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THESIS

**POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF PERMANENT NEUTRALITY
ON MONGOLIA'S DEFENSE FOREIGN COOPERATION**

by

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DEFENSE FOREIGN COOPERATION**

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ABSTRACT

The Mongolians have debated a potential declaration of permanent neutrality since September 2015. These debates have contained little or no consideration of the potential effects on Mongolia's defense cooperation with foreign military. Mongolia has developed defense cooperation with Russia, China, and other countries in order to enhance military capability and interoperability. The country's defense cooperation allows Mongolia's contribution to global peace and stability activities as a vital foreign policy tool of the country.

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If Mongolia became permanently neutral, it would likely cause defense cooperation challenges, such as discouraging current partners, and potential disengagement of current cooperation. Since Mongolia has limited military capacity, foreign cooperation for defense is crucial. Such cooperation will enhance Mongolia's defense capacity and enable it to participate in global stability affairs. This thesis assesses that the permanent neutrality policy is not suitable for Mongolia's defense foreign cooperation.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAPTC	Association of Asia-Pacific Peace Operations Training Centers
EU	European Union
GPOI	Global Peace Operations Initiative
IMET	International military education program
MAF	Mongolian Armed Forces
MPAT	Military training assistance program
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-commissioned officer
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PKO	Peacekeeping operations
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PSOTC	Peace Support Operations Training Center
PTEC	Partnership Training and Education Centers
ROK	Republic of Korea
U.S.	United States
UN	United Nations
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH

Subsequent to the Mongolian Democratic Revolution in 1990 and adoption of the new Constitution in 1992, Mongolia developed new national security and foreign policies. Similar to other small states situated near powerful nations and influenced by their location and geopolitical environment, Mongolia has pursued a peaceful, open, independent, and multi-pillared foreign policy in order to promote its security concerns and maintain sovereignty.

As a result of its open and multi-pillared foreign policy, Mongolia maintains friendly relations and wide-ranging cooperation with its two neighboring countries, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. At the same time, Mongolia is also developing bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries.

Since September 2015, when Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj and his foreign policy advisors started campaigns to institutionalize a “permanent status of neutrality,” Mongolia's political authorities, scholars, researchers, and public have debated Mongolia's declaring itself as a permanently neutral state or continuing its current foreign policy (well known as a Mongolia's “Third Neighbor” foreign policy).

The president and his legal policy team have submitted a draft law, on maintaining the permanent status of neutrality, to the parliament for ratification. The National Security Council of Mongolia has supported the president's “permanent status of neutrality” position and subsequently submitted its own directive to the Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy of the State Great Hural (Mongolia's parliament). As of 10 September 2016, the State Great Hural has not discussed the issue of declaring permanent neutrality status.

In the framework of Mongolia's constitutional documents, *National Security Concept of Mongolia*, *Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy*, and *Basics of Mongolia's Defense Policy*, the Mongolian Armed Forces have successfully developed cooperation not only with neighboring military forces, but also with other developed and developing

countries' militaries in order to enhance the capacity of Mongolia's military and to promote global peace and security activities. The Mongolian Armed Forces have actively participated in several United Nations peacekeeping operations, as well as NATO-led and U.S.-led coalition operations. Participating in peace support operations and cooperating with other countries' military forces have assisted the Mongolian Armed Forces in developing its military personnel's knowledge, skills, and abilities while developing military doctrine and upgrading their equipment.

My research question is: If Mongolia became permanently neutral, how would the neutrality affect its defense cooperation with foreign military?

This thesis will examine the benefits and limitations of the permanent neutrality policies that are already in place internationally with respect to the Mongolian Armed Forces. It will specifically examine the potential effects on defense cooperation and collaboration with Mongolia's longstanding and newly developed partners.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

To evaluate how the Mongolia's Armed Forces' defense cooperation with foreign militaries would be affected after the declaration of a permanent status of neutrality by Mongolia, I examine the basic concepts of neutrality and its existence in contemporary permanently neutral countries. President Tsahiagiin Elbegdorj and Mongolia's pro-permanent neutrality scholars argue that Mongolia could develop its permanent neutrality as have other neutral countries such as Switzerland and Turkmenistan. Moreover, they assert that Mongolia should seek support for her permanent status of neutrality through a United Nations General Assembly resolution as Turkmenistan did.

