

**Xinhua. 2010. "Interview: Chilean FM calls for greater Chinese investment".
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By Alexander Manda

SANTIAGO, Mar. 12 (Xinhua) -- Chile is happy with its increasing trade with China and hopes to see growing Chinese investment in Chile, said Foreign Minister Alfredo Moreno Charme on Friday.

"China is enormously important. There is growing trade and China is now Chile's largest trade partner," Moreno said in an interview with Xinhua.

"We are very interested in attracting Chinese investment to Chile," he added.

China is now the biggest buyer of Chilean copper, which represents around one-sixth of Chile's gross domestic product and about half the nation's exports by value, according to data released by Chilean central bank.

Chile has seen a steady rise in its exports of industrial goods to China, and it is also the first nation in South America to sign a free trade agreement with the Asian country, said the Ministry of Economy, Development and Reconstruction.

On the overall foreign policy of the new government led by Sebastian Pinera, who was inaugurated as Chile's president on Thursday, Moreno said Chile would continue promoting relations with the outside world, especially with its neighbors in Latin America.

"For a very long time, Chile has been pursuing the principles of democracy, human rights and free trade. These are principles that are not going to change," he said.

Boosting links with close neighbors like Bolivia and Argentina and a solid commitment to the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) are part of this policy, Moreno added.

Bolivia and Chile have not had formal diplomatic relations since the 1980s, due to a long-standing dispute over a Bolivian claim to sea access lost in a 19th century war. The two countries have made public commitments to improving their ties.

He said Chile was about to recognize the Honduran government, describing the country's October elections as "free and fair." But he said what happened in Honduras during the coup went against Chile's principles.

"But those that had been part of the coup have been changed. We believe the government is trying to follow the path back to democracy. We will be looking carefully at how it does so," Moreno added.

An important part of Honduras' efforts to normalize its ties with Chile is to let Manuel Zelaya, the president exiled in the coup last June, return home, Moreno said.

Peru, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica and the United States have recognized the government that won the October election, but many Latin American countries still refuse to do so, viewing it as a product of an illegitimate coup. Enditem