

Inaugural Speech of Malam Umar Namadi, FCA
As the 5th Democratically Elected Governor of Jigawa State
Monday, May 29th, 2023 – Aminu Kano Triangle, Dutse.

A'udhu Billahi Sami'ul Alim, MinaShaythanir Rajim, Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim,
Wassalatu-Wassalamu Ala Rasulullah.

Protocols

Godiya Ta Tabbata Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala...

All praises are due to Allah.

We praise Him, we seek His help, we seek His forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Him from all forms of evil deeds.

My fellow beloved citizens of Jigawa State. Today's inauguration marks the beginning of a new dawn for our dear State for which we express our utmost gratitude to Allah, the Most Beneficent and Most Merciful, *Al-Fattah - Malikul-Mulk, Dhul Jalali Wal Ikram* - The Giver of Victory, The Owner of Sovereignty, The Lord of Majesty, and Generosity. It is with His special grace that we are alive, healthy, and present to witness the proceedings of this very auspicious day in the historical development of our dear State. The day we are assuming the mantle of leadership of our dear State with my humble self as the 5th democratically elected Governor and the 2nd under our great party, the All-Progressive Congress.

Our victory and the victory of our great party at both the State and Federal level elections is a victory for democracy, for the progressives and for a united Jigawa State and a united Nigeria. It is a Victory for Greater Jigawa. We profoundly thank Allah (SWT) for the resounding victories. By this, the people of Nigeria and indeed, the People of Jigawa State; have sent a clear message of their satisfaction with the gradual, but undoubtedly positive, transformations taking place under our great party, the APC. We profoundly thank the good people of Jigawa State and Nigeria in general for the confidence reposed in us and our party by entrusting us with the mandate to continue to govern, to manage your affairs and resources, to steer the ship of state and to sustain and improve on the momentum of ongoing transformations taking place across the length and breadth of our dear State and the Nation in general.

The Sacred Mandate

Let me also from the onset, state most emphatically that we hold this mandate as sacred trust entrusted to us to deliver the will of the people in the most responsive manner. The mandate is sacrosanct. It is a compact between us and the people of Jigawa State. Accordingly, we now stand obligated to continue to deliver the legitimate yearnings and aspirations of the people. Let me therefore assure the people of Jigawa State that we will religiously adhere to the discharge of this mandate. We will govern with transparency, accountability, inclusion, prudence, responsiveness and above all, with the fear of Allah to Whom we will all ultimately be held accountable. We will govern in accordance with the Oath of Office we have just taken, in which I and my Deputy, do solemnly swear to devote ourselves to the discharge of our duties to the service and well-being of the people of Jigawa State. The Oath will be a constant reminder for us to remain steadfast, fair, and upright as we govern the affairs of the State.

A Journey of Positive Change

Fellow citizens of Jigawa State, the mandate entrusted to us and our great party, is a mandate we successfully campaigned for under our party slogan of *renewed hope* and a *Greater Jigawa*. This is coming after witnessing eight years of positive change in Nigeria and Jigawa State.

For Nigeria as a whole, we have witnessed in the last eight years, the entrenchment of the true principles and ideals of democratic governance which is one of the hallmarks of the Buhari Administration. The era of brazen constitutional breaches and desecration of our cherished governance institutions were made to be history. The principles of separation of power and increased autonomy across the arms and levels of Government were significantly improved. We have also witnessed the strengthening of our democratic institutions which made it possible for the 2023 general elections to be one of the most credible elections so far. We have also witnessed a rebirth in infrastructural development and economic transformations in our country. Despite challenges, we must acknowledge that new pathways have been charted for the Nigerian economy to sustainably grow in an inclusive manner as a non-oil dependent economy. The massive and unprecedented social investment programs pursued in the last seven years is gradually addressing extreme poverty and the empowerment of our youths. Of great significance is the extent to which Nigeria is gradually becoming food secure with much less dependence on imported rice and other food items. Even as we

intermittently witness security challenges, we must also acknowledge the tremendous progress made in this area by remembering where we came from. I mentioned these few accomplishments of the last eight years to buttress the fact that our country is gradually withering the storm of underdevelopment. Democratic governance and institutions are gradually getting deep-rooted with increasing accountability and transparency in the polity.