Declaring a permanent status of neutrality might be a simple procedure; maintaining the neutrality is not. As Laurent Goetschel emphasized, since neutrality and collective security have the same common goals as promoting peaceful solutions for disputes and greatly regulating and restricting use of force, neutrality in the twenty-first

century has lost its significance to the collective security.¹ Furthermore, neutrality might restrict some foreign policy as an unnecessary limitation, particularly in cooperation with international organizations, and create isolation or aloofness for the neutral states. The few states continuing to pursue neutral policy in the twenty-first century, and most of the non-European neutral states, are smaller in size and less strategic to the international political arena.²

If the Mongolian parliament approves permanent neutrality, Mongolia will not carry out certain defense foreign cooperation activities and some cooperation agreements might be terminated. The significance of my research is in its examination of the general concept of neutrality and examples of applications of current neutral countries, and its analysis of the consequences of potential effects on Mongolia's defense foreign cooperation if Mongolia decides to pursue permanently neutral foreign policy.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a little literature that directly analyzes the potential effects of permanent neutrality on defense cooperation. Most of the related literature's arguments are about European countries' neutrality challenges due to collective security, particularly after the Cold War. Mongolia has built her defense capabilities based on successful cooperation with neighboring countries, other developed and developing countries, and international organizations. This literature review examines neutrality concepts, their international theory applications and any possible application for Mongolia as a permanently neutral state; considers the practical experience of existing neutral countries and potential neutrality applications to Mongolia; reviews Mongolia's current defense foreign cooperation; and, finally, analyzes the potential effects of a permanent status of neutrality on Mongolia's defense cooperation.

¹ Laurent Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?," *Cooperation and Conflict* 34, no.2 (June 1999): 122–23, <http://cac.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/34/2/115>.

² Alexander Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century: An Analysis of Contemporary Neutrality with a Focus on Switzerland* (Zurich: DIKE, 2014), 53.

This thesis research focuses on the challenges of permanent neutrality in the context of defense foreign cooperation. Therefore, studies that provide a fundamental understanding of neutrality concepts and explanations of neutrality in accordance with international relations theory are essentials for the basis of research. Moreover, academic research examining the experience of existing neutral countries and Mongolia's current foreign defense cooperation provide fundamental understanding to analyze the potential challenges on Mongolia's defense cooperation.

Neutrality has been largely overlooked in international relations studies. Most of the literature explains the legal approaches to, and aspects and validity of, the existing international neutrality laws such as the Hague Conventions V and XIII. Efraim Karsh, Alexander Spring, and Cyril E. Black explain the main concepts of neutral behavior of states in order to survive and safeguard their sovereignty under the umbrella of neutral policy.³ Spring and Dieter Fleck in separate works provide a wide range of legal perspectives and explanations. Spring in particular analyzes historical developments in the neutrality and development of contemporary neutral states.⁴ Moreover, Spring argues that the Hague Conventions, which are the only international laws for neutral countries, are outdated. Hans J. Morgenthau argues that neutrality implies a realist worldview.⁵ Furthermore, Goetschel expresses that neutrality has not been concept topic of interest since the end of the Cold War, so that small states should contribute to and play main roles towards the world's collective security activities.⁶

³ Efraim Karsh, "International Co-operation and Neutrality," *Journal of Peace Research* 25, no. 1 (March 1988): 57–67, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/423981>; Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London; New York: Routledge, 1988), 3–203; Cyril E. Black et al., *Neutralization and World Politics*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 10–230.

⁴ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century 150-200*; Dieter Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 571–601.

⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Resurrection of Neutrality in Europe," *The American Political Science Review* 33, no.3 (June 1939): 473–486, <http://jstor.org/stable/1948801>; Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 98.

⁶ Laurent Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?" *Cooperation and Conflict* 34, no.2 (June 1999): 115–139, <http://cac.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/34/2/115>.

Karsh defines permanent neutrality, “as a policy of consistent non-alignment in peacetime, overly aimed at preparing the ground for neutrality in wartime.”⁷ For the first time in international cooperation history, the Hague Conferences codified and provided a legal framework of neutral states’ rights and duties in land wars in Convention V, as well as regulations of naval warfare through Convention XIII in 1907.⁸ Those international conventions provide basic fundamental rights to bear and duties to carry out in wartime for the neutral states. In other words, the Hague Conventions deal with conditions in time of war only. As Spring asserts, there is no existing international law that provides a legal framework for neutral countries in the times of peace.⁹

Several articles by international relations scholars have broader explanations of small states’ behavior in world politics.¹⁰ The balance of power theory of international relations explains Mongolia’s safeguarding security policy since its independence as well as reasons for Mongolian leaders to propose a permanent neutrality policy for the country’s future. Geographic location is one of the constraints for the small states’ behavior in international relations, especially if a small state is located as a rim state or a buffer state situated near greater power states.¹¹ Mongolia is located between two great world powers. Both of her neighbors have nuclear capabilities and are bigger players in world arena. In accordance with the realist theory of international relations, small states implement certain policies of safeguarding their security, such as aligning with one of the stronger and more powerful nations and then entrusting its security to the strong power.

