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THE ROLE OF MONGOLIA IN REGIONAL SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

The situation in Northeast Asia is an important topic of international security arena. Political and economic relations between Russia and China, as well as the Korean Peninsula issue, which can have a major impact in Northeast Asia as such powerful actors that can change the world order and security environment. Past decades, the peace policy of mutual trust between the countries of the Northeast Asian region has become the most important issue not only in the regional but also in the international security environment. Therefore, it is important to analyze and assess a strategic interests and international geopolitical ambition of major powers that could directly or indirectly affect Mongolia's national security to develop national strategic solutions to enhance Mongolia's national security and its security environment. Mongolia has no territorial, economic, military or political conflicts of interest with any of the countries in the region. Such reasons can give Mongolia an opportunity to be a key player in confidence-building measures to prevent hostilities, to avert escalation, to reduce military tension in Northeast Asia. There are many ways and fields to operate as peace player in this region. For instance, Mongolia can be an initiator or a main actor of a regional peacekeeping cooperation organization in Northeast Asia.

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Main part.

In both the "Constitution of Mongolia" along with the "Concept of Foreign Policy of Mongolia," it is stated that "Mongolia is to maintain friendly relations with the countries of the world by conducting a foreign policy that values peace, strengthens its position in the international community, and strengthens the independence and sovereignty of the country." As a result, one of the key focuses of our nation's foreign policy is Mongolia's place in international relations, which is conducted inside the framework of the UN and other international institutions.

One of the major achievements in the history of Mongolia's foreign relations was becoming a full member of the United Nations in 1961, which was a great political and diplomatic success for our country, as well as strengthening its international position and opening the door for active international operations.

Now we have established diplomatic relations with 193 countries of the world. Also, by becoming a member of more than 60 international and regional intergovernmental organizations and joining about 240 international agreements and conventions, the space occupied by our country and its responsibilities in the international community are expanding, which is an important step to ensure our national security. As of today, 11 organizations representing special agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations system are working permanently in Mongolia and have been important partners in our development policies and activities. Today, there are 28 diplomatic and consular missions of foreign countries in Mongolia, while there are 46 diplomatic missions abroad from Mongolia, which shows significant achievement.

Also, as part of the implementation of the foreign policy goal of ensuring Mongolia's security through political and diplomatic methods, our country declared its territory as a nuclear-free weapon zone in 1992 during the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly, "International security and a nuclear free weapon status of Mongolia." The resolution was not only first approved by the 53rd session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1998, but it also calls upon the member states of the United Nations to cooperate with Mongolia in strengthening the nuclear-weapon-free status.

We are proactively working on many important issues, including the implementation of UN SDGs and gender equality policy goals, including women's empowerment. For example, in 2023, Mongolia became one of the first countries in the world to adopt the "Sustainable Development Goals Financing Taxonomy".

In order to reduce the impact of global climate change, protect and increase forest and water reserves, and ensure ecological balance, successfully implement national initiatives such as "One Billion Trees", "Food Supply and Security," and expand and develop green, electronic, accessible trade and economic relations. And we have successfully organized "World Export Promotion Conference" in the country, it shows that Mongolia's foreign relations are developing successfully based on the principles of openness, flexibility and multi-pillars.

To ensure international peace and security, it has participated in UN peacekeeping operations since 2002, and as of December 2023, more than 23,000 military personnel have been trained and sent in duplicate.

To emphasize, currently Mongolia is ranked 23rd among UN troop-donating countries, 16th among 112 countries that have sent female uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations which Mongolia could set great deal of example.

In Mongolia's national security and foreign policy concepts, it is considered that Mongolia will participate in policies which aimed at strengthening strategic stability in Northeast Asia and expanding security cooperation, which shows the importance of Northeast Asian security in Mongolia's geopolitical position.

Table 1. Mongolia's foreign policy in NEA.

	Establishment of diplomatic relations	Development of relations
RF	On November 5, 1921	On September 3, 2019, during the official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Mongolia, the "Agreement between Mongolia and the Russian Federation on Friendly Relations and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" was signed in Ulaanbaatar. Established a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
PRC	On October 16, 1949	In August 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to Mongolia, enhancing the level of relations between the two countries and establishing and developing a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
Japan	On February 24, 1972	Mongolian President U. Khurelsukh and Japanese Prime Minister F. Kishida held official negotiations in November 2022, and based on the results of the negotiations, issued a Joint Statement aimed at developing the "Special Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity between Mongolia and Japan".
ROK	On March 26, 1990	"Joint Declaration"/"Strategic Partnership" issued in 2021 during the high-level online meeting between the President of Mongolia U. Khurelsukh and the President of the Republic of Korea Moon Jae-in.
DPRK	On October 15, 1948	Friendship relations were established.
SRV	On November 17, 1954	The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, established in 1961 and renewed in 1979, was renewed in 2000.

In 1993 and 1994, Mongolia has emphasized two neighboring countries as the priority countries of its foreign policy. In 1993 and 1994, it signed friendship and cooperation agreements with the Russian

Federation and the People's Republic of China, upgrading a new international legal basis for its relations. The priority goal of Mongolia's foreign relations policy is to "expand and develop partnership relations and cooperation within the framework of the policies of the third neighboring countries, including Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries." Mongolia is intensively developing bilateral and multilateral relations and cooperation with regional countries through political, economic, defense, cultural and humanitarian fields as part of the implementation of national security policies.