Eight Years of Enduring Legacies

At the State level, the success stories were also very glaring as documented in the eighth year Compendium of Government's Achievements titled the "*Enduring Legacies*". We would all recall that the Badaru Administration assumed the mantle of leadership during austere times with high cost of governance and huge contractual commitments and liabilities. With virtually no fiscal space to maneuver, His Excellency, the Governor, Alhaji Muhammed Badaru Abubakar, equipped with his "calculator", instituted a regime of prudence, accountability, transparency, and value for money which positively impacted on the entire public expenditure and financial management system of the State. Today as we perform this inauguration, there is no iota of doubt that the socioeconomic landscape of our State has been changed for the better. Jigawa State has become a pacesetter in financial transparency and accountability as adjudged by various independent assessments. As documented, virtually all sectors have witnessed appreciable progress in terms of service delivery and infrastructural development. All the nooks and crannies of the State have equally witnessed one form of socioeconomic development or the other. Access to qualitative and functional education and healthcare services have noticeably improved with positive impact on our human development indices. The State has recorded almost universal access to safe drinking water. The agricultural transformation agenda has significantly contributed to our Nation's quest for food security and economic diversification. Today, Jigawa State is among the leading producers of rice, sesame, and hibiscus among other crops. The State has been independently rated as having one with the highest road networks in the federation. The demand-driven economic empowerment programs implemented over the years have also contributed to the provision of sustainable means of livelihoods for our teeming youths.

The success stories of Badaru Administration are indeed too numerous to be recounted here. Fortunately, they have all been comprehensively documented in the compendium for posterity. Our pledge is to continue to build on these legacies, taking into consideration the lessons, experiences, and challenges of the last eight years. Government and Governance is a continuous process. Accordingly, as provided under

the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution, our pledge is to continue to *secure the "maximum welfare, freedom, and happiness of every citizen"* of Jigawa State based on the principles of "*social justice, equality of status and opportunity*". The principal message of our renewed hope mantra is therefore to continuously improve the social and economic wellbeing of our dear citizens in the most responsive and inclusive manner for a greater Jigawa.

A New Beginning...

Fellow citizens of Jigawa State, as we all know too well, Governance is a continuous process. Yet today, is marking the beginning of a new chapter in the governance history of our State which we promise will record yet another journey of fulfillments. While 'change' has been said to be the only 'constant' in the process of societal transformation, for our government, the focus of the change would remain constant, which is the attainment of the State's vision and its strategic development objectives as encapsulated in the State Development Plan. Primarily, this would be the pursuit of positive transformations across all sectors for sustained improvements in the socioeconomic wellbeing of the entire people in our State. While I believe the State Development Plan presently under review has adequately reflected our agenda for GREATER JIGAWA, strategically, we intend to pursue several policies focused on inclusive economic growth and human capital development in line with our 12-Point Development Agenda.

My fellow citizens of Jigawa State, let me at this stage espouse some of the major highlights of the policies we intend to pursue in the next four years to build on the previous legacies of success stories. Within the context of the long-term perspective of the State Development framework, we have identified several short- to medium-term outcomes of desirable targets which we intend to deliver through several sector-level initiatives. Generally, our priorities would be on the pursuit of policies, projects, and programmes focused on:

- i. Areas that generate inclusive and human-centered economic growth particularly agriculture, small & medium scale enterprises, and critical infrastructure.
- ii. Access to effective and efficient human development services with lasting impact on the State's human development indices.
- iii. Targeted youths and women empowerment programmes for job and employment creation.

- iv. Social Protection aimed at reducing vulnerabilities and extreme poverty.
- v. Expanded role of the private sector in growing the state's economy.
- vi. Environmental Sustainability and effective Land Administration.
- vii. Institutional and governance reforms aimed at improving the effectiveness of public institutions including sustained partnerships for reforms and development with our Development Partners.

Responding to Our Existential Development Challenges

Ladies and gentlemen, Governance is about the people. It is about development and the socioeconomic wellbeing of the citizens. It is about effectively responding to their legitimate yearnings and aspirations, safeguarding their survival, protection, and development. Very importantly, it goes beyond meeting the basic needs of the population to encompass the provision of opportunities for self-actualization to enable every individual to live a happy and dignified life. This requires conscientious leadership and painstaking planning to harness and manage our resources to build a better, stronger, united, and more prosperous State that would be the pride of our present and future generations.

