

## MONGOLIA'S NON-NUCLEAR STATUS - AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY

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### **Mongolia's search for security**

Since the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century Mongolia has been trying to regain its lost independence, exercise its sovereignty and enjoy full independence. In retrospect, the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century has been a century of Mongolia's struggle for international recognition as an independent state and to exercise full sovereignty. Thus in 1911 it proclaimed independence from the Manchu dynasty and declared willingness to establish diplomatic and other forms of relations not only with its immediate neighbours – Russia and China – but also with Japan, U.S. and other countries. However due to geo-political realities and tacitly divided spheres of influence, the major powers were not prepared to recognize its full independence. Numerous diplomatic demarches and initiatives, including delegations to Russia, official letters to U.S. and Japan did not bear fruit. At long last in 1915 Mongolia had to settle for a vague form of autonomy negotiated between Russia and China and imposed upon Mongolia as a *fait accompli*, with some Mongolian territories going to neighbours. The two neighbours recognized Mongolia as an autonomous part of China under Russia's influence. That was the first practical result of its policy of survival as an independent country. Throughout the past century Mongolia's security and independent status was part of or subordinate to Sino-Russian or Sino-Soviet relations.

It is only with radical changes in Soviet Russia and its external environment that Mongolia was able to turn to Russia for recognition of sovereignty and to establish diplomatic relations. Though full diplomatic relations were established only in early 1950s after China's recognition of Mongolia, in 1919 Russia established formal relations with Mongolian nationalists who were planning to declare full independence from the Manchu dynasty. Russia's geopolitical calculations led its government to support Mongolian nationalists in their resolve to drive the Chinese out of Mongolia and reassert some form of independence. Though supportive of Mongolian nationalists' aspirations for independence from China, the new Russian leaders did not support Mongolia's full independence, but rather only close relations with and dependence on Soviet Russia. Moscow was playing a double game - a policy of duplicity

explaining Soviet policy of refraining from according full-scale diplomatic recognition to Mongolia and recognizing its full independence until the end of World War II.

Thus, though the Soviet Union recognized Mongolian sovereignty, it exchanged diplomatic representatives only at the level of ‘envoys’ and the first treaty it concluded in 1921 was not with the Mongolian state, but with the government in power. Moreover, while supporting Mongolia’s adoption of its first Constitution, which was co-authored with them, the Soviets were at the same time secretly negotiating an agreement with China, in which Article Five stipulated that the Soviet Union “recognizes Outer Mongolia as an integral part of the Republic of China, and respects China’s sovereignty therein” and promised to withdraw Soviet troops from Mongolia after negotiations a forthcoming border conference. The treaty was signed in May, 1925, without the Soviets officially notifying Mongolia. By doing so, Russia in fact was trying to impose condominium over sovietized Mongolian puppet state, with dominating role to be played by Russia.

In the mid-1930s, the Soviets felt surrounded by the Axis Powers, including by Japan in the East, which had just invaded part of east China and set up a puppet State of Manchukuo. The Japanese plan was to cut off Russian supplies in Siberia by invading Mongolia. At that point, Soviet Russia concluded a bilateral protocol (1936) whereby Russia introduced its troops into Mongolia to prevent Japanese occupation of Mongolia and parts of Soviet Russia. China protested against Russia’s conclusion of the protocol with Mongolia, denouncing it as a gross violation of the 1925 Agreement.

During World War II Mongolia firmly sided with the Soviet Union, and thus with the Allied Powers, actively and materially contributing to the common efforts to fight the enemies in Europe and in Asia. As a result of its contribution, the Allied powers in Yalta in 1945 agreed to recognize Mongolia’s *de facto* status quo, provided the Mongolian population supported such a status in a national referendum. In October 1945 the Mongolian people overwhelmingly cast their votes in favor of full independence, a fact that the Republic of China could not ignore. On January 6, 1946 the Executive Yuan of the Republic of China officially recognized Mongolia and on February 27 the Soviet Union concluded a treaty of friendship and cooperation with Mongolia, whereby it officially recognized Mongolia’s full independence. Later that year, the Republic of China used a border incident as a pretext to renege on its recognition of Mongolia. When United Nations was established in 1945, Mongolia applied

for its membership. However due to different excuses by the Republic of China and the western powers, its application for membership was rejected several times until 1961.