Some of the good experiences of Mongolia's peace-keeping foreign participation in ensuring security not only in the region but also in many countries through the following notable experience can be mentioned. Including;

1. The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments, which is a large administrative unit of 6 North East Asian countries, Northeast Asian sub-regional cooperation program implemented in the context of environmental security of Northeast Asian countries, and Actively participates in initiatives such as the Greater Tumen Initiation, which was established with the support of the United Nations Development Program, with the aim of contributing to the peace, stability and economic development of the Northeast Asian region.

2. To support Mongolia's national security through political-diplomatic approach, to create favorable external conditions for defense, to strengthen military trust through joint military exercises, military-technical partnership, disaster risk prevention and rescue, international humanitarian operations and international terrorism, multilateral cooperation is being developed. For example, "Selenge", "Darkhan" joint tactical field exercise of Mongolia and Russia, "Hunter eagle" and "Steppe wolf" of joint exercise between Mongolian and Chinese armed forces which shows that the importance of strength the cooperation with its neighbors.

And we are also promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation with others countries in the region through:

- political relations policy;
- economic relations policy;
- relations of science and technology policy;
- cultural and humanitarian relations policy;
- advertising and public relations policies.

The situation in Northeast Asia is an important topic of international security. Recently, the international security environment has been changing rapidly and unpredictably. However, regional cooperating activity has been conducted persistently. For example, in 2014, Russia-China relations officially established the "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" which can be an advantage in ensuring regional security and strengthening understanding and trust in the region.

One of the security issues that needs attention in the Northeast Asian region is the issue of the Korean Peninsula. However, North Korea conducts nuclear weapons tests from time to time, the leaders of the two countries are seen to be formulating a positive strategy for a peaceful solution to the Ko

rean Peninsula issue. For example, during the 75th anniversary meeting of the Workers' Party of the Republic of Korea held in 2020, Kim Jong-un, head of the Democratic People Republic of Korea, said, "We wish for a day when the North and the South will overcome the pandemic and hold hands again," while Moon Jae-in, former president of Republic of Korea, said, "The schedule for the end of the two Korean wars." gives confidence that there is a possibility to solve the problem of the Korean Peninsula and to establish and strengthen the peaceful situation.

Just recently, on May 27, 2024, the leaders of South Korea, Japan, and China adopted a joint declaration promising to work closely together for peace and prosperity in the region, which is the most important step in ensuring regional security. I believe that mutual understanding and trust are the basis of the cooperation between the three countries and will play a positive role in peace and prosperity not only in Northeast Asia but also in the region and the world.

Seeking solutions to the complex security situation in the region through peaceful dialogue, a number of measures are being implemented within the framework of its multi-pillar foreign policy. It includes;

1. Mongolia continues to make efforts to create a good security cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia to strengthen peace and security in the region. For example, in the region of Northeast Asia, Mongolia has persistently put forward proposals for the establishment of a dialogue mechanism for Northeast Asia since the 1980s, and in 2013 initiated the "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue" on the security issues of Northeast Asia. Dialogue has been conducted till today. The goal of the initiative is to resolve the issue of the Korean Peninsula peacefully, to strengthen trust in Northeast Asia, and to support the establishment of peace. Within the framework of this initiative, Mongolia will hold an international conference on the security of the Northeast Asia, a "Conference of women parliamentarians of the Northeast Asia" and a "Meeting of city mayors of the Northeast Asia" that aimed at strengthening trust in the region, "Youth Meeting" and "Energy Linkage" that an academic conference of the countries of the Northeast Asia were organized respectively.

2. Since 2013, the Ministry of Defense has been successfully organizing international academic conferences in order to strengthen the security and trust in the region of Northeast Asia.

I believe that Mongolia's proposals and initiatives will come to fruition and support regional security.

Organizations and initiatives in research and other fields are putting forth common issues in the field of security not only in other countries but also internationally. According to these, there is a higher risk of threats such as climate change, environmental degradation or environmental security, poverty, infectious diseases, and organized crime among non-traditional threats rather than traditional ones. Therefore, we believe it is important to form a cooperation mechanism in this direction and work together to ensure regional security.

There are many opportunities for Mongolia to take part in strengthening the confidence of countries in ensuring regional security by using its advantage that has no conflict and dispute over territory, borders, and ideologies with any country in the region. For example, in order to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, countries in the region are encouraged to make greater efforts in the following areas. It includes;

- Improving the mechanism to fight natural disasters such as trans boundary air pollution and desertification by activating the Northeast Asia Sub-Regional Cooperation Program /NEASPEC/. In this frame Mongolia play in main role to initiative and establish "Northeast Asia Humanitarian Aid Center and Warehouse",

- Development of bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation of regional countries by creating mutually beneficial mechanisms for regional economic interaction. In this regard "Mongolia-Russia-China" three-country economic corridor initiative program is actively progressing with the two neighbors in this direction. Supporting the Eurasian Economic Union of Russia and China's Belt and Road Initiative the economy of the three countries in order to implement "Steppe Road" project of Mongolian government.

- Initiation on expansion of humanitarian, cultural, educational and scientific cooperation to strengthen peace and security in Northeast Asia. In this point as an important actor and an active supporter of research, and analysis in the creation of the "International Research Institute for Peace Promotion".