

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA,
PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA,
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 66TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 21 September 2011

Mr. President Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,

Mr. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My delegation offers you its warm congratulations on your unanimous election as President of the current session of the General Assembly and pledges its unconditional support and cooperation in the discharge of your onerous responsibilities.

I wish to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. Secretary-General, on your well deserved re-election and express my deep appreciation of your accomplishment in enhancing the role of the world Organization in promoting peace, security and development.

Your unanimous re-election to this high post is a testimony to your outstanding leadership of the United Nations over the past five years and is a vote of strong confidence in your future endeavors.

On behalf of the people of Mongolia, I warmly welcome South Sudan as the 193rd member of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Today the international community finds itself in times of uncertainty. The recovery from the economic and financial crisis has been uneven and sluggish. Its social repercussions have intensified with stagnant unemployment and poverty in many countries. Incidences of mega-disasters occur all too often. Unprecedented challenges stemming from climate change continue and remain to be dealt with.

The world's population will reach 7 billion next month. But it is a cause of great concern that over a billion still suffer from hunger. The global economic and financial crisis grossly affected our drive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. A number of international negotiations and mediation efforts on conflict resolution are yet to produce results.

In today's globalized world, these challenges require collective solutions. To find effective solutions, the existing governance structure ought to be improved and reformed. Involvement of international organizations is critical to this process.

The thematic discussions on enhancing the role of the UN in global economic governance and dialogues with the G-20 Chair held during the 65th session of the General Assembly were the first important step. What we need to do now is to enhance the role and status of the UN, including the ECOSOC in global economic decision-making. It has also become imperative to ensure full-and-on-time delivery on the Millennium Development Goals and formulate the post-2015 development agenda.

This agenda should ensure meaningful integration of developing countries into the world economy taking into account the vulnerabilities of landlocked, least developed countries and those susceptible to desertification and climate change. The Doha development round of multilateral trade negotiations, stalled for the past decade, has yet to produce positive results toward this end.

Every 6th member of the UN is a landlocked developing country (LLDCs). Remoteness from world markets and high transport costs are a major impediment to the development of landlocked developing countries. Along with other fellow members of the group Mongolia endeavors to advance our common interests at the United Nations and World Trade Organization. The creation of the International Think-Tank of landlocked developing countries set up in Ulaanbaatar will undoubtedly contribute to intensified cooperation in the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action and our relevant MDGs. Hence, I call on all the relevant parties to sign and ratify the multilateral agreement establishing this institution that is vitally important to LLDCs.

Last year we reviewed progress of the MDGs implementation and agreed on strengthening this partnership. Yet, as disclosed by the recent MDG Gap Task Force report, significant gaps remain in delivering on the commitments in the areas of aid, trade, debt relief, and access to new technologies.

As for Mongolia, 66 percent of MDGs are achievable by 2015. Yet goals on poverty, environmental degradation and gender inequality are seriously off track, which calls for stepped-up government action as well as enhanced bilateral and multilateral partnership to meet these challenges.

Mongolia has been implementing targeted policy and activities aimed at poverty reduction. Alcoholism is one of the serious social ills associated with poverty. As President, I initiated a nation-wide movement to stop alcohol abuse, curb its consumption and encourage abstinence, which has enjoyed wide public support. With a view to encouraging such movements in other countries it might be useful to look into the possibility of developing an international convention aimed at reducing alcohol consumption.

Mr. President,

Climate change, drought, land degradation, desertification (DLDD) have emerged as one of the gravest challenges facing humankind. Yesterday's High-level meeting on desertification was an important step in finding collective solutions to these challenges. It is a matter of great concern that 2 billion people around the globe and about 50 per cent of agricultural land are affected by desertification, land degradation and drought. Therefore, it is necessary to set up an intergovernmental panel to conduct a comprehensive study on DLDD's effects and identify action-oriented recommendations for the affected countries.

We look forward to the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Durban later this year to agree on a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the development of the "Green Economy". I believe that global transition to a green economy is critically important to mitigate climate change, halt desertification, land degradation, ecosystem destruction and loss of biodiversity. This in turn will reduce poverty.

Financial assistance and expertise are vital to developing countries, including my own country, in their efforts to develop a

green economy through introduction of green technologies and building national capacity in energy production, construction and agriculture. I trust that the "Rio+20" conference will produce results that will lead us farther down this road.

As a country highly susceptible to the impact of climate change, Mongolia is supportive of global efforts to combat negative effects of climate change. With this in view, Mongolia will host the ASEM Environment Ministers' Conference on Sustainable Management of Water and Forest in 2012.

Mr. President,

The passing year has witnessed dramatic transformations. The Arab Spring has brought freedom to millions of people. But the Arab Spring is far from over. The revolution for freedom is not the hardest social change to make. Building and developing a free, open, fair civic society is even more difficult. This is what our ancestors taught us, and these lessons have been reinforced during the 20 years of undergoing our own democratic transformation. Let me cite here the visionary teaching of the founder of the Great Mongolian State - Chinggis Khaan, who was rightly chosen as the Man of the Millennium. Chinggis Khaan

once said that "conquering the world on horseback is easy; it is dismounting and governing that is much harder". The revolution for freedom is fought and won by the combined efforts of thousands of people. However, in one form or another, it is each and every person who pays the price for freedom. It is my firm belief that notwithstanding any challenge it faces, freedom is the future of all humankind.

Mr. President,

From July this year, Mongolia has assumed the honorable and responsible duties of the President of the Community of Democracies aimed at promoting and strengthening democratic norms and values around the world. During its Presidency over the next two years, Mongolia will give priority to the promotion of democracy education and good governance, elimination of corruption, building partnerships with civil society and the consolidation of regional cooperation.

Over the past twenty years of our own democratic changes Mongolia has fundamentally transformed its former political, social and economic systems and laid down all the necessary pillars for new democratic governance that promotes and protects a market

economy, free elections, freedom of the press, and civil society. We rightly feel proud with these accomplishments. However, we are fully aware of the fact that there are many things that are far from perfect, and that a lot more needs to be done to nurture democratic values within each and every citizen. Foremost, we need to consolidate accountable and transparent governance which is free from corruption, and which is secured by an independent judiciary. Such governance ought to be more responsive to the needs of ordinary citizen, be in their service, abide by rule of law and impartiality, and be provided with proper checks and balances. In short, we strive to develop a system of governance that values its people and treats them with dignity and respect.

To address these challenges and the threats to democracy and open society, we are implementing Mongolia-specific MDG-9 on democratic governance, human rights and zero tolerance to corruption. Within this goal, we endeavor to make our governance open and transparent. That is why, we fully support “the Open Government Partnership” Initiative. Furthermore, I wish to call on all Member States endeavoring to improve their governance at the national level to join the movement for 'zero tolerance of corruption.'

Mr. President,

The Arab Change will be followed by the Arab Challenge. Although a democratic process is a homegrown phenomenon, it should be supported by international cooperation. Here, I have a message to industrialized, democratic countries: do not withdraw from the battle. On the other hand, democratization does not mean westernization. Democracy ought to develop naturally in line with the historical, cultural and development specifics of a given country. Nonetheless, respect for freedom, justice and human rights and strict abidance by the rule of law, are common to all successful and responsible democracies. Bad governance is the worst problem of all. Therefore, any aspiration to improve and streamline such a governance ought to be strongly supported at all times.

Libya has entered a new era as a result of the relentless courage and patience of the Libyan rebels who have persevered for many months in their struggle for freedom, human rights and democracy. Colonel Gaddafi called his fellow countrymen "rats" and to brutally hunt them down and exterminate. Now, he himself is being hunted as a rat from hole to hole, from trench to trench.

And this is the fate which awaits anyone who suppresses the people's love for freedom and desire to live in dignity.

Respectful of the aspirations of the Libyan people, Mongolia has recognized the National Transitional Council and expresses its full support for Libya's transition towards democracy, justice and human rights.

The international community should not shy away from condemning the regime of Syria's Bashar al-Asad, who has inhumanly and brutally chosen bloodshed to crack down on freedom and justice craving peaceful protesters by using combat vehicles, snipers and military force. Let us unanimously demand that he ends his atrocities. We must make the necessary decision to that effect without delay and help the courageous people of Syria who are craving freedom and justice, and are losing dozens of their brave sons and daughters every day. The love for freedom is the greatest force in this world. No tyranny, no cruelest regime can resist it forever. I would like to say these words to the authorities of Yemen and dictators seeking to suppress their citizens' fight for freedom.

Mr. President,

It has been a timely decision to make 'the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means' as the main theme of this general debate. The main purpose of the UN is to settle disputes by peaceful means. We commend skilful diplomacy by the Secretary-General and his envoys in resolving disputes and conflicts in various corners of the world. Member States need to work together to strengthen the UN's capacity towards this end.

Northeast Asia is a region where mediation activities can be vigorously pursued. The region still lacks a formal mechanism for building confidence and strengthening regional cooperation. Therefore, we believe that Mongolia's proposal to set up a permanent mechanism to promote peace and stability in Northeast Asia remains valid. To further our proposal we are ready to consult with relevant countries.

Mr. President,

On September 11 ten years ago, terrorists tore down the Twin Towers, but they failed to tear down their spirit – freedom and they will never succeed in doing that. Mongolia stands tall

with the international community in its fight against terrorism as a party to all the UN conventions to combat terrorism.

We need to re-invigorate our resolve for a world free of nuclear weapons and exploit nuclear power solely for peaceful purposes. The urgency and importance of strengthening safety and security of nuclear reactors was reminded by the tragic accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant last March. We commend the Secretary-General's initiative to organize tomorrow a high level meeting to strengthen international measures on nuclear safety and security around the world. The 2010 Non-proliferation treaty review conference gave a renewed impetus for expanding nuclear weapon free zones around the world. The proposed nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East will contribute to the promotion of world peace.

Mongolia continues to work on further strengthening its internationally recognized nuclear weapon-free status. To this end, we are holding consultations with nuclear powers. From this highly esteemed rostrum of the General Assembly I would like to underscore that there should be no doubt that Mongolia would in no way yield to dumping nuclear wastes on its territory. It should

go without saying that in today's world any attempt to enforce such decisions will undoubtedly fail.

Mr. President,

It is of historic importance to us that the observance of the 50th Anniversary of Mongolia's joining the world Organization coincides with this session of the General Assembly. On October 27 of 1961, Mongolia became a full-fledged member of the United Nations. It has opened new frontiers of actively engaging with the international community for the global good. Furthermore, this year Mongolia is marking the 2220th anniversary of its statehood, centenaries of regaining its independence and establishment of modern diplomatic service as well as the 90th anniversary of the people's revolution.

Over the past five decades the cooperation between Mongolia and the UN has expanded both in scope and substance. Today Mongolia is a party to more than 240 multilateral conventions and enjoys membership in over 110 international organizations. United Nations' assistance and cooperation has been instrumental in developing human resources and capacity building, developing education, health and information

technology, reducing poverty and developing an adequate response to natural disasters.

For its part, Mongolia has also been endeavoring to contribute, where it could, to the common efforts of the international community. My delegation is pleased to recall that at the initiative of Mongolia the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Peoples to Peace, the Principles and Guidelines for International Negotiations, resolutions to observe annually a disarmament week, the United Nations Literacy Decade and relevant resolutions on cooperatives, rural women and land-locked developing countries. Mongolian troops have courageously served as UN Blue Helmets in many hotspots around the world, including in the DRC, Western Sahara, South Sudan, Eritrea, Georgia, Sierra Leone, Chad and Darfur.

All in all, over the past five decades Mongolia has been faithful to its obligations under the Charter and strived to be an active Member State. We stand strongly committed to further contributing to the multi-faceted activities of the UN. I am pleased to announce our decision to present our candidature for a non-permanent seat of the Security Council for the term 2023-2024 at

the elections to be held at the 77th session of the General Assembly, and humbly seek your valuable support.

Mr. President,

The contribution and leadership of the UN in maintaining international peace, security and promoting sustainable development is ever increasing. In this respect, I call on the General Assembly to come up with relevant solutions and decisions at this session aimed at supporting the aspirations of countries and peoples for better livelihood.

The day-to-day activities of the United Nations are of paramount importance to the cause of creating safe, free and just life of humankind where everyone enjoys integrity and dignity. We are confident that the UN will succeed in its continued reform efforts to this end.

Thank you for your attention.