## Mexico Backs Japan Joining Pacific Free Trade Deal

LOS CABOS, Mexico (Nikkei)--Mexico strongly supports Japanese participation in a free trade agreement spanning the Pacific Ocean, its economy secretary said Monday.

In an interview with The Nikkei, Bruno Ferrari urged Japan to make an official bid as soon as possible to enter the talks for the agreement, known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and accelerate preliminary consultations with the U.S. and other countries.

Ferrari's comments came after Mexico was invited earlier Monday by the U.S. and eight other countries negotiating the TPP to join the talks. On the sidelines of the Group of 20 summit here, U.S. President Barack Obama met his Mexican counterpart, Felipe Calderon, and told him that the nine countries would welcome the participation of Mexico.

Explaining the U.S. support for Mexican participation, Ferrari said his country has close economic ties with its northern neighbor and that each is familiar with the other's domestic situation through trade and other exchanges.

Japan and Canada, which have both shown interest in the TPP, are important trade partners of Mexico, and their inclusion would add considerable heft to the free trade initiative, Ferrari said.

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