being implemented in the State. Today's Commission of the Judicial Research Centre is a clear testimony of our commitment to improving the Judiciary and Justice delivery in the State.

3. To complement the on going reforms in the Justice Sector, the State Executive Arm has initiated a comprehensive review of Laws of Katsina State. The review has become imperative in view of socio-political and economic developments and the need to bring the laws in tandem with the current democratic experience. We are indeed lucky in Katsina State to have a wonderful working relationship among the three arms of Government which is translating to the benefit of citizens and all residents in the State.

4. Let me assure His Excellency, Mr. Dennis Thieulin, Head of Delegation of European Community, who co-funded this Centre with Katsina State Government and Ms. Dagmar Thomas, the Country representative of UNDOC in Nigeria that the State Government will continue with the "Strengthening Integrity and Capacity of the Katsina State Judiciary" Project beyond the life span of the current one. The Government has every confidence that the leadership of the Judiciary in the State is able and capable of implementing the project.

\* 5. To achieve maximum benefit of this project, the Government will consider the possibility of expanding the Centre to cover all Judicial Divisions in the State as well as providing similar facility to the Ministry of Justice. \*

6. Permit me to at this juncture to call on the Hon. Chief Judge to incorporate our traditional system of Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism as part of the Justice Sector Reform Process. There is no doubt that A.D.R. is a viable alternative that would reduce the work load of our courts and engender non-adversary resolution of certain types of disputes particularly such disputes between neighbours, relations, business associated and in other domestic disputes that could be resolved without recourse to the formal court process.

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Finally, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Chief and the entire Judiciary on this land mark achievement and once again thank our development partners; EU and UNDOC for their collaborate role in moving the Justice Sector forward.

Thank you all and God bless.