With a current population of about 7.5 million people as recently projected by the National Population Commission, Jigawa State is the 7th most populous State in Nigeria. The demographics showed Jigawa State as having one of the fastest growing populations in the country. With almost 50% of the population aged between 0 to 14 years, the statistics indicated a very high dependency ratio with profound implications for our development agenda. Notwithstanding, this vast population, especially of the youths, constitutes one of our most valuable assets. It thus become imperative for us to develop and implement policies in the most strategic manner to harness this vast reservoir of human capital as to reap the developmental demographic dividends inherent in the population.

We would therefore evolve and vigorously pursue specific policies and programs that are responsive to the needs of these vast population including those yet unborn. We would ensure sustained provision of qualitative and functional education, improved access to qualitative and affordable healthcare services, effective social protection programs whose domains cover the entire life cycle and other initiatives that spur

inclusive economic growth and development. We would evolve policies that provide jobs and sustainable means of livelihoods for the ever-burgeoning youth population. We would equally evolve policies that specifically address concerns for the protection, survival and development of women and children as raised in the recent report on the "Situation Analysis" of Children in Jigawa State developed with the support of UNICEF. These and several other existential development challenges would be addressed through various policies and program initiatives by the State Government and in collaboration with our development partners and other stakeholders. With the special grace of Allah, we shall succeed in this resolve.

Specific Policy Declarations

My fellow citizens of Jigawa State, as mentioned earlier, we have in the last eight years, witnessed profound transformations that have positively impacted on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the people. As we renew hopes for Greater Jigawa, we intend to remain focused on the attainment of the State's vision and its development objectives. We also hope to accelerate the momentum of progress to deliver much more within the shortest possible time. While a lot will depend on the fiscal space, we would ensure strategic prioritization in resource allocation and policy implementation for optimal results. Accordingly, and in line with our agenda, I would use this occasion to make the following declarations as part of the policy thrusts to be pursued by our Administration across all the major sectors.

i. Sustained Agricultural Transformation

First and foremost, with majority of our citizens engaged in agriculture wherein lies the State's greatest comparative advantage, our collective resolve as a government, would be to sustain the ongoing transformation in the Agriculture Sector. Our priority is to sustain interventions to accelerate the contributions of the sector to the growth of the State Economy and provision of sustainable means of livelihoods for the people. Jigawa State is today a major contributor to national food security and the diversification of the national economy being among the topmost producers of many food and cash crops. In line with our priorities in the sector, we declare as follows:

- a) That we would revitalise and strengthen the State Agricultural & Rural Development Agency to focus on research-based extension service, promoting agricultural mechanization, rural development, development of more fadama lands, sustained support for cluster farmers and out-grower schemes, and facilitating government guarantees for access to agricultural financing.

- b) That we would strengthen and expand the operations of the State Agricultural Supply Company to ensure timely access to quality and affordable agriculture inputs to our teeming farmers. This will include facilitating the establishment of Agricultural Commodities Exchange and Marketing Outfit to foster local and international agricultural commodity trading support services to ensure that our farmers enjoy the sweet outcome of the sweat of their labour.
- c) That, we would do all it takes to fully exploit the State's agricultural potentials through all-year round production by bringing more of our fadama lands under cultivation. In this regard, we will gradually rehabilitate and expand our irrigation facilities and infrastructure including our dams and other borehole-based irrigation schemes. In addition, with our large expanse of cultivable agricultural land and huge reservoir of underground water, we would actively explore the option of upland irrigation in other areas of the State. It is our firm belief that sustained interventions in these areas will significantly contribute to our quest for food security, job creation and poverty reduction.
- d) That we would facilitate and mobilize large-scale private sector investments into the Agricultural Sector particularly around crops and livestock production and other aspects of the agricultural value chain.

ii. Accelerated Pursuit of Human Development Services

Guided by the provisions of the Sustainable Development Goals, our resolve in this respect is to continue to ensure access to functional and qualitative education at all levels; qualitative and affordable preventive & curative healthcare services; and ensure universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation services.