⁷ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 27.

⁸ Dieter Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995): 494–515; Jessica L. Beyer and Stephanie C. Hofmann, “Varieties of Neutrality: Norm Revision and Decline,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (September, 2011): 292, <http://cac.sagepub.com.libproxy.nps.edu/content/46/3/285.full.pdf+html>; Wolfgang Zecha, “Neutrality and International Solidarity—A Comparison Of The Policy of Certain Neutral European Countries With Respect to the UN,” *AARMS: Academic and Applied Research in Military Science* 10, no. 2 (2011): 305–26; Antonio S. de Bustamante, “The Hague Convention Concerning the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Land Warfare,” *The American Journal of International Law* 2, no.1 (Jan 1908): 95–120, doi:10.2307/2186561.

⁹ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*,” 169.

¹⁰ Gregory A. Raymond, “Neutrality Norms and The Balance of Power,” *Cooperation & Conflict* 32, no.2 (June 1997): 125, <http://cac.sagepub.com.libproxy.nps.edu/content/32/2/123>.

¹¹ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 81.

Otherwise, small states positioned among more powerful nations pursue neutral policies in order to avoid political and military repression from the more powerful countries.¹²

To address the main research question, neutral countries' experiences are fundamental in expressing the possible challenges. Most of the literature that explores the neutrality case study follows the scheme of Switzerland. Swiss neutrality and its associated actions have been discussed more frequently than any other in the neutrality policy studies. Switzerland has maintained its neutral policy since 1815; as such, it provides sufficient evidence that neutrality can be maintained successfully. John Dreyer and Neal G. Jesse provide four important reasons for successful Swiss neutrality; however, those are not proof other neutral countries will be successful.¹³ Conversely, many other neutral European countries had an ambiguous status, particularly after the Cold War and the establishment of the European Union. Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Ireland downgraded their neutrality policies. All of them are members of the European Union and are closely cooperating with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹⁴

There are a few more neutral countries aside from the European neutral states: Costa Rica, Ghana, and Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan's neutrality would be one of special significance for this thesis. Most of the pro-Mongolian neutrality scholars argue that the neutrality of Turkmenistan can be a model for Mongolia because both countries have similarities. Both countries had similar political structures during the Cold War (except Turkmenistan was part of the Soviet Union), and both countries are dependent on natural resources. Turkmenistan acknowledged her neutrality by resolution of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, and the resolution welcomes and respects that status, as

¹² Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no.4 (Spring 1985), 7, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2538540>, doi:10.2307/2538540; Ravdan Bold, *The Security of Small State: Option for Mongolia*, (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: The Institute for Strategic Studies, 2000), 15; Joenniemi Pertti, "Model of Neutrality: The Traditional and Modern," *Cooperation and Conflict* 23, no.1, (1988): 53–54, <http://cac.sagepub.com/content/23/1/53>.

¹³ John Dreyer and Neal G. Jesse, "Swiss Neutrality Examined: Model, Exception or Both?," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 15, no.3, (2014): 60–83.

¹⁴ Marco Wyss, "Military Transformation in Europe's Neutral And Non-Allied States," *The RUSI Journal* 156, no. 2 (2011): 44–51, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2011.576474>; Marjorie Andrey, "Security Implications of Neutrality: Switzerland in the Partnership for Peace Framework," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 9, no. 4 (2010): 83–96.

acknowledging, the “legislative confirmation by Turkmenistan of its status of permanent neutrality.”¹⁵ The president of Mongolia recommends a similar procedure by which, “Mongolia would aspire to achieve understanding, recognition and support from its neighboring states, other countries, and international organizations such as the United Nations.”¹⁶ It would be beneficial to Mongolia since both neighbors of Mongolia are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. In this case, both powerful neighbors would express their approval for Mongolia’s status of permanent neutrality through the UN General Assembly’s resolution.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether Turkmenistan’s neutrality can be a model for Mongolia. Barbara Kiepenheuer-Drechsler approached the behavior of Turkmenistan’s foreign policy as an isolationist policy, as “the striving for peace through a strategy of positive neutrality.”¹⁷ She further states that this neutrality policy, as well as political myth, reflects “Turkmenistan’s preference of mutual relations over multilateral engagement and it creates more isolation of the country.”¹⁸ Turkmenistan’s potential security problems are challenging, and the country has to manage internal and external threats alone due to its neutral policy.¹⁹

Mongolia has pursued a neutral policy based on its geographic location, and geopolitical interest. Several studies and official documents have addressed Mongolia’s current neutral policy in its foreign and security policies in the framework of Mongolia’s Constitution.

