

## **SECOND NIIA DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES 2025**

**Theme: *The Role of State Governments in Overcoming Insecurity in Nigeria***

The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) held its second Distinguished Lecture Series for 2025 on Tuesday, 11 November 2025 at the Institute's Conference Chambers. The lecture, entitled "The Role of State Governments in Overcoming Insecurity in Nigeria," was delivered by His Excellency, Senator Uba Sani, CON, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State. The event attracted participants comprising the Governor's entourage, members of the diplomatic corps, research fellows of the NIIA, invited guests, members of the public and the press.

In his welcome remarks, the Director-General of the Institute, distinguished Professor Eghosa Osaghae, reiterated the importance of national security and emphasized that the responsibility for it should not rest with the federal government alone. In his words, "Federalism means that states and the federal government must work together in harmony; they are not rivals or competing levels of government. They are complementary, especially on matters of security." The Director-General commended the Kaduna State Governor for his inclusive leadership and practical demonstration of democratic ideals in advancing peace and development across Kaduna State.



The Chairman of the NIIA Governing Council, the eminent Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, in his opening remarks, vouched for Governor Sani's vision for Nigeria, drawing on his record as an activist during the NADECO era. According to Professor Akinyemi, the Governor has consistently demonstrated his belief that Nigeria is worth fighting for.

In delivering the lecture, Governor Sani described insecurity as a scourge that has entrenched itself



deeply within the national fabric, presenting challenges that undermine the unity binding citizens together and threatening developmental aspirations. He emphasized that Kaduna has not experienced any

ethno-religious crisis in the past two and a half years, attributing this achievement to what he termed the "Kaduna Peace Model," a strategic framework anchored on coordinated dialogue, grassroots inclusion, and socio-economic renewal. For the Governor, insecurity in Nigeria is symptomatic of governance deficits, exclusionary politics, and socio-economic marginalization. The solution, he argued, lies in a comprehensive, multifaceted approach, with state governments assuming a leading role not merely as intermediaries but as architects of peace, social cohesion, and economic revival.

Governor Sani shared insights from the Kaduna Peace Model, which encompasses a holistic approach to addressing insecurity. The critical pillars of the model includes the strengthening of community policing; achieved by his administration through the empowerment of local vigilante groups by training, and provision of equipment and communication tools, the forging of a symbiotic relationship between communities and state security forces, and the harnessing of the legitimacy of traditional rulers and community leaders in peace-building. The latter bridges the trust gap and provides culturally resonant mechanisms for conflict resolution and early warning.

A second pillar of the model is comprehensive infrastructural renaissance and social investment for development. The Governor cited the construction of roads reconnecting isolated communities with urban centers and markets; the provision of education and healthcare facilities and transportation innovations. Specifically in the education sector, his government has constructed over 1,700 classrooms and established 62 new secondary schools; including a reduction of tuition

fees at state tertiary institutions by half and the establishment of vocational training and skills institutes. In healthcare, more than 1,100 primary healthcare centers have been built or refurbished, whilst 255 of these centers have been upgraded to level two, the highest number by any state in Nigeria. The introduction of 100 Compressed Natural Gas buses under the Kaduna Subsidized Transport Scheme, the ongoing construction of Kaduna's Bus Rapid Transit system (the first of its kind in Northern Nigeria), as well as the introduction of e-ticketing and digitized operations within the state-owned mass transit enterprise are some of the innovations within the transport sector that has enhanced mobility and economic participation

The third pillar of the Peace Model is inclusive governance. This entails the conscious rejection of ethnic and religious favoritism, fostering a culture rooted in meritocracy, accountability and equal opportunity and the establishment of an interfaith council to promote dialogue, mutual understanding and proactive engagement across religious and ethnic divides.

The fourth critical pillar under the Kaduna Peace Model is economic empowerment. For Governor Sani, his financial inclusion strategy under this pillar has integrated over 2.5 million previously unbanked citizens into the formal economy and facilitated access to credit, insurance, and savings for farmers, artisans, and small businesses thereby reducing vulnerability to exploitation and marginalization, which are common catalysts for violent conflict.



In concluding the lecture, Governor Sani noted that the interwoven relationship between economic development, social inclusion, and security as shown by the Kaduna Peace Model forms a template for other states. The Kaduna Peace Model has served as a pillar of stability, restoring peace, reopening schools, reviving farmlands, and earning Kaduna international recognition, including the United Kingdom's revision of its travel advisory on Kaduna from "red" to

"amber.

The Governor stressed the need for cooperative federalism and pointed out that the Kaduna experience validates the principle of cooperative federalism. He emphasized that the Kaduna Government has aligned its policies with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Agenda and the reforms being implemented by His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, at the national level. He also made a renewed call for the establishment of state police to address local security challenges.



The interactive session entertained compliments and testimonials about Governor Sani's laudable performance in Kaduna. Interrogations about banditry and the role of traditional leaders, strategic peace building, accountability of security votes, challenges and prospects of school feeding program,, and measures taken to stem the tides of out-of-school children were aired. The lecture rounded off with apt reflections by the Governor-Lecturer on the issues raised by participants.

**REPORT COMPILED BY NIIA REPORTS COMMITTEE**