### **“Security” amidst ideological dispute**

In 1949, when the Communist People’s Republic of China was proclaimed, Mongolia was one of the first to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with it and exchange ambassadors. Even establishment of full diplomatic relations was not enough for the PRC to accept Mongolia’s independent existence. Externally, Mongolia and the PRC were beginning to develop trade, economic and cultural relations, while people-to-people exchanges, especially among Mongolian peoples living on both sides of the state border, were increasing. In 1954 the Chinese leaders secretly approached the Soviets and demanded that Mongolia be returned to China. The Mongolian leadership, again, learned of this a few years later when Sino-Soviet rift intensified and both sides began attacking each other through press and media. By the mid-1950s Mongolia seemed beginning to enjoy good relations with both of its neighbours and there was even some economic competition to invest and build in Mongolia. But it all came to an abrupt halt in early 1960, with both neighbours demanding Mongolia adhere its ideological line. Mongolia was forced to take sides in the increasingly ideological dispute, although it had little stake in the debate. Conscious of past experiences with Russia and China, as well as the amount of assistance that the Soviet Union could provide, the Mongolian leadership opted to support Russia. China immediately withdrew its workers and halted assistance. On the other hand, Mongolia also tried to use the China card to increase Soviet aid. Soon the Soviet Union increased the volume of its assistance as well as political pressure to fully and unequivocally back its position regarding Sino-Soviet dispute, which by that time was turning from ideological to inter-state, covering all the areas of inter-state relations, including trade and investment. Following the rise in Sino-Soviet tension, not only did Soviet troop levels reach 120.000, but also Mongolia’s own armed forces were doubled. Participation in a possible conflict with China was on the minds of many Mongolians.

Thus since the early 1960’s until 1989, when Sino-Soviet relations re-normalized, Mongolia was firmly aligned with the Soviet Union. As an ally, it had to follow the Soviet line in domestic and foreign policies. As a result, its trade with China fell below five percent (mostly border trade), while its trade

with the Soviet Union soared and reached almost ninety percent. In 1966, based on the renewed alliance treaty, Mongolia allowed Soviet troops to be stationed on its territory until Sino-Soviet re-normalization. The Soviet troops, some equipped with weapons of mass destruction, were stationed in Mongolia until 1992. In the late 1960s, when Sino-Soviet conflict was becoming a potential flashpoint, the Soviets considered the idea of making a pre-emptive nuclear strike against Chinese nuclear installations and targets, and including the use of Mongolian territory as forward base. At that time Soviets even unofficially approached the U.S. regarding its possible reaction to such a pre-emptive strike. The U.S. did not support that idea, which would have meant that Mongolia would be spared use as a nuclear pre-emptive launch pad, and if the Chinese retaliated, as a battleground for nuclear exchanges.

### **Distant hopes of neutrality**

In the mid 1920s, when Mongolian nationalists were debating what kind of policy to pursue as an independent state, the elite were divided. Some thought that Mongolia's destiny was tied to the emerging Soviet State, while others were more sympathetic with rising Japan. There were also those who thought that it would be in the country's interest if it could become permanently neutral and would not take sides in disputes between the two neighbouring powers – Russia and China. However, political realities demonstrated that in times of overt political rivalry among great powers, a small, isolated country could not survive as an independent country without aligning itself with one of the regional powers or becoming a member of a regional concert of powers.

During the East-West as well as Sino-Soviet cold wars, Mongolia could not realistically pursue a neutral foreign policy. The principle that was applied rigorously was “either you are with us or against us”. The rigorous conditions set by the realities of the double cold wars began to change at the end of 1980s, when Sino-Soviet relations began to normalize and Mongolia was able to normalize relations with both. Also, the United States at last recognized Mongolia in 1987 which, together with Mongolia's UN membership and establishment of diplomatic relations with over twenty countries, has opened the way to redefine its foreign policy environment.

The changes in international relations in the early 1990s, especially the disintegration of the Soviet bloc followed by the Soviet Union itself, and resulting end of the Cold War provided an opportunity for Mongolia, like for many other countries, to free itself from Soviet influence, redefine its vital national interests

and foreign policy priorities, and formulate its national security and foreign policy concepts based on its own interests. These concepts found reflection in the 1992 new Constitution of Mongolia and later in more detail in 1994 in the country's national security and foreign policy concepts.

