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MONGOLIAN DEFENCE POLICY

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Exercice Solo Flight

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MONGOLIAN DEFENSE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

There is no way to imagine Mongolia without Armed Forces. The history of the Mongolian military dates back to the 1200s in the time of Genghis Khan. In any study of Mongolia's history, it is critical to understand the history of the Mongolian military. Mongolia's history entails a combination of the state, the armed forces and the people of Mongolia. Without its armed forces and their notable history, Mongolia as we know it today would not exist. Due to its precarious geographical location between Russia and China and willingness to exert its influence globally through peace keeping operations, an armed force is essential to the future of Mongolia.

In 1994, the Mongolian parliament adopted the Mongolian National Security and Foreign Policy Concept in order to improve the country's defence policy¹. The defence policy of Mongolia is based on the basic national interests set forth in Mongolia's Constitution, the National Security Concept of Mongolia² (NSCM), and the internal and external security environments. One of the primary premises of Mongolian defense policy is that it aims to solve problems without resorting to war or armed conflict. Through exercising this policy, Mongolia has become a respected, calm and prestigious example of a nation that utilizes its military forces for diplomatic efforts. Since adopting democracy in 1990, Mongolia has made some changes to its foreign policy concept. For example, it has developed a new concept of "multi-pillar" foreign

¹ The Mongolian Journal of International Affairs, "Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy", (Number 2, 1992),

² The Mongolian Journal of International Affairs, "Concept of National Security of Mongolia", (Number 2, 1992),

policy. Additionally, a new law has been included that welcomes Western countries as a "Third neighbor." The main reason for the third neighbor policy is that Mongolia need to balance its international relations with other nations and the influence of its powerful neighbors³. Mongolia has also emphasized its policy of implementing a peaceful defense policy, avoiding the use of military force or of posing as a military threat to other nations, and avoiding any use of the military against another country.

In peacetime, Mongolia has committed that it shall not join any military organization, that it shall not use its territory or airspace to combat another state, and that it shall not permit foreign military forces onto its territory, even for the purpose of transit⁴. As a member of the global community, Mongolia strives to contribute to the efforts of the global community in addressing regional and global issues. For example, Mongolia actively supports democracy and human rights and freedoms by participating in United Nations peace support operations and international activities, and by fighting against the proliferation of nuclear arms, mass killings, international terrorism, and organized crime. Because these activities are so critical to Mongolian foreign policy, this policy must be related to the Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF). As a result, the "basis of foreign policy" is the fundamental principle of Mongolian defense policy and the MAF.

This paper will emphasize that the MAF is able to fully fulfill its obligations under the foreign policy and defense policy of Mongolia.

³ Lkham.Ts, "*Foreign policy of Mongolia and issue of third neighbor policy*," (Proceedings of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Vol. 54 №02, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2014), 10, 11.

⁴ Resolution of the Mongolian Parliament, "Mongolian defense policy", (No 85, Ulaanbaatar, 2015),

MONGOLIAN FOREIGN POLICY

This section will describe Mongolia's foreign policy concept and how it is implemented in Mongolia's geographic region and other parts of the world.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev, then General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, began a process of reform and reformation of the Soviet Union which ultimately benefited Mongolia. Gorbachev's foreign policy would eventually lead to social changes in Mongolia, which at the time was already turning away from socialist politics. This opened the door for what was at the time the People's Republic of Mongolia to have more open relations with other nations. As a result, the XIX conference of the Mongolian People's Republic of 1986 decided to normalize relations with many capitalist countries. In 1987, Mongolia established political and economic relations with the United States. It went on to establish similar relations with the European Union in 1989 and with the Republic of Korea in 1990. This was the beginning of a new era for Mongolian foreign policy⁵.

Friendly relations with Russia and China are a priority of Mongolia's foreign policy. Considering the unique characteristics of historical traditions and economic cooperation that Mongolia shares with these two countries, this policy of interconnectedness directly influences the security and prosperity of Mongolia⁶. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, military relations with Russia have actually weakened. On the other hand, relations with China have since strengthened. The objective of Mongolia's most recent foreign policy was to balance relations with both neighbors by improving relations with Russia. In addition, Mongolia chooses to apply

⁵ Mongolian Academy of Sciences and History, *History of Mongolia: Volume 5, (Ulaanbaatar, 2003)*, 400, 401.

⁶ Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy. The Mongolian Journal of International Affairs. Number 2, 1992.

its third-neighbour policy as it does not wish to be limited to only two neighbors. The main reason for the third neighbour policy is that Mongolia aims to utilize its international relations to balance the influencing powers of its neighbors⁷.

