

# U.S. Trade Representative Kirk Welcomes Mexico as a New Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiating Partner

*Washington, DC* – President Obama announced this morning that the United States and the eight other countries negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement have extended an invitation to Mexico to join the TPP negotiations, pending successful conclusion of their domestic procedures. In addition to the United States, the current TPP countries are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.

**“We are delighted to invite Mexico, our neighbor and second largest export market, to join the TPP negotiations,”** said Ambassador Kirk. **“Mexico’s interest in the TPP reflects its recognition that the TPP presents the most promising pathway to boosting trade across the Asia Pacific and to encouraging regional trade integration. We look forward to continuing consultations with the Congress and domestic stakeholders as we move forward.”**

After Mexico expressed its interest in joining the TPP last November, the United States briefed Mexico about the status of the TPP negotiations and the high standards and objectives that the TPP countries are seeking in the agreement. The United States also discussed with Mexico its ability to negotiate on issues that are a priority for the United States in the TPP. Mexico has assured the United States that it is prepared to conclude a high-standard agreement that will include issues that were not covered in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The Administration will shortly notify Congress of its intent to include Mexico in the TPP negotiations. The notification will trigger a 90-day consultation period with Congress on U.S. negotiating objectives with respect to Mexico. USTR also will publish a notice in the Federal Register seeking public comments.

The TPP is a key element of the Obama Administration’s efforts to support the creation and retention of high-quality jobs for Americans by increasing exports to the vibrant economies of the Asia-Pacific region. The United States and its TPP partners are determined to expeditiously complete a comprehensive, next-generation agreement.

The TPP countries have completed 12 rounds of negotiations and the nine countries have made solid progress. The next round of negotiations is scheduled to take place July 2 – 10 in San Diego, California.