### **Basic principles of new foreign policy**

Thus Mongolia declared that its foreign policy objectives would in the future be to ensure its independence and sovereignty by following the trends of human advancement, and not through social experimentation, that it would pursue an open, non-aligned foreign policy and avoid past patterns of becoming overly reliant on any one country or group of countries. Bearing in mind its own foreign policy objectives and its comparative advantage (mainly geographical location) it declared that it would give priority to safeguarding its security and vital national interests primarily by political and diplomatic means and creating favorable external environment for its economic, scientific and technological development.

Mindful of its geographical location and historical experience, Mongolia declared that its priority would continue to be relations with its immediate neighbours, maintaining a balanced relationship with both and develop all-round good-neighbourly cooperation, bearing in mind both traditional relations as well as the specific nature of economic cooperation. The government explained that maintaining a balanced relationship did not mean keeping equidistance from them or taking identical positions on all issues, but meant strengthening trust and developing good-neighbourly relations with both powers. It stated that when dealing with the neighbours, due account would be taken of their policies in regard to the vital national interests of Mongolia. It was specifically emphasized that a policy of non-involvement and neutrality would be pursued in relation to the disputes that might arise between the two neighbours, unless they directly affected Mongolia's national interests, in which case it would follow its vital interests. Both neighbours welcomed this policy.

Bearing in mind the past experiences with its immediate neighbours or Soviet bloc countries, Mongolia declared an open foreign policy in 1990. Thus the second priority of its foreign policy was aimed at developing friendly relations with highly industrialized developed countries of the West and East. It openly declared that it would pursue a non-aligned policy as long as it did not threaten the country's national vital interests. The third direction was to promote relations and strengthen its positions in Asia, especially Northeast and Central Asia.

### **First steps towards active neutrality**

One strength of Mongolia's policy of neutrality with respect to disputes of its immediate neighbours lies in the fact that it coincided with the declared policies of its neighbours. In the early 1990s Russia and China publicly pledged not to use territories of their neighbours against each other. These commitments by Russia and China have been welcomed by all their neighbours, as well as other regional powers and by the international community as a whole. On its part, when Mongolia concluded treaties of friendly relations and cooperation with Russia (1993) and China (1994), it pledged not to allow other countries to use Mongolia's territory or airspace against interests of third countries, meaning first of all against their immediate neighbours. In return both neighbours have expressed support for Mongolia's independent and balanced foreign policy, as defined above, especially its commitment not to allow stationing or transit of weapons of mass destruction through its territory. Mongolia (1992) declared its territory a single-state nuclear-weapon-free zone as an important part of its security policy, and as an essential element of ensuring its neutrality in future Sino-Russian disputes. Currently, this policy enjoys wide support not only of the neighbours, but also of the region and the world. In 1998 the United Nations General Assembly<sup>1</sup> welcomed "Mongolia's active and positive role in developing peaceful, friendly and mutually beneficial relations with the States of the region and other States" and expressed conviction that "the internationally recognized status of Mongolia will contribute to enhancing stability and confidence-building in the region as well as promote Mongolia's security by strengthening its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders and the preservation of its ecological balance". The Assembly further endorsed and supported "Mongolia's good-neighbourly and balanced relationship with its neighbours as an important element of strengthening regional peace, security and stability".

General Assembly Resolution 53/77 D mentioned above has demonstrated not only recognition of the international status of Mongolia. It also showed that its foreign policy has matured to a degree that its policy of neutrality and non-involvement is recognized as an important element of strengthening regional peace, security and stability. This international recognition lays the foundations of further expanding Mongolia's policy of neutrality beyond Sino-Russian disputes or other Sino-Russian relations, that is could cover relations with other countries of the region, especially relations with the regional powers.

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<sup>1</sup> See United Nations General Assembly resolution 53/77 D adopted 4 December 1998

### **Emerging relations in the post Cold War Asia**

After the end of the Cold War the bipolar world has turned into one of a unipolarity. The U.S. is the sole superpower, whose influence is felt everywhere. Nevertheless this unipolar world cannot be sustained longer. New regional powers are on the rise that are not only questioning this unipolarity, but would try to redraw the political and economic map, redistribute power and influence and will compete for regional influence and dominance. This will lead to open competition, rivalry and discord among influential and emerging powers. Ascendance of China as a potential pre-eminent economic, political and military power is one of the clearest emerging realities of today's Asia. That is why not only regional but also world powers are courting China. The main debate about China is how much longer would it be a status quo power and when and how it would assert its power, whether or when would it use its growing economic, political and military power to assert its territorial and historical claims for hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, as it tried prematurely during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution four decades ago. Mongolians are also trying to foresee Chinese general policies towards its neighbours, especially Mongolia.