We understand that our demographics pose huge challenge at Government's efforts to achieve free and universal access to qualitative basic education as evident from our statistics of out-of-school children. Notwithstanding, we are determined to face this challenge head-on. While striving to ensure access to functional education for the vast number of school-age population, we would also be strategically creative in improving quality and better learning outcomes. Our declarations for the education sector include:

- a) Addressing the issue of out-of-school children through the conventional basic education and integrated quranic school programs.

- b) Addressing the challenge of unfavourable pupil-teacher ratio for many of our Basic and Post-Basic Schools through the recruitment of qualified teachers, training, and re-training of teachers as well as more balanced teacher-deployment policy.
- c) Reviewing the concept of established Centres of Excellence and Effective Schools at both Basic and Post-Basic Education levels to upgrade them to higher standards based on the principles of public-private-partnerships.
- d) Leveraging on the power of *e-learning* to achieve better learning outcomes in our schools. This would be part of an integrated State ICT strategy through which we would also actively promote *e-governance* and the gradual emergence of the State's digital economy.

For the health sector, we are also determined to sustain focus and accelerate the momentum of progress. It is gratifying to note that the Government's vision of at least one functional Basic Health Clinic per Political Ward, one Secondary Health Facility for each State Constituency and a Specialist Hospital for each Senatorial Zone is almost one hundred percent achieved. To accomplish our objectives for the health sector our short to medium term declarations include:

- a) Completing and commissioning all the outstanding projects on Secondary and Specialist Hospitals before the end of the year.
- b) Sustaining the program of foreign medical training for most deserving students. While this is ongoing, we will accelerate efforts to commence medical training in the State University as well as continuously expand the capacity of our health training institutions.
- c) Further Strengthening of the State's Primary Healthcare Program including reinforcement of Routine Immunization and Child Nutrition.
- d) Improving and expanding the performance and coverage of the State Health Insurance Scheme being a form of social protection. In addition to the introduction of Government Equity funding, we would study the possibility of running the scheme based on an arrangement of employer-employee contributory system.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation is one area of human development services where Jigawa State is playing a leading role nationwide. While access to safe drinking in Jigawa State was assessed to be over 90%, the State was also the first to attain an open-defecation free status in the country. Though we are aware of pockets of challenges in some of our rapidly growing urban centers, we remain resolute in achieving the target of universal access to safe drinking water across the State and sustaining the pace of progress towards improved sanitation and hygiene. In this regard, we would, over the medium term, undertake as follows:

- a) That we would review the yet-to-be-passed more than a decade old State Water Bill and State Water and Sanitation Policy to inject more reforms into the Water Sector to ensure economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability in the management of our water resources across the State.
- b) That we would sustain investment in our Urban Water Schemes where there are pockets of persisting challenges to close existing gaps in achieving the State target of universal access to safe drinking water.
- c) That we would pursue, within an integrated water and sanitation policy, initiatives that would reduce cost of water production and distribution as well as ensure effective community participation in the management of water and sanitation facilities.
- d) That we would develop and implement an Open Defecation Free (ODF) sustainability plan in collaboration with our partners.

iii. Innovative & Well-targeted Empowerment Programs

With a very high proportion of youthful population, high dependency ratio, and high rate of youth unemployment, it would be imperative to rededicate the next four years to the pursuit of more innovative and well-targeted empowerment programs that would result in job and employment creation. This is especially so considering the limited fiscal space for direct public sector employment for thousands of our youths graduating annually from various tertiary educational institutions all over the country.

The State Government has over the last eight years pursued several empowerment programs largely across the agricultural sector and its value chain. This in addition to micro-credit and grants to cooperatives, business start-ups as well as women and

youth-empowerment initiatives. It is on record that hundreds of thousands of individuals have benefitted from these including the women that participated in the goat-breeding empowerment program. Our resolve is to sustain these empowerment programs while we try to be more innovative in terms of the nature, scope, beneficiary targeting and funding of the programs. Accordingly, part of our resolve in this area is to:

