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BEIJING - China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) announced that the country would deepen high-tech trade exchanges with developed nations and called for the easing of restrictions in exporting high-tech products and advanced equipment to China over the next five years.

China would gradually raise the percentages of high-tech products, key components and equipment in the country's imports portfolio during the 12th Five-Year-Plan Period (2011-2015), according to a statement posted on the ministry's website Thursday.

During the period, China would meet the import demand from strategically important emerging industries at home, such as information technology, energy savings, environmental protection, new energies, and high-end equipment manufacturing.

The country would also set up mechanisms for bilateral high-tech trade cooperation with 20 countries including the United States, Japan, Finland and Israel. China also aims to jointly promote trade with other countries.

The importation of such high-tech products are expected to effectively bring down the pace of China's trade surplus growth with its trade partners, the statement said.

China's trade surplus shrank year on year by more than half to \$6.45 billion in January this year. Meanwhile, in February the country recorded a trade deficit of \$7.3 billion as the Lunar New Year holiday season hindered export growth.