China is not the only rising power in Asia. There are other traditional and newly emerging regional powers, such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, India and Russia that are pursuing their policies to partially accommodate to the Chinese where necessary and to compete where and when they can. There is growing competition among them as well. In this dual policy of cooperation and competition, emerging manifestations of neo-cold war and collusion of strategic and economic interests of the major and emerging powers in Asia, smaller countries, as during the Cold War, would soon be forced to take sides. In Mongolia's case it could soon be asked or expected to follow either Russia (where most of its economic and energy interests lie, and which does not harbor territorial claims over Mongolia), China (where its trade, economic, investment and trade infrastructure interests lie most), Japan (where its technology and possible investment are most welcome), the Republic of Korea (whose trade, technology and medium-size investment interests are also welcome, and where of thousands of Mongolian immigrant workers bring in hard currency to Mongolia) or the United States (the world's foremost power whose democratic values Mongolians share) or a coalition of states.

Therefore Mongolia's policy of neutrality and non-involvement in regard to Sino-Russian disputes which do not directly affect Mongolia's vital interests, needs to be formally expanded to include not only some other Sino-Russian

issues but also embrace its relations with other regional powers. The emerging realities of competition and confrontation among Asian powers demand that Mongolia maintain good-neighbourly relations with all of them and thus pursue a policy of active neutrality, which would be understood and accepted by all the major powers. When declaring such a policy, it needs to underline, like in the case with Russia and China, that it would pursue the policy of active neutrality as long as that policy does not affect its vital national interests, and that in the latter case it would follow its vital interests. This internationally recognized and supported foreign policy of Mongolia could be best reflected and defined in its emerging and widely recognized nuclear-weapon-free status.

### **Essence of the nuclear-weapon-free status**

Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status is essentially an expression of its rejection of nuclear policies of great powers and of nuclear proliferation, and at the same time a manifestation of its desire for neutrality and non-involvement in nuclear power rivalries or calculations of not only Russia and China, but of all nuclear-weapon states. When Mongolia's single-state NWFZ status would be internationally recognized and legally guaranteed, it would in fact define its internationally accepted regime with all the benefits that come with NWFZ status, including security assurances more rigid than NPT verification regimes, support in peaceful uses of nuclear energy and science, etc. As such, it could also serve as an example for other states which, due to their geographical or geopolitical location, cannot form part of traditional (i.e. group) NWFZs. At present there is still hesitancy on the part of some nuclear-weapon states to accept in principle the notion and concept of single-state NWFZ, since they believe that that would detract from or undermine the incentive for establishing traditional (group) NWFZs. However, there are real-life cases when a state cannot, due to its geographical location or for some geo-political considerations form part of a traditional NWFZ. There are also cases when a regional NWFZ cannot be established due to the fact that some potential states are either under nuclear umbrella of a nuclear-weapon state and enjoy "umbrella" protection, while others cannot, or some enjoy the protection of alliance relations, while others do not.

### **Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status – an important part of its security**

The right of any country to ensure its security without undermining the security of others is a well recognized fact. That especially applies to nuclear

security issues. For this reason the 1975 “U.N. comprehensive study on the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects” pointed out that “obligations relating to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones may be assumed not only by groups of states, including entire continents or large geographical regions, but also by small groups of states and *even individual countries* (emphasis added).<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, in 1976 the U.N. General Assembly expressed the hope that the foregoing study – together with the subsequent views, observations, and suggestions offered on it – would further enhance whatever efforts a country or countries may take concerning NWFZs and be useful in the establishment of such zones.<sup>3</sup> Mongolia is not the only one that cannot benefit from regional (traditional) NWFZs. There are other states that because of their geographic or geo-political location, or for political or any other reason cannot form part of regional/traditional NWFZs. Such countries like Nepal, Afghanistan, Austria, Cyprus, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Malta, Japan or even two Koreas have difficulties in forming part of a regional NWFZ. Under certain conditions even Israel might choose to opt for a non-traditional NWFZ in the Middle East pending the final resolution of the basic disputes with its immediate and other neighbours.

