

**SPEECH BY MR.MUNH-ORGIL TSEND,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MONGOLIA,
AT THE 12TH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by joining the previous speakers in expressing our gratitude to the Government of Bulgaria and its worthy Foreign Minister, our OSCE Chairman-In-Office, Dr. Solomon Passy, for the excellent organization of this Conference and the heartwarming hospitality extended to all of us here in Bulgaria.

It is a distinct honour and a pleasure for me to represent Mongolia in its new capacity as a Partner for Cooperation at the 12th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council. On behalf of the Government of Mongolia, I thank all the Participating States of the OSCE for their unanimous support of Mongolia's application for a partner status. Our special and very warm words of gratitude also go out to Dr. Solomon Passy and his able staff in the diplomatic service of Bulgaria for taking the lead in the expeditious processing of our application.

Becoming a partner of the OSCE is a significant event in the foreign policy of Mongolia. This is the first time in its long history that Mongolia is joining a trans-European security and cooperation arrangement.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia has supported the OSCE principles and objectives since its beginning as a Helsinki process in 1973 and shares its comprehensive and co-operative approach to security and related issues of economic and human development. We believe that the OSCE – already the largest regional security organization in the world covering euro-atlantic and euro-asian communities “from Vancouver to

Vladivostok” - with its unique philosophical premise that security is indivisible, could and should play an increasingly important role in fostering further understanding and stability in the world.

For Mongolia, the OSCE would become an important forum to meet old friends and make new ones, exchange views, ideas and information on a wide range of issues of our common interest. Mongolia has had close and extensive relations with almost half of the OSCE member states when the “iron curtain” divided Europe, and we have developed friendly cooperation with all the OSCE member states since the “curtain” was lifted. Mongolia is grateful to all its friends who contributed to its development, and assisted and continue to assist in its difficult transition to a political democracy and market economy.

Mr. Chairman,

It is, however, not only common bonds of history and common borders that Mongolia shares with the OSCE and its member states. We also share a common belief in human dignity and the curing effects of tolerance and education. Successive governments of Mongolia worked hard to combine political reforms aimed at creating a vibrant multiparty parliamentary democracy with the economic and social reforms to eradicate poverty, and related social and economic ills.

Mongolia is learning the hard way that political, economic, environmental and human dimensions of security are indeed intertwined and closely interdependent. Poverty, unemployment and the resulting sense of hopelessness can become breeding grounds for dangerous populism and political opportunism, which, in turn, could threaten to bring to a grinding halt development of a responsible, accountable and transparent political system. Lack of the rule of law in general, and lack of an independent and professional judiciary in particular, could

become, in our experience, a much more formidable challenge for economic development than a lack of capital or other resources.

We are learning as we move on that there is indeed no “one size fits all” recipe for success when it comes to building democracy and developing a country. We learn that it takes time for ideas to grow and take hold in a society, that it takes time to build capacity to fully embrace and implement reforms, and that it takes patience and local knowledge to properly pace and sequence the reforms. We have made our fair share of mistakes, but we have also advanced in many respects as well. We boast a highly entrepreneurial private sector producing 75 per cent of the GDP, an active civil society, a developing although in many ways struggling free media, a vibrant parliamentary democracy with political parties maturing with every election.

In short, much has been done, but we in Mongolia know much more remains to be done. In this context, Mongolia hopes to benefit from the wealth of experience gained by the OSCE and its Secretariat in promoting economic, environmental and human dimensions of security in particular relating to strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law. We count on the OSCE Secretariat to assist us in taking the full advantage of the opportunities available.

Mongolia looks forward to working with all our friends within the OSCE on a wide range of issues on its agenda and it will strive to contribute its modest share to the common cause.

Thank you.