

The 19th Ministerial Council Meeting's Statement by H.E. Mr. Luvsanvandan BOLD, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

Esteemed Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Ireland for successfully hosting the 19th OSCE Ministerial meeting and for its kind hospitality extended to my delegation.

It is my honour to deliver the very first statement of Mongolia as the 57th participating state of the OSCE. On behalf of the Government of Mongolia and personally, I would like to express deep gratitude to our Irish friends, who have played an important role in Mongolia's accession to this organization. Allow me to thank the previous chairs - Kazakhstan and Lithuania, as well as all participating states for supporting my country. My words of appreciation also go to the Secretary General Zannier for his support throughout the accession process.

Since Mongolia joined the OSCE in 2004 as its Asian partner for cooperation, it has been closely participating in its activities. Open and friendly cooperation with the OSCE and its participating states, and Mongolia's desire to contribute to the common vision of the OSCE to create a more democratic and more secure area that stretches out from Vancouver to Vladivostok, as set in the Astana declaration, has given the needed boost to Mongolia to formally apply in 2011 for a full membership.

Let me assure you that Mongolia is determined to respect and abide by the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and all other commitments and obligations under the OSCE. Mongolia will also work to make its best to contribute to the OSCE's common goals and commitments.

Your Excellencies,

Mongolia has an open society, a parliamentary system of governance formed by democratic elections, a free market economy that supports growth of the private sector and a social environment that encourages the human development. These, I believe, are the main achievements of the past 22 years.

Mongolia follows a peaceful, open, independent and multi-pillared foreign

policy within the principles of internationally accepted norms and practice. Maintaining friendly and balanced relations with our direct neighbors, China and the Russian Federation is one of the main priorities of its foreign policy.

Mongolia's newly amended foreign policy concept has defined its third neighbors. Within the framework of third neighbor policy, it is developing bilateral and multilateral relations with the developed democratic countries in political, economic, cultural, and humanitarian areas.

Strategic stability of Asia is important for Mongolia's security. It has been contributing to building confidence in Northeast Asia. Within the OSCE, Mongolia can serve as a link between Europe and Asia as well as broaden its engagement with the Asian Partners for cooperation. Taking this opportunity I would like to thank Lithuania, as Chair of Asian contact group, for its important cooperation with the Asian Partners.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Mongolia agrees with OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. It believes that economic and ecological dimensions of security are important areas of cooperation. We follow with great interest the issues of energy security and strengthening transport dialogue. With respect to the latter, I believe that our geographical location provides an opportunity to serve as an alternative rail link or transport corridor between Europe and Asia.

Mongolia considers OSCE's decision regarding Mongolia's membership as a recognition of its democratic achievements, respect for human rights, rule of law as well as political engagement and commitment for multilateral co-operation.

Mongolia is now chairing the Community of Democracies, which under our Presidency, has undergone substantial restructuring and reforms and is emerging as a promising global institution with the mission to protect, strengthen and improve democracy and democratic transition in its participating countries. Last two years, the Community of Democracies has established and operationalized its Governing Council and Executive Committee, and appointed its new Secretary General.

Mongolia is committed to continue its leadership to transform the Community of Democracies into a dynamic, inclusive and transparent organization. The 7th Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies to take place in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia, on 29 April 2013 will present a momentum for cementing the achievements under our Presidency.

As the Community of Democracies' chair, Mongolia has chosen education for democracy as its top priority and launched numerous activities. Education for democracy is essential to protect, consolidate and advance the democratic gains in all societies, especially those in transition. It will play important role in promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations, racial and re-

ligious groups. Mongolia believes that its efforts to develop a school curricula for education for democracy will contribute to the common cause mentioned above. I am thankful to Canada for supporting this project.

In 2013, Mongolia will hold its Presidential elections. Using this opportunity, I would like to invite the OSCE observes to visit Mongolia during these elections.

In conclusion, allow me to wish every success to the upcoming Ukrainian Chairmanship. I am happy that Mongolia's first operational year within the OSCE will be under the chairmanship of its traditional close friend.

Dear friends,

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my country's resolve to work with you within the OSCE.

Thank you for your kind attention.