The past decade has amply demonstrated that the time of creation of “easy” NWFZs is almost over and that establishing of NWFZs in Central Europe, the Middle East, South Asia or Northeast Asia would need more innovative and imaginative approach than the previous ones, if they succeed. The reason is that these proposed zones touch upon the interests of nuclear powers, have disputes among each other, some of them would need actual withdrawal of nuclear weapons, dismantling or destruction of nuclear-weapon weapons or their infrastructure. In the Northeast Asian case, not only some states have competing strategic interests, but some also have foreign military bases and nuclear umbrella. That is why United Nations 1999 guidelines on the establishment of NWFZs on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned<sup>4</sup> cannot be easily applied and therefore needs to be revised to allow for and reflect the challenges that the above-mentioned proposed zones encounter. Furthermore, the 1999 guidelines did

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<sup>2</sup> See UNGO, 30 th Session. Official Records. Document no. 27A (A/10027/add.1, p.31). The resolution “Comprehensive Study on the Question of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in All its Aspects” as adopted on 10 December, 1976

<sup>3</sup> See paragraph 8 of UNGA Resolution 31/70.

<sup>4</sup> See document A/51/182/Rev. 1 of 9 June 1999 (pp.71-77)

not address the issue of creation of single-state NWFZs. The guidelines only made reference that “owing to its unique geographical circumstances, Mongolia has declared its nuclear-weapon-free status in order to promote its security.” This status was welcomed by the General Assembly in its consensus resolution 53/77 D of 4 December 1998.” At that time the nuclear powers thought that Mongolia would most probably be the only exception. But as recent events clearly demonstrate, Mongolia is not at all and will not be the only exceptional case. Even the issues of de-nuclearization of DPRK or peacefully addressing the Iranian case would need an innovative and flexible approach.

Criticism that creation of single-state NWFZs would detract from or undermine the incentives for establishing traditional (group) NWFZs is unconvincing and in fact un-productive. It discriminates against individual states and violates their right to ensure security through political and legal means. As the saying goes, in most cases the security lies in numbers and not vice versa. Therefore single states need more assurances than groups of states.

As a result of Mongolia’s adoption (2000) of a law defining its nuclear-weapon-free status, and the diplomatic negotiations held during 1997-2000, the five nuclear weapon states (P5) made a joint statement (October 2000) providing political security assurances to Mongolia. However Mongolia and many other countries declared that political assurances were not sufficient to institutionalize Mongolia’s status. Therefore the P5 non-governmental experts, Mongolia and representatives of the United Nations met in Sapporo to address the issue of Mongolia’s status and recommended that in order to make the status more credible and legally based, Mongolia and its two neighbours, or Mongolia and all P5, needed to conclude an agreement institutionalizing that status. The experts all agreed that the main provisions of NWFZ treaties could be *mutatis mutandis* reflected in the agreement, reflecting at the same time the geopolitical nuances and realities. On the basis of the Sapporo recommendations, the Mongolian side has approached its neighbours with the proposal to conclude such an agreement, to which they agreed in principle.

### **Challenges to creating a NEA-NWFZ**

Changes occurring in the post Cold War period are most dramatic in Northeast Asia, which, after the 1997 financial crisis, is resuming its dynamism and is again becoming a natural focal point of the major powers. Today no one doubts that the situation in Northeast Asia and relations among the countries of the region are of great importance for world peace, security and stability. At

the same time it is still the region of the world that lacks collective security arrangement or mechanism. Bilateral and trilateral relations, especially among the great powers, remain the bedrocks of peace and stability in the region.

Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, as well as other traditional and newly emerging security issues of the region, need forms of dialogue, confidence-building and cooperation. There are many ideas and proposals, starting from developing a permanent mechanism of dialogue at the governmental level on non-political and non-controversial issues to initiating government-level regional security talks. There are also different views concerning the number of states that need to be involved and whether an extra-regional power should be included. Since analysis of different proposals needs a separate study of its own, I would focus only on the proposals aimed at turning the Northeast Asian region into a NWFZ (NEA-NWFZ). Such proposals have been put forward by many, including the states of the region such as the DPRK. There have been proposals to create such a zone on the basis of the formula “Three Plus Three”, in reference to two Koreas, Japan plus U.S., China and Russia. A modified version of the proposal adds Mongolia as the seventh party. There is a proposal to create a “limited” NWFZ, which would include some parts of China, Russia and the United States. As a first step to creating such a zone it is proposed that the non-nuclear states of the region create a league of Non-Nuclear states. However, as of today none of the regional states officially propose establishment of the zone, recognizing that its creation would be most difficult since strategic interests of the three of the five nuclear-weapon states overlap, some have alliance commitments and are being provided with “nuclear umbrella” by their ally. There is still deep distrust among some the members of the region dating from past history which needs to be adequately addressed.