¹⁵ United Nations Security Council, “Permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan,” *UN resolution 50/80, Maintenance of international security, A/RES/50/80*, A-B: 90th plenary meeting, 12 December 1995, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/50/a50r080.htm>.

¹⁶ Tsahiagiin Elbegdorj, “Mongolia-Neutrality,” *The Office of the President of Mongolia*, last modified January 8, 2016, <http://www.president.mn/eng/newsCenter/viewNews.php?newsId=1662>.

¹⁷ Barbara Kiepenheuer-Drechsler, “Trapped in Permanent Neutrality: Looking Behind the Symbolic Production of the Turkmen Nation,” *Central Asian Survey* 25, no. 1–2 (2006): 129.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 129–130.

¹⁹ Najia Badykova, “Regional Cooperation in Central Asia: A View from Turkmenistan,” *Problems of Economic Transition* 48, no. 8 (2005): 88–89.

Mongolia has been a democratic country since 1990, and she has been pursuing a peaceful, multi-pillar foreign policy like many other small states in order to survive among the more powerful countries. Mongolia has been implementing policies that are neutral in substance since she adopted a democratic Constitution in 1992.²⁰ Mongolia has been pursuing neutral and non-alignment security and foreign policies in the framework of her Constitution, national security policy, foreign policy, as well as her defense policy. Moreover, several publications describe and analyze Mongolia's current foreign policy commonly known as "the third neighbor foreign policy."²¹ This foreign policy permits Mongolia's increased cooperation with democratic countries and an enhanced profile in the international arena, while counterbalancing its relationship with neighboring powerful countries.²² The Mongolian Armed Forces have played a significant role in successfully executing Mongolia's foreign policy by participating in world peace and security operations and developing military-to-military cooperation to enhance its capacity for peace keeping purposes.²³

To address the potential challenges of permanent neutrality status on Mongolia's defense cooperation, the thesis examines Mongolia's current cooperation with other countries' defense sectors. Several works in the literature examine current defense cooperation of the Mongolian Armed Forces. In the framework of Mongolia's foreign policy, Mongolian foreign defense cooperation, which is based on coordination and integration with other countries' defense sectors, is intended to establish civil-military relations and enhance military capacity through peacekeeping training and participation in the peace operations. Cristina F. Matei, Christopher Plutz, and Jargalsaikhan Mendee

²⁰ Tsahiagiin Elbegdorj, "Mongolia-Neutrality," *The Office of the President of Mongolia*, last modified January 8, 2016, <http://www.president.mn/eng/newsCenter/viewNews.php?newsId=1662>.

²¹ Jeffrey Reeves, "Rethinking Weak State Behavior: Mongolia's Foreign Policy Toward China," *International Politics* 51, no. 2 (2014): 254–271, <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ip/journal/v51/n2/abs/ip20146a.html>.

²² Vaishali Krishna, Mongolian Foreign Policy Implications for Russia and China, *Mongolian Journal of International Affairs* 19, (2014): 75, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5564/mjia.v19i0.406>.

²³ Christopher Plutz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy: A New Paradigm for Security," *Asia Policy* 17, no. 1 (January 2014): 128, https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asia_policy/summary/v017/17.plutz.html.

have highlighted Mongolia's clear commitments to defense foreign cooperation in order to enhance its peacekeeping capacity.²⁴ Moreover, Mendee's analysis emphasizes how the Mongolian military consolidates its military norms with Western military norms to enhance its capacity. The Mongolian military has successfully adopted Western military norms in its institutions and developed a unique military relationship with U.S. allies in Asia such as South Korea, Japan, and some South Asian countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam. It also developed such relationships with some NATO member nations in Europe, including Germany, Turkey, Belgium, and with Canada.²⁵

The main focus of this research is finding the potential constraints and limits of permanent neutral policy on Mongolia's defense foreign cooperation with other countries' defense sectors in order to enhance its capability. Those aspects are discussed based on customary laws and concepts of neutrality and the neutral countries' experience, particularly in military cooperation.

D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATION AND HYPOTHESES

The Mongolian Armed Forces have been actively participating in UN peacekeeping operations as well as other international peace support operations since 2002, and they have been improving their image based on their performance and experiences.

