



MONGOLIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SANJAA BAYAR,
PRIME MINISTER OF MONGOLIA,
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

September 24, 2008

New York

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

This session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time when the international community is faced with formidable challenges and threats of much more complex nature. Global problems ranging from poverty, violence, inequality and disparity, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, natural disasters and other acute problems have been further impeded by the current global financial, food and energy crises. As we live in an increasingly globalized and interdependent world, the solutions demand our concerted action.

And it is no accident that in the face of the pressing need to formulate our shared vision on how to collectively address these complex challenges we turn to the United Nations. The United Nations has throughout manifested its undisputed authority in identifying ways and means to address major global problems. Yet, we also agree that our world Organization needs to be reformed and adapted to the evolving international realities with a view to ensuring its efficient functioning. Some important steps to this end have already been taken.

The General Assembly made a notable progress in the follow-up of the 2005 World Summit, including in areas of the system-wide coherence, mandate review, General Assembly revitalization and management and secretariat reform. In our view, we need to take bold decision on what have already agreed and move further expeditiously. Furthermore, we consider the decision of the 62 session of the Assembly to begin intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform as an important step in the right direction. The Security Council reform is an essential part of an overall institutional reform of the UN.

The current session of the General Assembly provides further opportunity to reinforce our commitment to democratize and reform the UN as the President Brockman made this issue as part of the main theme of the general debate. We believe that small states that make up majority of the UN membership are and should be driving force behind the democratization process. It is an ongoing process where, *inter alia*, the ability of developing countries to participate meaningfully in global decision making ought to be enhanced. My delegation looks forward to actively discussing these and other related reform issues during the current session of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

The main theme of this session as "The impact of the global food crises on poverty and hunger in the world" is most timely. Steep increase in staple food prices lead to a global food crisis. Today, millions of vulnerable people in poor countries who were barely making their ends meet face even greater challenges. It is a tragic setback that more than 75 million additional people have been driven into hunger and poverty because of the food crisis.

The economic challenges posed by the soaring food prices are daunting. They take toll on inflation rates, breed economic protectionism and seriously impede economic development for developing nations. These countries also had to cope with consequent macroeconomic implications concerning the nexus between food price increase and overall inflation rate. Here, special needs of the Net food importing developing countries (NFIDCs) ought to be immediately addressed by the international community so that to secure their right to purchase food and agricultural products in this crisis situation. In the long-run it has become indispensable for

vulnerable countries to focus on policy actions that would help boost agricultural production and build national resilience to similar shocks in future.

The Government of Mongolia having recognized the urgent need to address the food crisis took the necessary actions both at policy and practical levels to reduce its severe impact on the vulnerable strata of its population.

My Government has designated this year as the "Year for Food Supply and Safety" and aims to achieve three main objectives of promoting food production to reduce country's dependence on imported goods, raising public awareness about food quality and ensuring safe food production and processing in the country. In pursuit of the first objective I launched at the beginning of this year a Third National Crop Rehabilitation Drive (Campaign of Reclaiming Virgin Lands) to revive domestic agricultural production. As a result of this nation-wide campaign Mongolia is expected to ensure self-sufficiency in major staple food products by 2010.

Mongolia is also keen to implement specific measures recommended in the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) prepared by the High Level Taskforce on Global Food Security Crisis in accordance with the priorities and objectives of newly formed Government.

Mr. President,

Countries all over the world find themselves intimately affected by oil price hikes. In our case, the situation is aggravated by the fact that a surge in imported petroleum prices tends to be followed by overall price increase.

Coal remains the primary energy source used for electricity and heating in many countries. The use of inefficient coal burning technology causes air pollution, impacting negatively on the population's health and the environment. Therefore, research, development and deployment of clean coal technology are, indeed, a top energy priority for coal-producing countries like Mongolia.

The most effective way to mitigate these factors is to improve energy efficiency and pursue energy diversification. In this regard, Mongolia commends efforts of member states and international organizations in the field of research, development, deployment, and transfer of innovative energy technologies such as renewables, cleaner and low-carbon technologies, and nuclear power. These efforts are crucial, as we seek to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Ensuring energy security is a challenge that requires a comprehensive solution both nationally and internationally. No country in the world is endowed with or has developed all possible energy sources. So, each country has a vested interest in energy cooperation and has something to contribute to it.

Mongolia gives special priority to energy cooperation in its immediate region, i.e. Northeast Asia. An institutional foundation of such cooperation has already been laid with regular sessions of the Senior Officials Committee on Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia. The First Session of this Committee hosted by the Mongolian Government in November 2005 established the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia. The Tavan tolgoi, Mongolia's huge coking coal project, has an important role to play in such sub-regional cooperation.