Since 1990, the third neighbor policy has enabled the success of Mongolia's economy and politics. Donor countries now help Mongolia to solve its economic problems and have become the most important aspects of Mongolia's national security and independence. Mongolia constantly aims to balance the interests of its immediate neighbors while trying to have good relations with other parts of the world. The policy of the third neighbor in Mongolia is not intended to replace relations with Russia and China, but to supplement them. As such, Mongolia constantly attempts to balance relations between Russia and China, its two neighbours, with those of its third neighbour states, including Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, India, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The main purpose of Mongolia's foreign policy is to strengthen the independence and sovereignty of the country by promoting friendly relations with the world, expanding relations and cooperation of political, economic and other sectors, strengthening its position in the international community and expanding prosperity. To ensure the security and national interests of Mongolia within the framework of international law, diplomacy is a priority of foreign policy. Mongolia has a peaceful, open, independent and multi-pillar foreign policy. It aims to intensively develop relationships and cooperation with countries that are influential in the world and region, and is careful to not become dependent upon any country. To ensure that dependencies do not arise, Mongolia has developed flexibility in its foreign policy direction and goals⁸.

⁷ The diplomat. "Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy Blooms", last accessed 05 May 2019. <https://thediplomat.com/2016/03/mongolias-third-neighbor-policy-blooms/>.

⁸ The Mongolian Journal of International Affairs, "Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy", (Number 2, 1992),

Mongolia actively participates in regional security activities. For example, it has expressed interest in executing the intermediary role in the termination of the Korean Peninsula nuclear program. Through bilateral talks on North Korea's nuclear weapons program, Mongolia has been organizing bilateral and tripartite agreements between the United States, Russia, Japan, South Korea, and North Korea since 2007.⁹ In the context of Northeast Asia's security cooperation, Mongolia has always made efforts to promote six-party talks and has organized the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue.¹⁰ Ulaanbaatar dialogue is about Northeast Asian Security meeting hold in Ulaanbaatar, which is the capital city of Mongolia. In addition, the MAF organizes the Khaan Quest peacekeeping training exercise, which is Mongolia's largest annual multinational exercise used to showcase Mongolian foreign policy. The MAF considers this exercise to be its largest annual military training event, providing the country with the opportunity to demonstrate its ability to play a key role in regional peace support operations¹¹.

Mongolian foreign policy is in line with its defense policy. Both policies work in the post-communist environment to maintain good relations with its two powerful neighbors. The implementation of the third neighbor policy and expansion of its relations with other countries has contributed to the successful implementation of Mongolia's foreign policy over the past 20 years. One of the most important examples of this is that the MAF has demonstrated a great deal of innovation, experience and lessons learned over the last 20 years.

⁹ The NIDS International Workshop on Asia Pacific Security, Security Outlook of the Asia Pacific Countries and its Implications for the Defense Sector, Ganbat Damba, "*Security and Defense Environment of Mongolia in 2015*" (No.14, Japan, 2016), 117,

¹⁰ Ibid 118,

¹¹ mn.usembassy.gov, "Peace Through Khaan Quest: Mongolia and the Global Peace Operations Initiative", last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://mn.usembassy.gov/peace-khaan-quest-mongolia-global-peace-operations-initiative/>

MONGOLIAN DEFENCE POLICY

This section will discuss the evolution of Mongolian defence policy and how it interacts with Mongolian foreign policy and the MAF.

Since the collapse of the communist regime, Mongolia's defence policy has been reformed by adopting the concepts of national security and foreign policy. The reforms were social orders reflecting the evolution of international relations, market economy relations, and the democratic system. Mongolian national security and defence policy has been updated within the constitution, national security concept, foreign policy concept and strategic planning documents for the MAF. The main idea of Mongolian defence policy is to enable the MAF to defend against external threats, and to defend Mongolia's national interests, independence, territorial integrity, and national borders¹².

All states possess their own strengths and capabilities to provide their citizens with security. Some join international military organizations, or establish political unions that pledge to provide security for their defense. Some have strategic military missile defenses including nuclear capabilities designed to protect the state's security and independence, and some states opt to stay neutral, believing that their neutrality provides a form of defence. In the case of Mongolia, former President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj submitted an initiative to the National Security Council of Mongolia in 2015 proposing that Mongolia maintain a "permanent neutral status." This proposal was approved by Mongolian Security Council, initiating a draft law on

¹² Resolution of the Mongolian Parliament, "Mongolian defense policy", (No 85, Ulaanbaatar, 2015),

neutrality and its adoption by Parliament that same year. In the meantime, the former president Elbegdorj presented this policy at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly.¹³

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) develops the strategic policy and planning of the MAF in line with Mongolia's internal and external security environment. Mongolian defence policy also supports Mongolia's foreign policy by providing diplomatic security in Mongolia, strengthening military mutual co-operation with the world and regional countries, and directing armed forces reforms. The mission of the MOD is to develop a flexible, rational defence system based on national development goals and the fundamental interests of Mongolia in line with international and regional security policies and changes, all to ensure the country's independence, territorial integrity and the security of its people¹⁴.

