

President Kagame today inaugurated the new Volkswagen assembly plant in Rwanda, the first Integrated Mobility Solution in Africa, situated in the Special Economic Zone. The facility will incorporate sales and service retail outlet, vehicle assembly, training center and a mobility company that will undertake the first ever car sharing service in Rwanda.

President Kagame recalled that the Volkswagen car brand was among the first cars to be used in Rwanda, and cited the event as history repeating itself, for Volkswagen to start assembling cars in Rwanda.

“Some found it hard to believe that German cars could really be built in Rwanda. Yet today, the first vehicles are rolling off the assembly line. This facility undoubtedly represents a new chapter, in Rwanda’s journey of economic transformation. There are also positive implications for Africa more generally. Not only can global brands assemble high-quality products in Africa, they can also find customers here. Africa is not merely positioning itself as a new low-cost hub to manufacture goods for export. African consumers will also be among the biggest contributors to growth in global demand in the years ahead.

President Kagame pointed out that it was more cost efficient for Rwandans and Africans in general to turn their attention to purchasing new products as opposed to used ones, because Africa deserves better.

“Africa does not need to be a dumping ground for second hand cars, or second hand anything. In the long run, you end up paying a higher price anyway. If you can pay a high price for second hand, why not pay a high price for something new? It is a simple choice. Africans, Rwandans, we deserve better. This is one way of showing how we can afford it. For these and other reasons, this promising partnership with Volkswagen is off to a good start. ”

The launch in Rwanda marks Volkswagen brand’s expansion of its engagement in Africa. Thomas Schäfer, CEO of Volkswagen Group South Africa and responsible for the Sub-Saharan region stated that the company’s interest in Rwanda was mostly because they saw in Rwanda a country with great potential, a country that is young, modern and hungry for individual mobility.

“With a package specifically tailored to the region comprising local vehicle production, new vehicle business and innovative mobility services, we intend to harness the opportunities for growth and create new opportunities. Rwanda can

become a blueprint for other African and emerging market countries.”

The project kicks off with community car sharing primarily aimed at organisations in the capital Kigali.