In the case of the Mongolian parliament approving the bill of "permanent status of neutrality," the status would have wide-ranging negative effects on defense foreign cooperation. Mongolian defense foreign cooperation faces challenges and might

²⁴ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, *Mongolia's Peacekeeping Commitment: Training, Deployment, and Evolution of Field Information Capabilities* (Washington, DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2007); Florina Cristina (Cris) Matei, "Developing Effective Armed Forces in the Twenty First Century Case Studies of New Democracies," *Journal of Defense Resources Management* 2, no. 1 (2011): 21–38; Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization: Mongolia as a Case Study," *Armed Forces & Society* 39, no.2 (2013), 305–330, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0095327X12441323> ; Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "The Military Training Assistance Program (MTAP): Merging Interests of Mongolia and Canada," *Canadian Military Journal* 10.1, no.30 (2009), <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol10/no1/doc/06-mendee-eng.pdf>.

²⁵ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization," 318 ; Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Finally, A New Era in NATO-Mongolia Relations," *Voices from Central Asia* 1" (2012): 1–6.

terminate some of the relationships such as cooperation in the NATO-led peace operation in Afghanistan. The Mongolian Armed Forces has been successfully developing enhanced peacekeeping capacity through cooperation with powerful countries, an effort that could be lost. Similarly, further support for the Mongolian Armed Forces' participation in global peace and stability activities could also be lost in parliament approves permanent neutrality status for the nation.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis reviews the concept of neutrality, analyzes the benefits and limitations of neutral policies, and reviews the possible reasons for Mongolia to declare a permanent status of neutrality.

Moreover, this thesis examines case studies of existing neutral states' policies toward collective security and defense cooperation. The neutrality policies of Switzerland and Turkmenistan are the main cases studied; furthermore, the neutral policies of Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden provide potential supporting arguments for the neutrality examples.

Additionally, the thesis examines current Mongolian defense cooperation with neighboring countries' defense sectors as well as other countries' defense strategies. The review addresses the benefits as well as challenges of the cooperation.

Based on the examination of the concept of neutrality and the customary law of neutrality, neutral countries' case studies and the current state of Mongolian defense foreign cooperation, the thesis provides critical analysis of the potential effects of permanent neutrality policy on the current defense policy and future cooperation.

F. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of five chapters. After the introduction, Chapter II primarily focuses on the theoretical perspective of neutrality based on conventional rights and practices. It identifies the benefits and limitations of the neutrality policy. Chapter III discusses the case studies of the neutrality of Switzerland, and other European neutral countries, as well as Turkmenistan's positive neutrality policy. Moreover, Chapter III

provides applications and implications of permanent neutrality status for Mongolia based on the practices of existing neutral countries.

Chapter IV reviews current Mongolian defense foreign cooperation and its benefits as well as challenges.

Chapter V recapitulates the findings of previous chapters and offers a critical analysis of potential effects of the permanent neutrality status on the cooperation and development of the Mongolian Armed Forces.

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II. NEUTRALITY

A. CONCEPT OF NEUTRALITY

The idea of being neutral has developed as a method to avoid being part of someone else's war or conflict. The concept of neutrality is as old as the concept of war, as Karsh notes: "Ever since human beings began to wage war upon one another, there have been individuals or groups that have sought to avoid participation in a war."²⁶ Scholars debate whether neutral states benefit from the policy of neutrality or are challenged by limitations of neutrality. If this policy had been beneficial, the countries of the world would have implemented neutral foreign policies and the whole world would enjoy eternal peace.

The main focus of this thesis is defense cooperation between a neutral country and powerful countries and collective security organizations. The objective of this thesis is to identify the possible benefits and limitations of neutral policy on defense. This analysis is based on the international legal rights and duties of the neutral countries and on the experience of existing neutral countries.

This chapter addresses the definition of neutrality and the legal perspective of the rights and duties of neutral states; the appeal of neutrality for states; defense and security policies of the permanently neutral countries; constraints and restraints of the permanent neutrality; and Mongolia's possible interest in permanent neutrality status.

1. Definition of Neutrality

This section examines different definitions of permanent neutrality and powerful countries' consideration of the position of neutral countries. Moreover, it reviews the ways of becoming a neutral country and some duties and rights of neutral countries in accordance with Hague Conventions V and XII as international laws for the neutral countries.

²⁶ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 13; Laurent Goetschel, "Neutrals as Brokers of Peacebuilding Ideas?," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no.3 (2011), 313, doi: 10.1177/0010836711416957.

Neutrality was a topic of interest through the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century due to the conflicts and contradictions among global superpowers. Today, scholars study the general definition, general concept, and principle of the international legal framework of the neutrality based on the Hague Conventions V and XIII which address the rights and duties of neutral countries.

Spring has defined neutrality as, “the status of a state which does not participate in an armed conflict between other states.”²⁷ Thus, states, particularly small ones, and those that are weak militarily, and economically, choose to be neutral when possible conflicts arise among the powerful nations around them.