- a) Explore partnerships with reputable national institutions, such as SMEDAN, ITF and NDE, to design and implement fit-for-purpose skill acquisition and empowerment programs that would create jobs and generate employment for our teeming youths. This would leverage on our existing skills acquisition centres which would be rehabilitated and appropriately equipped for the implementation of well-packaged demand-driven empowerment programmes.
- b) Explore partnerships with the private sector for internships that would empower our youths with the necessary functional and innovative skills that could enable them to be either self-employed or become gainfully employed.
- c) Design and implement home-grown public works programs aimed at providing skills and income for our youths,
- d) Create an alternative funding sources to achieve more coverage and ensure sustainability for all our skills acquisition and empowerment initiatives.
- e) Leverage on the power of ICT to create employment opportunities for our youths.
- f) Resuscitate the State Manpower Committee to synergise and collaborate with the Guidance and Counselling Directorate in ensuring the placement of State indigenes in Federal Recruitments and filling of State Quotas in Federal Establishments.

iv. Expansion and Improved Targeting of the State Social Protection Investment Programs.

As most of us are aware, the State Government has been pursuing several Social Protection Programmes aimed at addressing vulnerabilities and reducing extreme poverty. To date, Jigawa State has, in its Social Register, over 708,000 poor and vulnerable households and over 2.7 million individuals which is being harnessed by both the State and Federal Governments in the implementation of Social Investment

Programs. While on the one hand, almost 168,000 persons are receiving monthly cash grant of the Federal Social Investment Program harnessed from the Register, on the other hand, tens of thousands are also benefiting from several social protection interventions of the State Government including the maternal cash transfer and social security for people with the disability. In this regard, I would declare as follows:

- a) That we would shortly approve the reviewed State Social Protection Policy which was developed following the enactment of the Social Protection Law by the State Government last year. We intend to use this as another front to effectively reduce poverty, develop human capital, protect families and individuals from lifetime risks, and contribute to the development of the broader State economy.
- b) That we would also review the Social Security Law to enable the State Government to assume greater responsibilities in the payment of monthly Social Security Allowance to people with disability including improved targeting and expanding the number of beneficiaries across the State.
- c) That within the scope of the reviewed Social Protection Policy, we would introduce new social protection interventions which would include cash grants and health insurance coverage for the aged population and other vulnerable groups as well as the introduction of welfare schemes for the orphans.
- d) That we would strengthen and expand the operations of the State Disability Trust Fund established under the Jigawa State Persons with Disabilities Law enacted in 2021. We would create a window to ensure sustainable funding for the Trust Fund and strengthen other aspects of the Law aimed at safeguarding Persons with Disabilities and promoting access to opportunities for enhanced livelihoods.

v. Development of Critical Infrastructure

Critical infrastructure, particularly Power Supply, Information & Communication Technology, and Roads & Transport Development, remains critical to our objectives of accelerating inclusive economic growth. Presently, Jigawa State has one of the highest road network densities in Nigeria with virtually all urban centers and major towns connected with each other. This is not surprising considering that over the last sixteen years, over one-third of the cumulative State budget was earmarked for the roads sector alone. Even at present, the State is committed to several ongoing roads projects worth several billions, particularly on the reconstruction of roads

destroyed by the 2022 Flood Disaster which affected several parts of the State. While we remain committed to sustained development of this vital sector including the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing roads, specifically, I would declare as follows:

- a) That we would collaborate with the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) to implement the State ICT Master Plan, promote e-governance and the gradual emergence of the digital economy. Part of our resolve in this respect is to ensure that Jigawa State reaps the dividends of the fourth industrial revolution through vigorous pursuit of innovation and technology.
- b) That we would pursue a rural-development strategy under which high quality rural roads would be constructed to ensure comprehensive connectivity of the hinterlands with all major regional roads and major highways as well as with markets for commodities. The strategy will also encompass the provision of amenities to promote the socioeconomic wellbeing of people living in the rural areas and help reduce the often-risky seasonal economic migration to urban areas.
- c) That we would continue to pursue the development of both conventional and renewable energy in our quest to improve access to reliable and affordable energy for the citizens. Already the State Government has an approved Off-Grid Solar Policy which we would review and implement in line with our Agenda.

