



MONGOLIA

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STATEMENT

BY H.E. MR. TSAKHIA ELBEGDORJ, PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA
AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
ON THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

September 24, 2012

Mr. President Vuk Jeremic
Mr. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,
Excellencies, Ladies & Gentleman

One of the major goals of Mongolia's transition to democracy was aimed at establishing a society ruled by law. Today after more than 20 years since our democratic revolution – where not a single window was shattered – I confidently reaffirm our commitment to the rule of law.

I commend the Secretary-General's leadership focusing on this issue, as it is essential for both democratic values and for economic prosperity.

Human rights and the rule of law are interlinked. They belong to the universal and indivisible core values and principles of mankind. If there is no rule of law, it is not possible to ensure human rights and full enjoyment of freedom. This is at the heart, the core, of the social contract between the State and its people. It requires concrete measures to ensure adherence to the principles of the supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, and fairness in applying the law.

Mr. President,

The rule of law and corruption cannot co-exist together. Freedom, human rights and the rule of law are non negotiable, as is the fight against corruption. The law should apply equally for anyone. It is a core principle of democracy that no one is above the law – no one. That includes everyone from high government officials to ordinary citizens.

Historically, Mongolians have governed the state by rule of law. We have strong penalties for corruption. In developing nations, corruption is the mortal

enemy of democracy. It is like an infectious disease – it must be attacked head on, it must be a priority.

The crime called corruption is committed by public servants, and not citizens. The fight against corruption is a test for all leaders and public servants. Since corruption builds power and wealth, some who commit corruption try to use the court of public opinion to escape the court of law.

There are strong relations between corruption and socio-economic development. When you have higher levels of corruption, you have less development. This fight for the rule of law, therefore, is also a fight for more transparent and successful economic development.

Education is crucial in the fight against corruption. Educated populations where citizens know their rights do not let their leaders abuse their power. Mongolia is a young democracy. Our success is not just political or economic; it must be judicial as well. We need an independent judiciary – and focused on creating a judiciary that is immune from political pressure. We have more than 20 new legislative acts to bring structural reform of our legal system.

Mr. President,

We see the rule of law as a guarantee as the fundamental human rights and freedom. Governments are created by people – and must serve people. Those in government have a duty to put the rights of individuals first – and not their own personal gain. Governments are not above the law – and government should honor human rights and never take human life. I believe capital punishment is wrong – it degrades human dignity. It brings no peace to society. It does not deter crime and does not lift up mankind.

Since June 2009, Mongolia has been commuting death sentences. I have declared a moratorium as President. We are working on legislation to abolish the death penalty once and for all.

Mr. President,

Last year, Mongolia assumed the presidency over the Community of Democracies. My top priority will be educating on the evils of corruption, building zero tolerance for corruption and strengthening capacity to fight corruption.

Advancing rule of law is a top priority for us – and we applaud the effort by the international community. I am grateful that the United Nations, and Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in particular, has made the rule of law a top priority. It is a passion on mine and a goal of Mongolia as well – because our democratic progress and economic success depends upon it.