The main concepts of the use of the armed forces are described by Mongolia's defence policy. In the context of military security, it defines the state's approach to any armed aggression, including aggression against Mongolia's economy, territory and how to counteract any armed aggression. The role of the defence policy is to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country from external armed aggression¹⁵. Protection of state frontiers, supervision of air frontiers, protection of the state's important objects and national interests, protection of the population from the dangers of natural and public disasters and industrial accidents, building reserve forces and educating the population on military affairs, as well as providing assistance to human security and participating in UN peace support operations are all key elements of Mongolia's defence policy¹⁶.

¹³ The NIDS International Workshop on Asia Pacific Security, Security Outlook of the Asia Pacific Countries and its Implications for the Defense Sector, Ganbat Damba, "*Security and Defense Environment of Mongolia in 2015*" (No.14, Japan, 2016), 116,

¹⁴ mod.gov.mn, "Minister of Defense's Mission, Strategic Objectives, and Priorities," last accessed 06 May 2019, <http://www.mod.gov.mn/index.php?com=content&id=7>,

¹⁵ Resolution of the Mongolian Parliament, "Mongolian defense policy", (No 85, Ulaanbaatar, 2015),

¹⁶ Ibid,

The world's international and regional security conditions, including the dangers of terrorism, multinationals, and weapons of mass destruction, and other dangers associated with religious extremism, are all considerations of Mongolia's defence policy. They are implemented, managed, organized, and coordinated on the basis of foreign policy.

As a result, Mongolia's defence policy aims to provide the country with security and to support its national interests, strengthening its defence system and bringing its military structure to international standards by generating a professional, compact, skillful force. By implementing the targets of its defence policy, the MAF is developing in a positive direction.

MONGOLIAN ARMED FORCES

This last section will focus on the MAF and how it operates within Mongolia's defence policy and foreign policy. This section will discuss whether or not Mongolia needs an armed forces, as there are many Mongolians who believe that an armed forces is a waste of money.

Recently, negative information about the MAF has become widespread in newspapers, on the internet, and on social networks¹⁷. Some people say that they do not want their son to go to military service and they have given the wrong information to the people¹⁸. They say that the MAF tortured and beat soldiers and killed and that some of soldiers were disabled. It is happened that only a few cases of this type have recently occurred, but not all MAF cases are the same. This is a misunderstanding in the information and it is impossible to blackmail the entire MAF. There is currently no requirement for a military in Mongolia as it is surrounded by two friendly major powers, Russia and China. As such, the arguments ask why a protected nation needs a military, as the likelihood of an enemy coming over one of these two neighbors is low. While it

¹⁷ fbnews.mn, “Эх орны нэрээр эрлэгийн газар бүү дууд,” last accessed 05 May 2019, <http://www.fbnews.mn/news.php?nid=1007>,

¹⁸ olloo.mn, “Цэрэгт Хүүгээ Явуулах, Цэцэрлэгт Хүүхдээ Өгөхөөс Айдаг Болов,” last accessed 05 May 2019, <http://www.olloo.mn/n/62429.html>,

is unlikely that an enemy will pass through either Russia or China to invade Mongolia, it is important that Mongolians remain cognisant of the threats posed by these two powerful neighbours. Russia and China have different nationalities, ethnicities and religions and, if something were to happen in a domestic conflict in either state, it would have the potential to affect Mongolia. Without a military, Mongolia would have no ability to stop a spillover conflict within its own borders.

Another reason why an armed forces is important to Mongolia is that threats are not exclusive to foreigners; internal problems requiring military force can also occur. Therefore, the main role of the MAF is to ensure the country's independence, territorial integrity and the security of its people¹⁹.

The strategic role of the Mongolian Armed Forces is to counteract foreign armed aggression and to provide an opportunity for political diplomacy for Mongolia's political leadership. Politics has led to pressure from the UN and other countries to influence aggressors through diplomatic means. Today, terrorism poses a global threat and it is proving that domestic armed forces are the tools needed to combat and to prevent this hazard. Examples from some countries show that there is a need to develop and strengthen military relations and cooperation not only within the country but also at the international and regional levels in order to combat terrorism. As a result, the MAF supports international and UN activities peacekeeping. One of the best examples of this is the "Khaan Quest," an international training exercise hosted by Mongolia²⁰. The number of countries involved and the expansion of the training is increasing

¹⁹ legalinfo.mn, Mongolian Parliament, "Armed Forces Law," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.legalinfo.mn/law/details/12123>,

²⁰ marines.mil, "Multinational Peacekeeping Exercise Khaan Quest 2016 Commences With Opening Ceremony," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.marines.mil/News/News-Display/Article/778487/multinational-peacekeeping-exercise-khaan-quest-2016-commences-with-opening-cer/>,

each year. In addition to this training exercise, there are several bilateral training exercises events conducted annually and the extent of the training increases each year. For instance, bilateral training exercises are conducted between Mongolia and the United States, Russia, China, India, Qatar, Japan, and Turkey. As a result of these exercises and training, the MAF's skills are increasing and Mongolia's reputation is growing amongst many countries and regions.