vi. Environmental Sustainability

The phenomenon of perennial flooding, desertification, and gradual loss of our forest reserves raises lots of concern for environmental sustainability with negative consequences on sustainable livelihoods for most of our citizens. We would therefore sustain and build upon ongoing efforts through the adoption of policy initiatives and interventions that would protect the environment together with its flora and fauna. Even though our contribution to global warming is next to nothing, we will responsibly promote initiatives that are environmentally friendly and support environmental resilience. We would build on current efforts to develop and implement programs around sustainable forest management, control of desertification and land degradation. Some of the specific declarations in this respect include:

- a) Leverage on new World Bank supported AcReSal Project and other national programmes of the Federal Ministry of Environment to promote agro-climatic resilience and expansion of our forest shelterbelts.
- b) Review and implement the recommendations of the flood committees constituted by the State Government especially around emergency response and preparedness and other measures aimed at mitigating future flood occurrences including technical cooperation with our partners from the Netherlands and our local experts.
- c) Take appropriate proactive measures to access funding from the National Ecological Fund to address some critical areas of environmental degradation.
- d) Reinvigorate and expand ongoing programmes including the production of 2.5 million tree seedlings annually for distribution to the citizens, public sensitization on tree planting, deforestation, and general environmental protection.

vii. Security

Even as we intermittently witnessed security issues in our State, we must express our utmost gratitude to Allah for the relative peace and security we have enjoyed in our State. We pray that Allah continues to protect our citizens from all forms of insecurity. As a member of the State Security Council, I am fully abreast with the various Government initiatives and the highly commendable relentless efforts of our security agencies, the State Council of Chiefs, Council of Ulamas and other stakeholders in the maintenance of security, law, and order in our State. We remain committed to the sustenance of these efforts as well as continued support and collaboration with the security Agencies. We would also continue to count on the valuable support of our traditional authorities at all levels and the State Council of Ulamas. Other specific interventions to be pursued towards enhanced security include:

- a) Sustained implementation of security and justice sector reforms to ensure access to justice for the citizens and the effectiveness of our justice sector institutions.

- b) Continued support for community policing and the performance of our community law centers which help promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in local communities.
- c) Strengthening of preventive mechanisms with effective enforcement of the relevant criminal laws in justice system administration.
- d) Support and collaborate with the relevant Federal Agencies to decisively address the threat posed by local drug dealers wasting the lives of our youths and creating serious security challenges in the Community.

viii. Land Administration, Housing & Urban Development

As part of our development agenda, we would also sustain ongoing efforts aimed at ensuring effective land administration, provision of mass housing and ensuring the proper planning and development control measures of our urban centers. The imperative for this was further necessitated by the dynamics of population growth and its implications on demand for land, housing, and urbanization. Indeed, our quest for economic growth and development involving the mobilization of private sector investments has also added to the increased demand for land either for large scale agricultural production or for the establishment of industries. These make it imperative to sustain policies such as the Land Acquisition & Resettlement Framework Policy initiated as part of our investment promotion initiatives. Specifically, we commit ourselves to the following:

- a) Accelerating the ongoing development of a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) leading to the establishment of a full-fledged Jigawa State Geographic Information Service.
- b) The digitization of the State Land Registry for easy access and quick retrieval of land records for timely processing and production of land titling requests based on real-time land data for individuals, corporate bodies, and public institutions.
- c) Implementation of a mass housing scheme in collaboration with the private sector in the State Capital and across other major urban centers with the aim of improving access to affordable housing.
- d) Pursuit of urban renewal programs guided by updated and simple master plans for orderly provision of urban infrastructure and social amenities in all urban centers of the State.

ix. Partnerships for Reforms and Development

One of the pillars of the State Development Strategy is the pursuit of Governance and Institutional Reforms. These were majorly pursued in partnerships with our development partners, particularly Foreign, Commonwealth and Development (FCDO) which has supported Jigawa State for several decades. Others include UNICEF, the European Union, Save the Children and Action Against Hunger. We would continue to cultivate and harness these partnerships for sustained reforms and development. We would continue to engage, learn, and adopt appropriate institutional and governance reforms to achieve our socioeconomic development objectives. We would continue to collaborate with our partners to sustain reforms in such areas as policy and strategy across all sectors, public service management, and other areas of human development services and economic growth. Even as the FCDO is presently supporting both the Education and Health Sectors through the PLANE and LAFIYA Programs respectively, we would engage further through the Mutual Accountability Framework to widen the scope of the collaboration as to address specific gaps in service delivery. We remain confident that we will continue to enjoy the support of our partners in this regard. Going forward, we intend to explore new areas of partnerships with such international development agencies as the UNDP, European Union and USAID with whom the State has successfully partnered with previously.

