

First Ford Rangers assembled in Nigeria

Ford Motor Company assembled the first Ford Ranger in Nigeria at an existing facility, Ford's Nigerian partners, Coscharis.



Jeff Nemeth, president and CEO of the Ford Sub-Saharan Africa region alongside Dr Cosmos Maduka, president and CEO of the Coscharis Group.

"The facility will accommodate one shift and will produce an initial ten units per day for the Nigerian market, creating approximately 180 direct and indirect jobs. Over time, this will gradually expand," said Jeff Nemeth, president and CEO Ford Motor Company of the sub-Saharan Africa region.

"The main driver behind Ford in Africa is affordability. Africa is one of the youngest markets in the world and presents a huge opportunity in terms of consumption. The buying power of the African consumer is on the rise as the continent's middle class increases exponentially. Despite infrastructure challenges, Africa has demonstrated impressive returns on foreign direct investment."

Ford's semi-knockdown operation in Nigeria was established in partnership with the local Ford dealer group, Coscharis Motors Limited, and is based in Ikeja, approximately 750km south-west of Nigeria's capital city Abuja.

Important milestone

"We have worked hard and moved quickly to turn this dream into a reality. This is an important milestone when the cogs in the wheel really start to turn, not only for Ford in Nigeria, but in general for the Nigerian industry, which is receiving a much needed boost towards industrialisation and the development of the automotive industry," said Dr Cosmas Maduka, president of Coscharis Motors.

The Ford Ranger trucks will be assembled at a semi-knockdown level, using body parts and components imported from Ford's Silverton assembly plant in South Africa.

"New assembly operations, even on a small scale, have positive knock-on effects in the local economy and workforce. In line with the operating procedures for Ford plants around the world, Ford will send experienced employees to Nigeria to assist with implementing the Global Ford Production System, which focuses on the highest standards for safety, quality and delivery," explains Nemeth.

Nigeria is a significant market in Ford's sub-Saharan Africa region and accounts for a solid percent of the regional sales - the reason why Ford is committed to increasing market share in Nigeria, and other key African markets in the future.

Growth strategy

A unified growth strategy for the continent, with the formation of the new Middle East and Africa business unit in 2014, has also enabled Ford to consolidate its efforts in Africa.

"Ford has taken steps to support its dealers in Africa, including after sales support and ensuring parts availability," Nemeth says. "In addition, we are looking at training and skills transfer opportunities to enhance the continent's skills base. In Nigeria, this includes a training programme co-ordinated by Coscharis Motors and the Lagos state government, including hands-on modules for technicians."

The models that will initially be built in Nigeria are the 2.5 petrol 4x4 double cab base and the 3.2 TDCi XLT 4X4.

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