The sub-regional cooperation in energy sector combined with ongoing efforts to energize the implementation of the Greater Tumen River Initiative could be conducive to furthering the prospects for economic integration in Northeast Asia, one of the most dynamic and diverse regions of the world.

Mongolia strongly believes that integrating its economy into the regional integration process is one of the best means to overcome the developmental difficulties it faces today. Unfortunately, small and vulnerable economies usually face enormous challenges in integrating their economies into the regional and international integration process, owing to their backwardness and inadequacy in technology and infrastructure.

To enable them to respond to the opportunities created by globalization, they need support from their development partners in the form of market access, simplification and relaxation of the rules of origin, technical assistance in trade, transfer of technology and removal of bottlenecks to trade. In this regard, we hope that the upcoming High level midterm review of the Almaty Program of Action of Landlocked Developing Countries will come up with recommendations of tangible actions and deliverables to enhance the beneficial integration of landlocked developing countries into regional and global trading systems. Furthermore, for the Doha Round, to be successful, it should result in establishing more favorable and fair terms of trade for developing countries, especially those with specific needs.

As for our national contribution to the successful implementation of the Almaty Program of Action, my Government developed and approved a comprehensive action plan – “Transit Mongolia” – with a purpose of addressing Mongolia’s landlockedness through pro-active, far-reaching measures for modernizing the transport system in Mongolia. This “Transit Mongolia” program is open to interested multilateral, bilateral and private institutions to contribute, cooperate and invest.

Mr. President,

Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) back in 2000 we have passed midway in our efforts to implement them. The progress on MDGs implementation across the globe reveals a largely contrasting picture: some countries find themselves in more advanced stages of achievement, while others are still lagging far behind on all or many important goals. Thus, the urgent need to foster an effective global cooperation aimed at assisting the off-track countries in their efforts to reach the relevant targets by 2015. In this respect, my delegation looks forward to tomorrow’s high-level discussion to come up with bold and specific commitments to action.

Mongolia stands strongly committed to achieving the MDGs. Over the last few years (2004-2007) our economy has been growing steadily with an average GDP growth at 9.1 percent. GNP per capita has grown since 2003 two and a half fold, reaching a little less than USD 1500 early this year. The second progress report on national MDGs, released last December, revealed that out of 24 Mongolia-specific MDG targets, about 60 per cent have been achieved or are likely to be achieved by 2015. However, important goals of halving poverty, providing housing and ensuring environmental sustainability still remain most challenging ones and require undivided focus and redoubled efforts.

With rich deposits of coal, copper, gold, molybdenum and uranium, most of them still largely untapped, Mongolia is, indeed, faced with unprecedented opportunity to embark upon the path of rapid economic growth and sustainable development if we are able to overcome partisan division which have in the our recent past all too often obstructed our onward movement.

It is in this vein that the two main political parties, in an unprecedented move, set aside their longstanding differences and formed a unity government only a few days ago following the fifth democratic general elections of June 29. The results of the elections, concluded as free and fair by over 80 observers from more than 20 countries, gave an undeniable majority to the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) with 45 seats out of total 76 seats in the parliament. However, in face of the pressing need to forge national consensus on major developmental issues the MPRP has decided to voluntarily give away its right to unilaterally form its own government and concluded an agreement with the Mongolian Democratic Party.

Our two parties' historic decision to work hand in hand is a testimony to our commitment to the wellbeing and prosperity of the people of Mongolia. I call it the fourth historic choice of my people over the last 100 years – since the declaration of independence in 1911, abolition of feudalism in 1921-1924, embrace of democracy in 1990. I am most confident that this unity will greatly contribute to pulling our efforts together to collectively succeed in achieving the MDGs by 2015 and the MDGs-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy by 2021, thus substantially improving the living standards of our people and upgrading Mongolia into a middle-income country.

Mr. President,

In our globalized world, no nation can achieve its goals all on its own and neither can Mongolia. Constructive engagement in world affairs through multilateral cooperation mechanisms with the UN at the center, and deeper integration into the world economy will thus continue to be the cornerstone of Mongolia's foreign policy. I understand all too well that existence of a stable, peaceful and prosperous world is a condition sine qua non for a fulfillment of my or any other government's promise to its people. With this in mind, I wish to reaffirm Mongolia's strong resolve to continue its active engagement in the work of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations and processes and her commitment to the world Organization as a central coordinating instrument of common efforts of the family of nations to address complex challenges of our times.

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