Moreover, strong states often prefer neutral neighbors since they act as buffer between other strong, potentially threatening states. On the other hand, the idea of perpetual neutrality has developed among those small states in order to abstain from all possible future wars and conflicts making neutrality an appealing option among powerful and weak states. The powerful countries prefer having a buffer state at their periphery with another quarreling powerful state. For instance, Great Britain supported Belgium’s neutrality when Germany became a power in Europe in the nineteenth century. As another example, Austria became a neutral country between the two contradicting power blocs of Communism and Capitalism during Cold War. These powerful countries’ interests provided vital benefits for the small states to survive along with the balancing of power among them. At the same time, these “neutrals” succeeded in gaining guarantees from the powerful nations for safeguarding their survival in case of war.

According to Spring, neutrality can be divided into two main categories within the framework of the international legal perspective of neutrality: relative and permanent neutrality.²⁸ Mainly, states choose to pursue these two types of neutral policies depending on their interests and the situations they encounter. Relative neutrality allows the states to stay neutral and not be part of any particular conflict; when that conflict is over, the state

²⁷ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 34.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 20–23.

might not stay neutral.²⁹ For instance, Belgium and Luxembourg did not pursue a permanent neutral policy after World War II based on their experiences of powerful countries' disregard of their neutrality during two drastic wars in the twentieth century.

Permanent neutrality is different from relative neutrality: it does not allow the state to participate in any conflicts or hostilities at any time. Black provides a conventional definition of permanent neutrality:

A state whose political independence and territorial integrity is guaranteed permanently by a collective agreement of great powers, subject to conditions that the neutralized state will not take up arms against another state, except to defend itself, and will not assume treaty obligations which may compromise its neutralized status.³⁰

Moreover, Karsh defines permanent neutrality as, “a policy of consistent non-alignment in peacetime, overtly aimed at preparing the ground for neutrality in wartime.”³¹ In this regard, permanent neutrality is the position of a country that expresses its will to: abstain from any future wars and armed conflicts against any-one unless required to conduct self-defense against the threats to its neutrality, not support any belligerents that are in war or conflict, and not align with any country militarily at any time. Moreover, a permanently neutral state must not join in any military alliances, have any foreign military installations on its territory at any time, nor maintain any foreign military forces' presence domestically for sustaining its neutral policy.³²

Neutrality creates ambiguity for powerful countries due to neutral countries' behavior towards belligerents during wartime. Powerful states weigh the risk that the neutral country may switch its position to the winning side for its own interests at any time.³³ Furthermore, depending on the geographic location, a belligerent state might violate its neighbor country's neutrality based on the belligerent's preemptive self-

²⁹ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 36.

³⁰ Cyril E. Black et al., *Neutralization and World Politics*, xi.

³¹ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 27.

³² Goetschel, “Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?,” 118.

³³ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 43.

defense and the military necessity of safeguarding its sovereignty.³⁴ This idea has proved true. For instance, Switzerland, Spain, and Sweden remained as neutral states while other neutral countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands could not enjoy their benefit of neutrality during the drastic wars in the twentieth century. Germany violated Belgium neutrality in 1914 in order to safeguard its own security and solve its geographic problem. Germany considered this violation as an act of preemptive self-defense to avoid fighting in two fronts in war.³⁵

However, the three successful neutrals (Switzerland, Spain, and Sweden) violated their own neutrality for the winning powers in order to maintain their independence and sovereignty. When Germany was superior in the war, all three states violated their neutrality in favor of the Axis, and when the Allies became superior in the war, all violated their neutrality in favor of the Allies. Sweden and Switzerland allowed German forces to transit through their territories, while Spain established German bases on its territories. In addition, Switzerland allowed British aircraft to fly over its territory and provided broad intelligence for the Allies, and Sweden provided arms and military equipment for Norway to fight alongside the Soviet Union.³⁶

Since these cases caused uncertainty among powerful states about the neutral states, the neutral states have had to show compliance with their duties in accordance with international laws. Neutrals, particularly permanent neutrals, prefer to have certain bilateral or multilateral agreements and treaties with powerful states to guarantee their safety and inviolable status of neutrality during wartime. Permanently neutral states need to build and maintain proper credibility at all times to ensure their neutrality in wartime.³⁷ Otherwise, potentially belligerent countries could target the neutral countries at their borders as a matter of strategic necessity and safeguarding their own security. Consider the example of Germany violating Belgian neutrality in 1914 to solve its geographic

³⁴ Isabel V. Hull, *A Scrap of Paper: Breaking and Making International Law During the Great War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 26.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 23–29.

