

STATEMENT BY DR. BALDAN ENKHMANDAKH,
VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF MONGOLIA
AT THE OSCE ASIAN PARTNERS
FOR CO-OPERATION
Helsinki, 3 December 2008

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by joining the previous speakers in expressing our gratitude to the Ministerial Troika and the Secretary General for their capable guidance and competence in successfully leading the Asian Partners Contact Group throughout the year. Our special thanks go to the Chair of Asian Partners Contact Group, for its continued efforts and dedication to promote our cooperation throughout the year. Mongolia also welcomes incoming Finnish Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group and expresses its readiness to work with it so as to contribute to the success of the Finnish Chairmanship, and partnership cooperation in general.

We are of the view that this partnership institution plays an important role in OSCE activities, and that Partners' Co-operation meeting as well as this Ministerial meeting will provide us with yet another opportunity to exchange views on further fruitful co-operation.

This year OSCE faced a serious challenge in the national security area, namely the conflict between Russia and Georgia. Mongolia expresses confidence that OSCE would be instrumental in its mission for a peaceful and just resolution of this conflict. The Mongolian Government calls upon both sides to continue the diplomatic dialogue and abide by their obligations under international law, including protection of civilians, and to facilitate full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to assist those in need.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia actively participated in the Conference on strengthening co-operation between OSCE and its Asian Partners for Co-operation held last month in Kabul, Afghanistan. It provided an opportunity to look at Afghanistan's state institutions and the challenges that they are facing, at the border status, illicit drug production and narcotic trafficking that affect not only the stability of that country but also security of OSCE member states in the region. We believe that Afghanistan's stability and development may ultimately be connected to its possible neutrality status in the region, an issue that had been raised time and again by the Afghans themselves and by some influential international players throughout the past century. This issue connected with Afghanistan's and its immediate neighbors' security, need to be closely and creatively looked at from the stand-point of the globalizing world in this XXI century. Experience of some neutral and non-aligned OSCE states could be useful.

Distinguished delegates,

The Mongolian Institute for Strategic Studies, in conjunction with the Marshall Center, is planning to host a conference on the lessons learned from the CSCE process and the possible relevance for other regions. We would be grateful if delegates of OSCE Participating States and Partners for Co-operation would share with us their views on this important issue and contribute their ideas to us either before or during the conference. The Mongolian side is interested in having some involvement of OSCE in this conference.

In conclusion, we express our hope that the close relations and cooperation which so happily exist between all of us will successfully continue in the years to come, for the benefit of all the states involved in the process, and of the entire world.

Thank you for your attention.