x. Public Service and Local Governance Reforms

As part of the ongoing reforms, we would fast-track ongoing collaborations with FCDO's PERL-ARC Program to ensure that the State Civil Service, as an institution, remains capable and responsive in the implementation of Government policies, programs, and service delivery. I am aware that one of key challenges facing the State Civil Service is that of Human Resources – in the right mix of quantity and quality with required level of competence, capacity, motivation, and commitment. Working with our Partners, we will do whatever is necessary to deal with the issues through the adoption of appropriate short to long term interventions. We would ensure that the State Civil Service is reinvigorated, repositioned and run based on the principles of meritocracy. Some immediate interventions in this regard would include:

- i. A critical review of the report on manpower and skill-gap analysis in the State Civil Service. This will inform appropriate actions required to address the mentioned human resource challenges facing the Service.

- ii. Pursuit of Organizational & Corporate Planning in selected MDAs as well as the reintroduction of work-force planning to ensure that, as an Institution, the Civil Service remains capable in the implementation of Government policies and programmes.
- iii. Repositioning of the State Manpower Development Institute in line with its primary mandate of training and capacity development for all Civil Servants. This is to ensure the Institute supports our vision of a State Civil Service that is managed by competent, proficient, and skilled manpower in line with the professional standards demanded by the peculiarities of each cadre. Our target in this respect is to see that the Institute is discharging its mandate in line with international best practice.

We would also strengthen Local Governance and work with Communities and the Civil Society to improve accountability and effective service delivery at the grassroot. While coming up with interventions that empower and mobilize local communities for participatory governance, we shall also support and collaborate with the Local Governments to ensure that they perform optimally in delivering services to the people. Our resolve in this regard includes:

- a) Ensuring that the financial autonomy of the Local Governments effectively contributes to development by collaborating with our Development Partners to entrench an effective financial management system alongside improved policy and strategy across all the Local Governments.
- b) As required by Section 7(3) of the Constitution, we would ensure that each Local Government Council effectively participates in the economic planning and development of their respective Local Government Areas in line with the overall State Development objectives. Consequently, within the dictates of the extant laws, especially the Economic Planning and Fiscal Responsibility Law, we would continue to support, collaborate, and work with the Local Governments to deliver services to the people.

xi. Public Service Delivery and Performance

One of the core functions of Government is the delivery of social services to the populace. As part of efforts to ensure effective public service delivery we will introduce a system of supervision and performance measurement based on the principles of rewards and punishments. While appropriately rewarding productivity and

commitment to duty, we would also adopt hardline view against laxities and poor performance. All service delivery outlets, especially our schools and health facilities, should be performing effectively in the best way possible. We would therefore reintroduce State SERVICOM and Service Charter Initiatives in key Government Agencies as veritable tools to drive for excellence in public service delivery. The adoption of Service Charters across selected Agencies involved in direct service delivery to the public, would be a deliberate strategy not only for improved effectiveness, but to ensure that public service providers, whether as teachers, health workers or revenue officers, are performing their responsibilities professionally, with courtesy and commitment to duty. The operationalization of the Service Charters would be centrally monitored to ensure appropriate reward for performance & commitment to duty and sanctions poor performance & laxities.

xii. Private Sector Development and Investment Promotion

Globally, the private sector plays crucial role in promoting economic growth and generating employment opportunities for the people. Accordingly, we will sustain the current focus on improving State's Business Environment and Investment Climate aimed at mobilizing domestic and foreign investments into the State. Our resolve in this respect is to:

- a) Fasttrack the completion of the ongoing Gagarawa industrial park where the State Government is already collaborating with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) to facilitate the functionality of the project and the attainment of our objectives in that respect.
- b) Support the implementation of strategic plan of InvestJigawa to achieve the State target of mobilizing domestic and foreign direct investments into the State.
- c) Provision of hand-holding support for the development of our local medium and large-scale industries.
- d) Strengthen existing institutional arrangements on Ease of Doing Business to ensure that the State continue to provide the necessary business environment and investment climate attractive to both Domestic and Foreign Investors. Our target is not just to continue to be among to topmost performers in the Nation's Business Competitiveness Index measured in the periodic Ease of Doing Business Reports, but to be among the topmost preferred investment destinations in the Country. Accordingly, we would continue to ensure that the relevant policy, legal,

regulatory, and institutional frameworks for private sector development are pragmatic and attractive enough to yield the desired results.