It is clear that denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is *sine qua non* for establishing a NEA-NWFZ. Without successfully addressing the North Korean nuclear issue, it will be impossible to create an atmosphere conducive to serious multilateral negotiations. Such issues as withdrawal of U.S. nuclear umbrella from Japan and the Republic of Korea will have far-reaching effects on the region. On the other hand, disregarding this and other hard core issues would only stall the real talks.

Addressing the sensitive issue of DPRK’s nuclear program needs appropriate setting and agreed “rules of the game”. The four party talks have proven to be inadequate. The six party talks underway under the stewardship

of China seems to be more productive, though there is still no guarantee that the talks could be successful in the near future. However, since it is the only inter-governmental mechanism that is trying to address, if not solve, the Korean nuclear and related issues, it needs to be supported in every way, i.e. politically and organizationally. The research work undertaken by the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc. in association with the Fletcher School (Tufts University) has raised pertinent questions regarding the structure, capacity, obstacles and other factors that the talks are or will be encountering. At the same time the study shows that with right attitude and patient approach the six party talks could yield results and might even form the basis of the future Northeast Asian security and dialogue mechanism.

Since most issues of Northeast Asia denuclearization are inter-connected the hard issues of confidence, nuclear umbrella, security assurances, other “inducements”, return to and role of NPT and IAEA, Japan’s surplus plutonium issue, etc. need to be addressed. Since NEA-NWFZ cannot be established quickly and easily, intermediate measures and steps will be required and should address the difficult issues, while simultaneously promote confidence among the parties to the talks. One of such measures could be creation of separate single-state NWFZs<sup>5</sup> by some of the countries of the region, which would take them out from under the nuclear umbrella and at the same time provide them with the needed general security assurances that are usually provided by the nuclear-weapon states to NWFZs (until a full-fledged NEA-NWFZ is established). On the other hand the party that is not under any nuclear umbrella could also be provided with general security assurances as a single-state NWFZ that could perhaps include assurances from use or threat of conventional force. This way the parties could level the playing field and promote confidence. Leveling the playing field has an important role to play not only in improving the atmosphere at the talks, but also in reaching mutually acceptable understanding or resolution. In this connection the Northeast Asian Regional Action Agenda, adopted in February 2005 has underlined that “Mongolia’s

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<sup>5</sup> The obligations would include non-acquisition of nuclear weapons or assistance in acquisition, rigid and mutually agreed safeguards and export-control restrictions, non-stationing of nuclear weapons or parts thereof or non-transit through its territory, positive and negative security assurances from nuclear-weapon states and perhaps conventional security assurances from the neighboring states. The issues of possible visits of nuclear capable ships and aircraft and some other issues could be mutually agreed. States with nuclear-weapons could commit not to contribute to any act which might constitute a violation of the single-State NWFZ status.

NWFS could provide an example of a political and realistic approach in addressing nuclear issues involving individual states.”

The six party talks are the only inter-governmental talks aimed at addressing the Korean nuclear issues. However, instructions of government delegations tend to be somewhat rigid. It is therefore important that civil society organizations (CSOs) of the countries of the region work both with their governments to induce them to be more flexible as well as among themselves to propose bold, yet reasonable ideas that could help bring closer the positions of parties to the talks. Thus for example a model Northeast Asian nuclear weapon-free zone treaty has been elaborated by an independent peace research institute called Peace Depot a few years ago that could serve as a good basis to discuss the possible structure and main elements of the NWFZ. Also CSOs could undertake analysis of the positions of governments with regard to the hard core issues, the political, social and even psychological/ideological obstacles, organize workshops to encourage more bold and innovative thinking. Working at the national level, CSOs could also put pressure on governments either through NGO advocacy or awareness raising activities, carrying out polls, or even proposing face-saving solutions to successfully address the issues. It is for this reason that Northeast Asian Conflict Prevention Network of GPPAC has expressed its intention to launch a Civil Society Forum in parallel to the Six-party talks and pursue innovative and flexible approaches that are needed for the realization of NEA-NWFZ. This initiative needs the fullest support. Perhaps this civil society forum could turn into an effective, vocal and influential movement for the establishment of NEA-NWFZ that could find a way to form a true partnership with governments and become as effective and successful as the Nobel Prize winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines.