



# MONGOLIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. TSAKHIA ELBEGDORJ  
PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA AT THE GENERAL DEBATE  
OF THE 71<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:  
A UNIVERSAL PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD”

New York, 20 September, 2016

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I wish to join others in extending our heartfelt congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly. Mongolia pledges its full support to you.

Mr. President,

It is my great honour to address this august body for the seventh time on behalf of the Mongolian people. I am the youngest of eight sons. For generations, my family lived as nomadic herdsman in the western highlands of my country. My mother and father never dreamed that, one day, their youngest son would be speaking from this respected podium to the largest assembly of the world.

I am proud to serve for my country upon the free will of our people. Mongolia is governed by democratic rules. The President has a constitutional term limit. So, my mandate ends next year. This is my last address as the President of Mongolia to the UN General Assembly.

But, the people of Mongolia will continue to be citizens of the global community together with all nations. I am proud that my country is a good friend and partner of every member State of the United Nations. I am confident that our next president would be welcomed by all of you and be given the same respect and same spirit of cooperation which I enjoyed during these years.

### Sustainable Development Goals

Distinguished delegates,

Achieving sustainable development is essential. It is essential, because no one in the world should be left behind and deprived of the right to development. We must work together towards a world where everybody can have a dignified life, free from poverty, violence and depression. I firmly believe that justice, stability and security cannot be guaranteed without the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms for all. These basic principles must be respected and protected in every country by all governments.

The United Nations turned 70 at the time of turbulence. Today, we all witness many conflicts and terrorist attacks which became almost everyday news headlines. The world has its largest-ever humanitarian crisis, including millions of people displaced from their homes. The slowdown in global growth, and rising tensions in many places have threatened further progress.

However, the intervening period was a year of inspiring collaboration as well. In some places, a long fought war is over. Peace agreements are reached. The development of dangerous weapons is restrained. The power of diplomacy has prevailed. Last year, we all

together launched the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda universal action plan for people, peace, prosperity and partnership.

In December in Paris, the world turned a new page to combat climate change.

As a global community, we are following a new roadmap on our next 15-year journey. The Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement provide clear guidelines for achieving what we have promised to do.

We now must act together as we take responsibilities for the people.

We now must boost our partnership to save the planet.

We now need the resources to put this plan into action.

Mongolia will ensure that no one is left behind, by reaching out to the most vulnerable first. The principles and policies of the 2030 Agenda have been translated into our national strategy. The Sustainable Development Vision of Mongolia 2030 is in action.

Our agenda calls for the establishment of a diverse and inclusive economic structure. That is for increasing decent jobs and providing opportunities and income generation. Our goal is for improving quality of life and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Equally essential is cooperation between and among governments, international development communities, the private sector, and institutions of the civil society.

From our past experiences of implementing Millennium Development Goals at the national level, we learned that regular follow up and review mechanisms are essential to achieving the SDGs.

Therefore, accountability and the quality of governance will eventually define the success of SDGs.

### Climate change

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Tomorrow, we will mark the landmark achievement on our collective journey to counter climate change. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Parties which have formally ratified the Paris Agreement. The people of Mongolia joined the world in its fight to mitigate the climate change. We have concluded our national legislation process and recently ratified the Paris agreement.

The Paris agreement is our common success. It is a result of hard work. It is also a great inspiration for all of us. It's our bold vision and promise to our children to save the world for them. And we must deliver on this promise.

Mongolia is one of smallest carbon emitters in the world but suffers disproportionately from the climate change. Desertification, deforestation, and the loss of biodiversity have been severe blows to the livelihoods of our traditional nomadic culture, and they spur further environmental degradation.

Mongolia is holding its end of the bargain. But the promised international cooperation and support are still lacking. The benefits of the green funds and carbon credits

are sorely missed in Mongolia and many developed countries like it. We urge the multilateral institutions to take the lead in these important efforts.

We have one home, one world for all of us, and we have one universal goal to save it. And, today is our time to act. We must not miss it as we cannot miss our future.

### Accountability

Dear colleagues,

To that end we must work for equality, inclusivity and accountability in our governments and societies.

Our agreed Agenda called for inclusive societies and accountable institutions.

People called for good governance and the rule of law through the 2030 Agenda.

They asked for transparency and accountability in how our government plans and delivers development.

We must be accountable for our actions and responsibilities.

Accountability is a benchmark for good governance.

Good governance is a key for global peace and prosperity.

Therefore, we promote accountability and good governance in our society. The National Law on Public Hearings and the Policy for Supporting Public Participation are in action in Mongolia.

The Development agenda demands action against corruption. It requires that institutions function in a transparent and efficient way, based on the rule of law.

That means basic services are delivered without discrimination or corruption.

That means stability for investors and predictability for business, with clear legal frameworks, decent jobs, and recourse to an independent court.

That means natural resources are harnessed to benefit the many, not the few, and the environmental impact is measured and controlled.

### Democracy

Dear friends,

Development and accountability is all about democracy.

We should never take democracy for granted. Neither should we worship it. It must be nurtured and strengthened on a daily basis. It is our way of living, our state of mind.

A democratic society is sustainable because it aims at the highest development of every one of its members.

Therefore, our common goal as leaders is to provide for an environment where the democratic institutions can thrive – provide for rule of law, human rights, democratic governance, and free and fair elections.

And we must enforce accountability, accountability, and again, accountability.

The people will do the rest in a democracy.

For only in a democracy is everyone provided with opportunities for self-development and realization.

In the last 26 years, Mongolia has accumulated its own experience of a stable and peaceful democracy. It was tested again by the last parliamentary elections held on 29 June 2016.

The election was open and transparent. The newly formed Parliament and Cabinet are now responsible for the people of Mongolia. The people vested them full power to work hard for them.

Over the last two decades, Mongolia has been supporting and promoting stronger democratic institutions, and sustainable, effective and legitimate democracy. We have been sharing our experiences and lessons learned with other fellow nations. We were happy to learn that our lessons helped other countries.

From this podium, I wish to sincerely congratulate the people of Kyrgyzstan and Myanmar for their successful elections held last year and wish them sustained prosperity.

As a chair of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Mongolia hosted the International Democracy Forum last month. At this year's Forum, the focus was on "Learning from Democratic Transitions". Experts from many countries with different models of democracy shared their experiences on improving the modalities of elections, accountability and transparency. This was truly a knowledge sharing and inspiring exercise.

The International Cooperation Fund of Mongolia, to which we are committed, will expand its activities to work together with emerging democracies.

### Human rights

Mr. President,

Mongolia holds dear human rights and liberties. These days we all too often talk about human rights and rule of law.

Whether we uphold these values is tested by actual exercise and implementation.

The entire 2030 Agenda is centered on the respect for human rights and human dignity.

We, the member States, have the primary responsibility for upholding human rights.

To undertake its duty, Mongolia started a new phase of legal reform to ensure full protection of human rights, including the rights to justice.

Mongolia abolished the death penalty.

I believe that the death penalty is neither acceptable nor justifiable under any circumstances.

I believe that one day our loving human family will become free of the death penalty.

I know, it is not easy to exercise leadership on this tough issue.

Nevertheless, as a democratic society in the east, Mongolia shall spare no efforts to promote human rights and human dignity.

As a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Mongolia will work against any form of discrimination.

Ten years ago, we, the member States created the Human Rights Council to put the human rights pillar back at the centre of the United Nations system.

It was created to provide a space for open dialogue to respond to human rights emergencies.

As we all know too well, human rights are sadly threatened around the world.

Many fail to uphold human rights while countering terrorism.

The Human Rights Council must act effectively to create a global culture based on respect for human rights and dignity for all.

Excellencies,

The spread of terrorism all over the world is a grave concern for us.

Terrorism is a common challenge for the entire humankind.

It is a common threat to national security as well as the global order.

We all witness, almost every day, humanitarian disasters and massive human rights violations. Mongolia firmly opposes all forms of terrorism and violence.

There is no justification for any terrorism. The international community must be united to defeat and counter terrorism. At the same time, we should also do all we can to prevent this violent extremism.

Global order and ASEM-11 in Ulaanbaatar. (Asia European Summit)

In July this year Mongolia successfully hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit, commemorating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Heads of State and Government and Leaders of the ASEM Partner Organizations for attending the summit and contributing to its success.

I am proud to report to the General Assembly that the leaders of Asia and Europe all came together to chart out the future course of actions in the next decade.

We reaffirmed our strong determination for joint actions to consolidate peace, security and stability.

Asia and Europe are united in our actions against terrorism, corruption and poverty.

I firmly believe that ASEM multilateralism will advance global well-being and prosperity.

Once again, thank you, friends, for visiting my homeland for a once-in-a-century event of global magnitude.

In the Ulaanbaatar Declaration, the leaders of Asia and Europe sent strong messages to the people of the world how we will work together in the next decade. We are united in contributing to sustained peace, security, stability, economic recovery and to responding to global and regional challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We all agreed on the key role that the United Nations should play in maintaining international peace and security.

### Security, peace and regional cooperation

Friends, colleagues,

It has always been a profound delight for me as the Head of State of Mongolia to report to the General Assembly of the successful service of Mongolian sons and daughters in blue helmets who stand on guard for global peace and stability.

The United Nations is making its utmost to protect civilians, end conflicts and create conditions for lasting peace.

The security environment is far more complex and more dangerous than ever, and services of the UN peacekeepers has never been this much in demand.

The world is not yet free of wars, devastations and destitution.

But we believe that there will come a day:

- when child refugees no longer will be swept to the shore by cold ocean tides,
- when children no longer will be orphaned in senseless violence and wars,
- and when people no longer will be afraid to take peaceful strolls in the beautiful streets of Nice, Istanbul, or Dhaka.

Dear friends,

South Sudan is still the youngest member of the international community. People of South Sudan need our help and support. And we are proud that Mongolian peacekeepers together with fellow blue helmets continue to extend their helping hand to the people of South Sudan. We honour their bravery and dedication.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the thousands of courageous members of the international humanitarian organizations. They put their very lives at risk while saving millions from certain death and starvation.

The demand for mediation and support and good offices for humanitarian assistance reached all-time highs. This situation must be resolved.

My own region, Northeast Asia is home to many unresolved issues. The last stronghold and division of the Cold War still remains on the Korean Peninsula.

Any development there will have a direct impact on regional, and our own security and stability. Once again, we reiterate our firm position that the Korean peninsula should be nuclear weapon free.

In order to resolve the tensions and conflicts, it is crucial to eradicate mistrust amongst the concerned nations and to hold direct talks more often.

**“The Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security” is called to do exactly that: to promote trust in the region, to facilitate exchange of ideas, and to find solutions to common concerns.**

**The task is complicated and not easy. However, every member of the United Nations shall strive for a right solution.**

**Mr. President,**

**In conclusion, may I express Mongolia’s full commitment to faithfully implement both the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We must demonstrate to the world and to our nations that meaningful progress is being made on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We reaffirm our firm commitment to the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core. So let us work together for the progress of global development for future generations.**

**And, as ever before, in the cause of peace, freedom and justice, Mongolia will play its part.**

**I thank you for your kind attention.**