Mongolian troops have also demonstrated success at participating in international coalition operations and UN peacekeeping activities, placing Mongolia in high standing on the international stage. Participating in international coalition operations and UN peacekeeping operations²¹, Mongolian troops have learned and changed due to gaining experience from working with troops from other countries. At the same time, participation in these operations aids in eliminating the consequences of armed conflict and civil war, rehabilitating displaced civilians, and humanitarian relief. That is why Mongolian troops participated in Iraq and Kosovo operations in support of international coalition forces, and why Mongolian troops are still in Afghanistan. Mongolian troops have participated in Sierra Leone, Chad, Georgia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, and are currently serving in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Sudan, South Sudan, and Western Sahara. The Mongolian government and public must clearly understand that participation in peacekeeping operations increases Mongolia's image and prestige at a global level. The active participation of its peacekeeping forces within the global community directly supports Mongolia's foreign policy and contributes to ensuring its defence and security.

²¹ Asia by Africa, Jeremy Luedi, "How Mongolia is changing peacekeeping in Africa and beyond," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.asiabyafrica.com/point-a-to-a/mongolia-peacekeeping-changing-africa>.

The roles of the Armed Forces have increased through the adoption of a new law by the Parliament of Mongolia in 2016²². The large-scale foreign labour force that currently works in Mongolia has negatively affected the national security interests of Mongolia and its population. This demonstrates why the MAF is critical to Mongolia's security interests as, by assisting in managing the conflicts that have arisen as a result of foreign labour forces, it has participated in the economic and peaceful development of the country²³.

The MAF is also required to work in strategically important mineral deposits. Due to the lack of labour force in Mongolia, some civilian workers and company's qualifications have been insufficient to provide discipline, correct organizational weaknesses, and increase productivity. Therefore, engineering education and a reconstruction of the armed forces to assist in the mining, construction, urban development, and infrastructure sectors, is set to occur. It is also possible to involve military personnel in the operation and maintenance of machinery and equipment. As a result of these government events, the value of the armed forces has increased as it is now able to assist in much-needed development within the country²⁴.

The MAF is successfully implementing the tasks and objectives of Mongolian foreign and defence policy. It is also successfully deploying with UN peace support and coalition operations and conducting multinational and bilateral training exercises not just within the country, but within the region and all over the world. Also the MAF is successfully involved in the development of Mongolia, and performs these duties without affecting its ability to protecting the country.

²² legalinfo.mn, Mongolian Parliament, "Armed Forces Law," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.legalinfo.mn/law/details/12123>,

²³ legalinfo.mn, Mongolian Parliament, "Armed Forces Law," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.legalinfo.mn/law/details/12123>,

²⁴ montsame.mn, "Soldiers contribute to Tavan Tolgoi Railway construction," last accessed 06 May 2019, <https://www.montsame.mn/en/read/185855#>,

CONCLUSION

Mongolia's commitment to peacekeeping and other defence activities in the world today is an important part of its commitment to building its global and regional peace and security roles in accordance with the global community's foreign commitments. The MAF implements Mongolian foreign policy initiatives, ensuring the country's security through politics and diplomacy, and promoting the country around the world. Mongolia should be concerned about national security for a number of reasons. Firstly, Mongolia borders two large and powerful states. Secondly, Mongolia is an important economic region with many national resources. Thirdly, it has a vast territory of 1.5 million square kilometers and a small population. Those are all ongoing challenges to Mongolian security, demonstrating clear need for Mongolia to maintain defence force.

Mongolian foreign policy and defence policy were completely dependent on the Soviet Union throughout the communist era. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the Warsaw agreement also broke down, ending communist ideology and beginning a new generation of development within Mongolia. This has led to wonderful achievements in peacekeeping, other international operations, foreign relations, and cooperation. Within Mongolia's foreign policy, the "Third Neighbor Policy" has been implemented well for over two decades. Mongolian defence policy promotes its foreign policy and increases the geopolitical importance of Mongolia, thereby increasing its position and relevance in the Asia-Pacific regional community. One of the clearest manifestations of Mongolia's defence policy is its military co-operation initiatives.

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