³⁶ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 55–59.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

problem as a preemptive self-defense action in a two-front war.³⁸ In this case, any guarantees of neutrality became “a scrap of paper,” as it was phrased in British Ambassador Sir E. Goschen’s report.³⁹

Permanently neutral policy began to conflict with collective security, especially when victorious countries started establishing post-war international organizations after the two World Wars. The United States led the other European states to establish the League of Nations in 1920 and the United Nations in 1945. Those powerful countries excluded or greatly challenged the neutral states due to potential uncertainties; moreover, the nature of neutrality does not match with the alliance of countries and collective security actions against potential belligerent countries.⁴⁰ Particularly, the founders of the United Nations had great doubts about the eligibility of neutrals for the new security collective organization, probably resulting from the effects of the actions of neutrals in World War II. In this regards, the UN Security Council had debates on neutral countries joining the organization as members in the early days of the organization’s development.⁴¹ Moreover, a collective security organization’s behavior, such as military and economic sanctions or possible military interventions against aggressor states, contradicts the concepts of neutrality.

Neutral countries develop their own concept of neutrality based on their significance in geopolitical situations and potential external threats.⁴² Therefore, neutral countries’ approaches to declare and gain guarantees for this status are different depending on the world political situation and development. Basically there are two methods to establish neutrality: by treaty or by unilateral declaration. Some countries have declared their neutrality on their own and let other countries recognize and guarantee their neutrality; while some countries have been forced to become a neutral

³⁸ Hull, *A Scrap of Paper*, 23.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁰ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 27, 32; Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 108; Black, et al., *Neutralization and World Politics*, 52.

⁴¹ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 115.

⁴² Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 33.

country.⁴³ For instance, after the Napoleonic War, powerful countries in Europe (Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia) recognized and guaranteed Switzerland's status of permanent neutrality at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Those powerful countries applied similar procedures to other neutral countries in the nineteenth century: Belgium became a neutral country by the *Treaty of London* in 1839 and Luxembourg by the *Second Treaty of London* in 1867. Powerful countries proscribed Austria and Laos's neutrality in the twentieth century and guaranteed their neutrality.⁴⁴

However, Turkmenistan declared its status of permanent neutrality voluntarily and the country's legal status of permanent neutrality was endorsed with non-binding expression through a UN General Assembly resolution in December 1995. Turkmenistan, according to Spring, "was the first case where an international organization recognized a unilateral neutrality declaration."⁴⁵ Turkmenistan legalized this formal recognition of its status of permanent neutrality as customary law in 1996.⁴⁶

The international framework of neutrality is provided by the Hague Conventions V and XIII. These are the only international documents to provide duties and rights for relatively neutral states as principal instruments; however, those conventions deal with the condition in time of war only, not in peacetime. In other words, there is no international treaty or legal documentation that confers the status of permanent neutrality.⁴⁷ Therefore, as Spring affirms, "permanently neutral states have a certain *margin of appreciation* for the determination of customary law rules which has to orientate itself at the core concept of neutrality of the Hague Convention."⁴⁸

The Hague Convention V defines the legal rights and duties of neutral countries in land warfare, while Convention XIII deals with the rights and duties of the neutral

⁴³ Nasir A. Andisha, "Neutrality in Afghanistan Foreign Policy," *Special Report* 360. United States Institute of Peace (March 2015), 3.

⁴⁴ Black, et al., *Neutralization and World Politics*, 3–4.

⁴⁵ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 81.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 169.

states in naval warfare. According to Convention V, the territory of a neutral state is fully protected from any effects by the hostilities of belligerents.⁴⁹ It also provides the legal framework for not allowing the belligerents to use the territory of neutrals for military purposes, and for not allowing belligerents to recruit the neutral countries' population into their armed forces. According to the Convention, neutral states can maintain their own military forces only for self-defense, and it does not allow the states to join any military actions nor alignment activities at any time.

Apart from those rights, neutral countries have duties to carry out in accordance with Hague Conventions. A neutral country must not participate in a war either directly or indirectly. The neutral country should not provide any support to the warring parties. For example, neutral states must prohibit the following actions according to The Hague Convention V: any belligerents' military presence in their territory, sea, or airspace; transiting belligerents' military equipment through their countries; supplying the belligerents with any military supplies including ammunitions, weapons, and any other war materials; crediting financial support as well as any unlawful assistance; and recruiting troops in order to support the belligerents.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, neutral states can make trades involving non-war material to belligerents, but the neutral state must treat each belligerent with the same level of impartiality.

Furthermore, the conventions provide more duties for the neutral states to affirm the safety of war victims such as prisoners of war, escaped prisoners of war, and internees, including the wounded and sick.⁵¹ Even neutrals have a duty to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum for displaced persons. Although neutrals are allowed to conduct trade with belligerents, neutral states have a duty to prevent arms trading to belligerents, either as exports or by transporting arms through its territory.

