Mexico's May Auto Production Up 2.8% to 228,048 Units

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- --Mexico auto production at record high in May
- --Auto exports to South America remain firm
- --January-May auto output also at a record high

MEXICO CITY--Mexico's production of cars and light trucks in May rose 2.8% versus the same month last year to a record 228,048 units, the Mexican Automobile Industry Association, or AMIA, said Monday.

May auto exports grew 5.7% to 187,042 autos, which was also a record, AMIA said. Exports to the U.S. in May fell 0.5% versus the year-ago month and auto exports to Europe fell 41% versus May 2011, AMIA said.

But Mexico's exports of cars and light trucks to other Latin America countries grew by 32% in May to 31,942 autos, the industry group said.

AMIA President Eduardo Solis said sales to Brazil are expected to fall later this year when Mexico hits its quota for tariff-free auto exports to Brazil.

For the January-May period, Mexico's auto production was 13% higher compared to the same period last year to 1.15 million, and exports were up 14% to 945,530 vehicles, Amia said. Both numbers represented new records for Mexico in the five-month period.

Domestic auto sales in May rose 17% to 80,267 cars and light trucks. And accumulated domestic sales in the January-May period grew by 11% compared to the year-ago period to 383,731 autos, AMIA said.