- e) Re-examine the concept of the State's Export Processing Zone which is very important to promoting commerce and industry across our borders.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I expressed these commitments across almost all sectors to reassure the citizens of Jigawa State and provide them with a sense of the policy direction and priorities of our administration for the next four years. They are by no means exhaustive. Generally, our solemn declaration is to continue to deliver the dividends of democracy to the people of Jigawa State by building on the solid foundation of my predecessors. We would continue to build on the enduring legacies of the Badaru Administration to achieve the desired long-term transformations of the socioeconomic landscape of our dear State. I will reiterate that we shall continue to deliver the dividends of democracy to the people of Jigawa State based on the principles of social justice and in accordance with our oath of office.

As I mentioned during the electioneering campaigns, our governance philosophy would continue to imbibe the principles of open government, inclusion, and the participation of all stakeholders in the governance process. We would continue to effectively utilize existing means and new avenues to provide space for stakeholder consultation. First among these is our revered traditional and religious institutions which remarkably serve as effective governance establishments critical to the unity, peaceful co-existence, security, progress, and development of the State. We would also continue to periodically engage with our political leaders, the forum of Jigawa Elders, the Open Government Partnership Forum and other existing credible non-state actors' forum. Indeed, I am delighted to mention the immense support of the leadership of our great party and the commitment of my fellow contestants in the party to ensure that, as a government, we would continue to deliver. I believe even across other political parties, we do share a common purpose and a passion for the unity, progress, and development of our dear State. Accordingly, I would passionately call on my fellow contestants in all parties to join hands with me and our government to sustain the progress and development of our dear State. In all respects, it will be a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Beyond these, I must emphasize the fact that, every citizen of Jigawa State also has an obligation and a duty to make our State function for the better. We should therefore all be patriotic citizens, adopt positive mindsets, and think and act in an upright manner

as to contribute our quota to the development of our State. Remember the famous hadith... "KULLUKUM RA'I WA KULLUKUM MAS'ULUN AN RA'TYYATIHI" meaning every one of you is a leader and every leader would be called to account for his or her actions.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen - As I conclude my speech, I would once again emphasize that leadership and governance are about the people, their security, welfare, and development. It is about being accountable, transparent, and being responsive to legitimate yearnings and aspiration of the citizens. All the commitments I mentioned earlier are about these. To fulfill the commitments, we will remain passionately committed and pledged to dedicate our time, energy, and resources for a greater Jigawa. We would continue to build on the solid foundation and legacies of the Badaru Administration and take our State to greater heights. I have prayed during the electioneering campaigns that may we be victorious in the polls only if God, in His infinite knowledge, knows that our leadership would make positive impacts on the life of our people. Having emerged victorious, it is our firm conviction that by the Special Grace of Almighty Allah, we will deliver a more united, more prosperous, and greater Jigawa State. While soliciting for your continued prayers in this regard, May Allah, the Most Beneficent and Most Merciful, the Provider and Most Magnificent guides, protects, and makes us successful as we assume the mantle of leadership.

On a final note, my dear good people of Jigawa State, with all sense of humility, I would use this opportunity to call you to do me a favor by addressing me as MALAM UMAR NAMADI instead of His Excellency, Umar Namadi. This is in the spirit of modesty which I believe will also increase our sense of humility and togetherness as we interact with each other. Once again, I, most profoundly appreciate our teeming supporters for their unwavering support. While I crave the indulgence of the people to be patient and to be good citizens as we strive to achieve our vision of GREATER JIGAWA, please never stop praying for the unity, progress, and development of our dear State and Nigeria as a whole.

Thank you all for your time and listening. Long Live our great party the All-Progressive Congress, Long Live Jigawa State, Long Live Nigeria.

Wassalam Alaikum, Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu