



MONGOLIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

6 East 77th Street, New York, N.Y. 10075
Tel: (212) 861-9460 Fax: (212) 861-9464
e-mail: mongolia@un.int

Check against delivery

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA,
PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA,
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

26 September 2013
New York

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA,
PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA,
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, September 26, 2013)**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to first congratulate Mr. John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda on assuming the Presidency of this session of the General Assembly. Mongolia pledges its full support. We gather here at the United Nations to collectively assess the state of the world, share our thoughts and our vision, and agree on common actions.

Mr. President, I begin today by reviewing where we are.

Over 70 million people worldwide join the middle class annually. The Millennium Development Goals have improved the lives of billions of people. The world has reached poverty reduction targets - in some places, even ahead of the proscribed deadline.

Rather than seeing 2015 as the end, we should view it as a beginning of new era. In this era, we should build on our successes, attend to gaps and meet emerging challenges. Sadly, we face many challenges.

Today, over 200 million people are jobless, over fifty million children are not in school; and one out of 8 of our fellow citizens still go hungry. Yet over \$900 billion dollars are earmarked for military expenditures every year. Only a fraction of that is spent on healthcare and education. Such a state of affairs should not be tolerated.

Climate-wise, more than a two degree temperature increase would be disastrous, if not catastrophic. Our environment is changing rapidly. On the production side, global consumption far exceeds our fragile planet's capacity. Resources are being exhausted. Mankind is gravely endangered. We are running out of time.

The world has too many hungry people, too much violence, and too little commitment to human rights. We need to change that.

Mr. President, I want to share with you Mongolia's views and experience.

Mongolia is a great nation with a rich history. It is an old nation...with a young heart. We are fortunate to have abundant natural resources which offer great growth prospects and a unique opportunity for economic development and social progress. With double digit percentage growth, we are one of the world's fastest developing economies.

Mongolia has achieved many development goals in areas such as universal primary education, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. However, our Fifth National Report on MDG progress suggests that more need to be done. To reach our development goals, the government is working closely with all national stakeholders, including political parties, the private sector, research institutions, civil society and media.

Likewise, we invite investors to work together for our common interests. Just a few days ago, we hosted the World Economic Forum "Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Mongolia". This event gathered representatives of multiple stakeholders to explore future economic pathways for my country's development.

Mongolians care deeply for the environment. We take seriously our shared responsibility to confront the threat from climate change. That's why we are promoting a green development policy. We have also created and preserved national parks to curb desertification. At the same time, these scenic parks form the backbone of new eco-tourism. They will generate both conservation income and green jobs.

My country is creating an "Asian Super Network for Green Development". It will produce renewable energy and provide it to Asian consumers. Mongolia's first wind farm, which is privately owned, is now in operation. Wind energy has the potential to produce electricity well beyond the country's needs.

We face many other environmental challenges such as land degradation, deforestation, natural disasters and pollution. These issues need to be resolved urgently and collectively. Environmental education and wider public participation are vital to solve these challenges. We hosted the UN World Environment Day this year. We are at the center of the green economy. The Mongolian people, particularly our youth, are committed to build a better environmental future.

Mr. President,

Last year, I spoke of the importance of Mongolia's battle to root out corruption at all levels. We are combating corruption - the scourge of democracy- with a "zero tolerance" policy at every level of government. As a result, Mongolia moved up 26 places in Transparency International's rankings of member states.

Transparency is the key to fight corruption. Citizens have the right to know how their taxes are spent - at every level of government - from national agencies to the local administration.

Our "Glass Account" system ensures that all funds are accounted for openly and transparently. Citizens deserve access to information and a say in how their communities are developed. The best government is the one that comes from strong civic participation.

Mr. President, Mongolia believes in democratic development.

Over 20 years ago, it was unimaginable that Mongolia would chair the Community of Democracy. This well-known and highly respected global democratic movement is dedicated to promoting freedom and democracy. Hundreds of human rights activists and democratic leaders from many countries gathered in Ulaanbaatar last April. Their Ulaanbaatar Declaration charts a future course for promoting democracy. Our initiative - the Asia Democracy Network - as well as the Ministerial Consultative Meeting have laid a solid foundation for democratic development.

I believe that efforts to foster civic engagement are more effective with democracy education. Implementing General Assembly Resolution 67/18 on Education for Democracy will strengthen democratic institutions and improve human rights for more of our fellow citizens – because knowledge is power.

Mr. President, we all must focus on promoting human rights.

In the past two decades, Mongolia has been learning and advancing democracy at home. With a view to supporting emerging democracies, we initiated and established an International Cooperation Fund and have already started implementing several projects.

We are actively sharing the lessons of parliamentary democracy and conducting a legal reform with Kyrgyzstan. We organized training for diplomats and public servants from Afghanistan. We are discussing the possibility for cooperation with Myanmar and other emerging democracies.

I call on Member States to support our policy of protecting and promoting democratic governance and human rights. I humbly ask for your support of Mongolia's candidacy to the United Nations Human Rights Council at the elections to be held in 2015.

Mr. President, peace and security remain a fundamental human right.

Today, people around the world are distressed by the endless cycles of conflict. Military forces and weapons are being used to settle disputes. Thousands of human beings are losing their lives, millions are displaced and many more are suffering. The grave situation in Syria is the latest example. We express the hope that the US-Russian initiative will bear fruit and lead to a peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict

Mr. President,

Mongolia firmly stands for non-proliferation and complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction. We cannot tolerate the use of chemical weapons and strongly condemn violation of the universally accepted international law.

This morning, I participated in a High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament. As a country with internationally recognized nuclear weapon-free-status, and uniquely situated between two nuclear-weapon states, permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, Mongolia has been working hard on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

As a result of our efforts, the five nuclear-weapon states, permanent members of the Security Council have issued a joint declaration recognizing Mongolia's unique status. They pledged to respect that status and not to contribute to any act that would violate it. Their joint commitment ensures that we will not be used as a pawn in any future nuclear plans or strategies. This is Mongolia's contribution to greater confidence and stability in the region.

Strengthening peace and stability in Northeast Asia is one of Mongolia's national security priorities. We firmly believe that dialogue and open discussions bring confidence. Therefore, we have put forth an initiative, the "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security". We are inviting the other states of the region to jointly address various issues of common interest, including security issues in Northeast Asia.

Mongolian military officers and troops are honored to serve along with fellow UN peacekeepers to maintain international peace and security. We are very proud of our peacekeepers for their dedicated services and their invaluable contributions to the cause of peace.

We all know the complexity of contemporary conflicts. Our peacekeepers are serving in areas with high security threats and risks. To support and encourage our

peacekeepers, last February I took a trip to South Sudan and visited the UN Mission there. During my visit, I met the President of South Sudan and offered my support to him and to his nation, the youngest member of the international community.

Mr. President, in closing, let's make our world safer and more prosperous.

Let's be fearless when it comes to fighting for fairness, transparency and rule of law. Where there is rule of law, there is less corruption and more human rights. Where there is transparency, there is less economic disparity and more accountability.

Where citizens are engaged and informed, good things happen. We must be fearless in our promotion and adoption of a fair, open and transparent world community.

Thank you for your attention.

