

Nissan signs MoU with Ghana

Adding to its track record of investing in Africa, Nissan has committed to working with the government of Ghana to establish an automotive manufacturing industry in the country. The company will also make Ghana its hub for sales and marketing in West Africa.



Mike Whitfield and Alan Kyerematen with Jim Dando (next to Mike Whitfield) and Salem Kalmoni looking on. Image supplied by motorpress.co.za

The announcements were recently made in Accra, where Alan Kyerematen, Ghana's minister of trade and industry, and Mike Whitfield, managing director of Nissan Group of Africa, signed a memorandum of understanding.

Nissan aims to be the first carmaker to assemble vehicles in Ghana, building on its market leadership in the country. Nissan models accounted for 32.8% of vehicle sales in Ghana last year. The company's cars, pickups and SUVs are sold through a national network of six sales and service outlets.

"Nissan is the most popular auto brand in Ghana because the quality of our products and services has won the trust of our customers," Whitfield said. "We want to build on our leadership by supporting the government to create the environment for a successful automotive manufacturing industry in the country. Building vehicles in Ghana will enable us to further improve the products and services we offer to our customers here and will have significant, long-term benefits for the economy in terms of jobs and growth."

Unlocking potential in the automotive sector

The memorandum seeks to unlock economic potential, promote development of the automotive sector and promote investor-friendly regulatory frameworks that encourage sustainable car manufacturing. The aim is to promote infrastructure development, job creation and skills development in Ghana.

Kyerematen praised Nissan's commitment to Ghana, saying, "We welcome this MOU and commit ourselves in turn to working with Nissan to create the necessary environment for the level of investment that will make Ghana's automotive sector a reality."

On his part, the president of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, said, "We welcome Nissan, one of the great automobile manufacturing companies in the world, to our country. We assure them of the full co-operation of the Government and people of Ghana to make their investment a success for both them and us."

Industrywide vehicle sales in Ghana have been growing steadily at an annual rate of about 10% and now stand at about 9,150 vehicles a year.

Working closely with the government of Ghana and with other members of the African Association of Automotive Manufacturers, Nissan will provide its global expertise to establish a sustainable auto manufacturing industry in the country.

The agreement builds on Nissan's investment in Nigeria where, in 2013, the company became the first major automaker to assemble cars.

"Establishing a long-term automotive industrial development policy will give investors further confidence in Ghana," Whitfield said. "Properly administered automotive development policies can bring about structural economic change in a short time. We've seen this happening with our plants in South Africa and Nigeria."

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