

**Xinhua. 2015. "China accounts for nearly 20 pct of Chilean exports: business leader". Xinhua,
December 20**

SANTIAGO, Dec. 18 (Xinhua) -- China accounts for nearly 20 percent of Chile's foreign trade, maintaining its position as the country's leading trade partner, said a top Chilean business leader.

Juan Esteban Musalem, president of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, lauded the free-trade agreement (FTA) between Chile and China in a recent interview with the daily El Mercurio.

Musalem said the FTA, which went into effect on Oct. 1, 2006, helped boost bilateral trade exchange to 32.93 billion U.S. dollars in 2014, and the number of Chilean exporters from 400 in 2006 to more than 900 in 2015.

The FTA was further bolstered by supplementary agreements on services and investments.

"A clear reflection of the quality and depth of the bilateral ties between Chile and China is the fluid continuity of official visits by the top authorities of both countries," said Musalem.

For example, he said, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visited Santiago in May, leading to the signing of a series of accords.

A currency swap deal worth 22 billion yuan (3.5 billion U.S. dollars) was signed during the visit between the central banks of China and Chile with an aim to deepen economic ties by boosting trade and investment.

"Chile hopes to continue to play a major role in supporting and complementing (China's economy) as it has in the past 45 years" since diplomatic relations between the two were established, Musalem added. End item