

Statement by Amb. J. Enkhsaikhan of Mongolia at Asian Contact Group on
“Eurasian Security Community: How Can Mongolia Contribute”

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Vienna, Hofburg

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to thank the Chairman-in-Office for participating personally in this meeting of the Asian Contact Group, for his introductory remarks and for sharing his overview of the world ahead in 2012.

I would also like to congratulate the Lithuanian delegation for its assumption of the Chairmanship of the contact group. With your delegation’s rich experience and dedication, my Chairman, I am sure that we would be able to further the dialogue and cooperation of OSCE with its Asian partners and implement the Vilnius Ministerial Council decision 5/11 regarding co-operation with partners. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Kazakhstan for its very effective stewardship of the group in 2011.

At this meeting I would like to briefly touch upon our general mind-set about cooperation with the OSCE, its partners and share some ideas, unlike the catchy topic of my announced presentation, regarding possible areas of cooperation.

General mind-set

Like other partners for cooperation, Mongolia believes that security can be built best if and when addressed in all its dimensions. Thus comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach to security, reflected in OSCE’s concept of comprehensive security, fully echoes Mongolia’s approach to its own as well as to regional and international security. The 1994 national security concept defined 9 areas of security concern, including security of existence of Mongolia, of the democratic social and state system, of citizen’s rights and freedoms, economic and ecological security. The 2010 amended concept, that reflects the changes in the society and the security environment in the past 16 years, tries to place more accent on good governance and broader civil participation as ways to promote and strengthen national security. This concept places emphasis not only on security of existence, economic and ecological security, but also on internal stability, transnational threats, human security and information security. The concept is based on the notion that democracy at home and multi-pillar, active policy abroad provide greater flexibility for Mongolia to promote balanced relations with its two powerful neighbors and pursue the “third neighbor” policy.

The “third neighbor” policy, reflected in the foreign policy concept, prompted Mongolia to become OSCE partner for cooperation, and, lately, to apply for a participating state status. Hence Mongolia’s policy of “returning to Europe”, this time with open heart and extended hand of friendship and co-operation, is based on the advantages it sees in promoting its multi-pillar and balanced foreign policy as well as in contributing to and participating in advancing from the outset the common Eurasian concept of security.

Mongolia's choice of OSCE as a 'third neighbor' is a conscientious one, based on its agreement with the latter's noble goals, principles and commitments, where applicable, as well as on the Organization's openness to adapt to new security realities and challenges. We agree with the spirit of the 1990 Paris Charter to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government. Likewise, as realists, we accept OSCE as a forum for open discussion and, where possible, for decision-making in the three areas of security. Mongolia is interested in being both a benefiter of and a contributor to common Eurasian security

In a wider context, we are already working with the European Union and some of its members to introduce, where possible, European standards in healthcare, education, human rights, environmental protection, public administration, support of civil society and some other areas. It has initiated with the EU a partnership and cooperation agreement that would be signed, hopefully, soon.

Some areas of possible cooperation

The question arises as to how Mongolia can contribute to the emerging Eurasian security community. At this early stage the question is more of a rhetorical nature. Though sovereign equality is the basis of OSCE's activities, in reality states can play different roles depending on their interest, available resources and comparative advantage. If there is a will there is always a way.

I consider today's meeting to be more for reflections rather than decision taking. Therefore I would like to briefly touch upon some areas where, in my view, Mongolia could work productively with the OSCE in the near future and to elicit comments and ideas.

One: Political and military dimension. Active participation in advancing OSCE's agenda in confidence-building and disarmament. Mongolia's policy of institutionalizing its nuclear-weapon-free status and promoting good-neighborly and balanced relationship with Russia and China are, as UN General Assembly has underlined on a number of occasions, important factors in strengthening peace, security and stability in the region. We would be prepared to work with the OSCE and the participating states on these or related issues.

Mongolia can also contribute to updating the 1994 OSCE principles governing non-proliferation or to exploring ways of ensuring fuller implementation of UNSC resolution 1540. It can participate in the discussion of the concept of a common Eurasian security space and a possible security structure. In the future it would be able to contribute to annual exchanges on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. Mongolia's experience in peacekeeping and observer missions can also come in handy.

Two: Economic and ecological dimension. Sharing its experience of undertaking simultaneous democratic and economic reforms, and demonstrating that these two reforms do not necessarily exclude or hinder each other. As a land-locked developing country, it would be prepared to share its experience in addressing the challenges connected with the lack of access to the high seas and thus to world markets. The newly established international think tank in Ulaanbaatar on issues of

this group of countries could serve as a basis for devising policies in support of such countries. Mongolia could participate and contribute to the preparation of an OSCE-UNECE Handbook on Best Practices at Border Crossings which would contribute to awareness-raising and capacity-building both for participating states and partners for cooperation. On a broader scale and in a long-term perspective, Mongolia has already offered to provide the shortest land-bridge that would link Europe and East Asia.

Three: Humanitarian dimension. Mongolia attaches great importance to this dimension of security. It would be prepared to share its experience and lessons learned of not only establishing but also consolidating democratic institutions, including supporting the civil society and freedom of the press. Mongolia's Constitution, by design, places the chapter on human rights and freedoms rights immediately after the first chapter on sovereignty of Mongolia and before the chapter on the state system (i.e. parliament, head of state and government). Since 1990 Mongolia has been holding regular parliamentary, presidential and local elections that have been found to be in general fair and free. It can share its experience of holding fair and free elections and even participate in election monitoring.

To reflect better the will of the people, some changes have been made in the election law and the parliamentary elections, to be held in June of this year, will be the first test of the vitality of those amendments.

Internationally, Mongolia is a party to all the major international human rights conventions and has regularly been submitting its implementation reports to the relevant human right bodies. Last week the Mongolian parliament ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) thus taking the final step in abolishing the death penalty. It will be followed by amendments of the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code. Thus out of 41 Asia-Pacific countries, Mongolia will become 18th to have abolished the death penalty.

In 2003-2006 it chaired the conference on new and restored democracies and elaborated national democratic and governance indicators against which progress in democratic reforms or lack thereof are measured by independent experts. They submit their conclusions and recommendations to the Government. The third such report has been submitted last year. We would be more than happy to share our experience in this area.

In 2011-2013 Mongolia is chairing the Community of Democracies, which is both an honor and a heavy responsibility for my country. Our goal is to focus on promotion of democracy education, strengthening regional cooperation, providing greater support to civil society and promoting sharing of experience. Perhaps we could cooperate with OSCE and its relevant institutions in this area.

Within the context of cooperation with fellow Asian partners, Mongolia participates in the annual Asian partner – OSCE conferences. It is looking forward to the conference to be held in February in Thailand. At present it is working with the OSCE Secretariat to organize in Mongolia a training course for mid-level Afghan diplomats, hopefully this coming spring.

My delegation would be grateful to get some feed-back on the ideas expressed, either at this meeting or at some later stage.

Thank you for your attention.