



## Toyota Expands Its Involvement in Global Motorsports

### Announces Return to FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) with Yaris hatchback

**Beirut, Lebanon, February 25, 2015** – Toyota Motor Corporation recently revealed details of its 2015 global motorsports activities and announced an expansion of its racing initiatives with a return to the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) in 2017. Toyota will compete in the WRC for the first time since 1999 through a Yaris hatchback with a 1.6-liter direct-injection turbo (in line with global race engine stipulations). It will be developed and tested by Toyota Motorsport GmbH (TMG). Between 1973 and 1999 (with a temporary suspension between 1996 and 1997), Toyota won 43 WRC rallies and won the championship three times.

Toyota Racing will also continue to race in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). Last year, when it became possible to fully utilize the maximum potential of the hybrid system, the "TS040 Hybrid" won five out of eight races, winning the manufacturers' and drivers' world titles. In 2015 which is the fourth year of participation, Toyota Racing will enhance its full-hybrid powertrain—the Toyota Hybrid System-Racing (THS-R)—aiming to win the title again and, for the first time, win the legendary Le Mans 24 Hours (held June 13–14). The THS-R powertrain, developed at Toyota's Higashi-Fuji Technical Center in Japan, incorporates last year's V8 engine including front and rear motors/generators to better power all wheels. Toyota plans to utilize the advanced hybrid technologies obtained from these activities in its mass-production hybrid vehicles.

According to **Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, TOYOTA Motor Corporation**, "Toyota views motorsports as an ideal medium for conveying the anticipation and excitement that driving can produce, and will strive to expand the reach of motorsports to attract a wide range of car enthusiasts. Toyota hopes to use these activities to hone its people, automobiles and technologies, and use the experience and expertise gained to develop ever-better cars. Toyota has a rich motorsports history spanning 57 years during which we have performed at the highest level of world motorsport, and succeeded in a wide variety of disciplines. I would also like to acknowledge the huge support from our fans for our motorsports activities and we deeply appreciate their loyalty and encouragement. We look forward to building on this heritage by competing successfully once again in the WRC championships."

In the United States, Toyota will continue to compete in all three categories of the NASCAR racing series. Toyota will make its ninth consecutive-year appearance in the Sprint Cup Series, the pinnacle of NASCAR racing, with the aim of taking the Drivers' Championship title for the first time.

At the Dakar Rally held in South America in January this year, Toyota Auto Body Co., Ltd.'s Toyota Land Cruiser 200 placed first and second in the production vehicle division for the second consecutive year.

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For the Japanese Super Formula championship, Toyota has developed a two-liter four-cylinder R14A direct-injection gasoline turbo engine. The engine meets new regulations, and propelled both the driver and team to titles. This year, Toyota Racing will further enhance engine function with the aim of earning more titles, while Toyota Racing will also enter a Toyota "Prius" in the Super GT GT300-class.

Since 2012, GAZOO Racing has sponsored Tom's Spirit, a team competing with the "86", and will compete again this year with the GAZOO Racing Spirit 86 in the Super Taikyu series. Moreover, Toyota will dispatch engineers and mechanics to learn vehicle development skills and be trained as automotive seasoning personnel.

GAZOO Racing will also compete with a Vitz Turbo in the All-Japan Rally Championship, which is the pinnacle of Japanese rallying. Participation will take a comprehensive form, with staff acting as mechanics and involvement ranging from vehicle development to racing aimed at handing down expertise for educational and vehicle development purposes. GAZOO Racing aims to commence participation around mid-2015.

## **YouTube Links**

Toyota Motor Corporation President Akio Toyoda test drives the Yaris WRC, recently announced as the vehicle Toyota will be fielding when it returns to the FIA World Rally Championship in 2017 after an 18-year absence.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QY8A4m0g5aw>

Toyota returns to the FIA World Rally Championship after nearly 20 years. Hear from the people of Toyota Motorsport GmbH about Toyota's WRC legacy, as well as the passion and determination behind the return.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3ZW1m4z-FA>

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