**Media Release**

**25 May 2015**

BMW South Africa and Nissan South Africa join forces to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

* BMW SA and Nissan SA sign Memorandum of Understanding
* Partnership will share knowledge and co-develop electric vehicle charging grid
* Charging points to support Electric Vehicles (EV) and Plug-in Electrical Vehicles (PHEV)

**Rosslyn.** Two of South Africa’s most innovative vehicle manufacturers have joined forces to advance electric vehicle (EV) and plug-in hybrid vehicle (PHEV) adoption.

BMW Group South Africa (BMW SA) and Nissan South Africa (NSA) today signed a memorandum of agreement that will see them jointly plan and build a national grid of EV and PHEV vehicle charging stations for use by both Nissan and BMW vehicles.

“Our introduction of the 100% electric Nissan LEAF in 2013 was part of Nissan’s global drive to advance sustainable mobility and to grow the market for zero-emission vehicles. With this in mind we believe our partnership with BMW SA is a sound investment to create a future-proof automobile industry,” says Mr Mike Whitfield, Managing Director of Nissan South Africa.

Mr Tim Abbott, Managing Director of BMW South Africa, says industry wide cooperation is the key to the future success of electric vehicles. “We have successfully launched the BMW i3 and i8. A key imperative of our strategy is to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is rolled out to help increase consumer confidence in the viability of electric vehicles. We therefore believe that in order for the introduction and expansion of electric vehicles as well as plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to be successful in this market, we need to work together. Our partnership with Nissan is the first step towards that.”

The agreement will see BMW SA and NSA roll outdirect current (DC) fast-charging stations that are equipped with both the Combined Charging System 2 (CCS2) used by BMW’s electric and plug-in hybrid models and the Charge de Move system (CHAdeMO) plug standards used by Nissan’s 100% electric LEAF.

The national grid of charging stations will also make use of smaller alternating current (AC) type vehicle chargers in certain regions. It terms of the newly signed agreement these chargers will be equipped with Type 2 sockets that allow the connection of all EVs and PHEVs.

Planning and building a national electric vehicle charging infrastructure are major feats, and the grid will be managed by a joint task team comprising executives from both manufacturers.

“By sharing expertise, ideas and challenges BMW and Nissan will accelerate the growth and consumer acceptance of the EV and PHEV market to the benefit of the entire automotive industry. These organisations have shown the same insight in establishing a vehicle charging grid as they did in creating their futuristic electric vehicles,” says Mike Schüssler, chief economist of Economist.co.za and an automotive market specialist.

BMW SA introduced its EV and PHEV models, the BMW i3 and the BMW i8 in March this year. Both models have received global recognition for their innovative technology and low carbon emissions. In 2014 the BMW i3 was named the Green Car of the Year by the Green Car Journal, and the BMW i8 in turn was named the 2015 World Green Car of the Year.

Nissan started the zero emissions movement in 2010 when it introduced the LEAF as the world’s first mass-produced EV. Its innovative design, modern battery technology and role in creating a market for 100% electric vehicles were recognised when it was named World Car of the Year in 2011. The LEAF was introduced in South Africa in 2013 and to date over 150 000 units of the pure-electric LEAF has been sold worldwide.

The agreement between BMW SA and NSA is effective immediately and will be in effect until 2017.

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**The BMW Group**

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world’s leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2014, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.118 million cars and 123,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2013 was € 7.91 billion on revenues amounting to approximately € 76.06 billion. As of 31 December 2013, the BMW Group had a workforce of 110,351 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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