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STATEMENT BY MONGOLIA HEAD OF DELEGATION
AT THE 17TH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Athens

2 December 2009

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

OSCE is the only institution in which the countries of Europe, Central Asia and North America can engage in dialogue and cooperation on issues of hard and soft security, including disarmament, economic cooperation, protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law. In this light, I would like to commend warmly the Greece Chairmanship for launching this year the "Corfu Process" to address European security challenges with a concrete aim to restore and further strengthen confidence and cooperation.

Mongolia welcomes the intention of the in-coming Chairman-in-Office, Kazakhstan, to focus on issues of common concern of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, since four of the five officially recognized nuclear-weapon States are members of the OSCE. U.S. President's pledge to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world and Russia-US agreement in principle to reduce further their strategic nuclear weapons are positive signs that need to be followed up by other nuclear-weapon states and supported by the international community as a whole. The 2010 NPT Review Conference could mark a milestone in this respect. Effort of every state, nuclear-weapon or non-nuclear-weapon, is important. Thus Mongolia, which in 1992 declared its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone, is working to institutionalize that status so that its territory would not be used by any state for nuclear-weapons related purposes. That we see as our practical contribution to mutual trust, regional security and stability.

Mongolia agrees that OSCE needs to focus on Afghanistan, a strategically located Central Asian state, internal developments in which can have serious implications for international peace and stability. We believe that addressing the immediate security and developmental challenges of Afghanistan should be accompanied with discussion of its long-term political development and its role and place in the international relations. Thus in the past century its leaders have on a number of occasions raised the possibility or necessity of its neutrality. Perhaps it is an idea that is worth looking at by its current leadership, its immediate neighbors and other stakeholders.

Economic dimensions of security

Economic cooperation between OSCE members and its Asian partners is an important integral part of larger economic development between Europe and Asia. It is in that context that the issue of most efficient and cost effective transit trade was discussed in 2007 in Ulaanbaatar by OSCE members and its Asian partners. Situated on the shortest physical route connecting Europe and Asia, Mongolia has been working to

reduce the physical and administrative barriers to rail transport so as to promote faster and more effective flow of a two way trade between Europe and Asia. It has been holding talks with Russia and China in this regard. We have made some progress. Both European and Asian states would be the direct beneficiaries of such transit route. Therefore participation of European Union in these talks and bringing their widely accepted and applied transit transport standards would benefit every State without exception. We express the hope that this would logically fit into next Chairman-in-Office's objective regarding this important economic dimension of security.

Human dimension of security

Looking to the future, in February 2010, as agreed to be the Permanent Council, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, together with OSCE will organize in Ulaanbaatar a workshop entitled "*Combating Modern Slavery: National, Regional, International experiences*", which was agreed to by the Permanent Council.

Finally, along with other partners, Mongolia strives to make its modest contribution to the multidimensional activities of OSCE. Thus, I would like to inform you that Mongolia has decided to host the Asian Partners conference in 2011. The concrete date and topics of the conference will be discussed with OSCE members and our Asian Partners in 2010.

Thank you.