⁴⁹ Dieter Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 494–498.

⁵⁰ Christine Agius and Karen Devine, “Neutrality: A Really Dead Concept?,” *A Reprise*, *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (2011): 270.

⁵¹ Dieter Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts*, 498-500.

To conclude the section, neutral status is a political position that enables a small and weaker state to avoid being part of more powerful countries' conflicts. It also prevents the neutral state from joining any particular alignment against others. Neutral countries can develop their own neutral concepts based on the political and security situations around them. Neutral countries have rights and duties that are protected by international law as defined by the Hague Conventions. Such laws enables them to maintain their neutrality in time of war and some aspects of the conventions could also apply to permanent neutrality. Moreover, neutral states need to establish proper credibility in order to gain the trust of powerful countries, develop close cooperation with collective security organizations, and avoid possible threats or ambiguities related to their neutrality.⁵²

2. Why Do States Choose Neutrality?

This section provides a brief overview of the reasons that states become neutral states. It includes international relations scholars' explanations of neutrality and neutral states' defense policies.

Neutrality has become one of the important concepts in world political studies and international relations since the nineteenth century, because many small states pursued neutral policy as a survival strategy within a polarized international system, particularly in the twentieth century. Furthermore, many small states do not have powerful military forces, and they do not want to be torn apart by warring belligerents. They wish to sustain their independence and sovereignty. In addition, in the case of Switzerland, it seeks to maintain to the unity of its population that consists of diverse nationalities, especially when powerful neighboring states are at war among themselves. One of the solutions for such small states to avoid other countries' wars or conflict and sustain their own sovereignty is to become a permanently neutral country. In doing so, they must pursue a neutral foreign policy by which they treat other countries equally, while maintaining their

⁵² Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 35–38.

internal and external equilibrium. Many states believe neutrality can guarantee their sovereignty and security.

World Wars I and, II and the Cold War of twentieth century as well as asymmetric warfare in the first decade of the twenty-first century have challenged neutral policy.⁵³ Only a few small neutral states succeeded in maintaining neutrality through different challenges in the twentieth century. In fact, many neutral states changed their stance at the end of twentieth century, particularly European neutral states.

According to the realist perspective of international relations, as central actors of the international system, all states maintain some level of power to ensure their own security. Kenneth N. Waltz asserts, “The aims of states may be endlessly varied; they may range from the ambition to conquer the world to the desire merely to be left alone.”⁵⁴ Great power states seek dominance in their own regional or global systems and define international politics; moreover, no hegemony wants a peer in its system.⁵⁵ This fear of great powers creates potential rivalry or conflict in a region or globally. Frequently, states that are weak economically, politically and militarily, particularly those near powerful states, pursue neutrality through their foreign and security policies. Neutral policies or non-alignment policies support small states’ independence, and help them abstain from possible conflicts among powerful countries. Small states consider themselves insecure in their economic and security perspectives against those powerful rivals. One of the options for the small states is remaining detached from their conflicts and staying neutral to belligerent powers.

Moreover, the realists’ main consideration about sustaining their existence and pursuing their national interests is power; the state must be able to defend itself against any threats and maintain the power needed to defend its interests. Thus, the realist theory of international relations does not support neutrality as a vitally important policy for a

⁵³ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 31.

⁵⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press 2010), 91.

⁵⁵ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2001), 40.

state's existence. As Christine Agius points out, although realist theory acknowledges neutrality, it has not supported neutrality as a viable stance for state behavior and does not express interest in developing the neutrality policy as a serious part of its main consideration for power of the states.⁵⁶ The only acceptable explanation for neutrality in accordance with the realist perspective is that the small, weak states choose to remain neutral during any conflict if the state justifies it as the only policy for sustaining its survival as well as protecting its self-interests.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Neal G. Jesse affirms a neutral stance is "to be the product of rational calculation of a small state's interests and capabilities that creates the state-centered, unfriendly, and self-help international environment."⁵⁸

As realist theory would acknowledge, geographic location is one of the major constraints for the countries related to their survival. This is especially true for weak states that like any other country, cannot choose their neighbors. In accordance with the realist theory, small states pursue two types of foreign policy in order to preserve their independence: entrusting their security to a powerful state for balancing power against possible adversarial countries, and conducting neutral policies to isolate themselves from either opposing or supporting powerful countries.⁵⁹

Geographic location poses challenges for some small states in sustaining their existence or sovereignty. Karsh affirms that two major geographic locations, as rim and buffer, provide advantages to small states on the periphery of great power states. Rim and buffer states are always attractive to great powers because these small states prevent from others controlling these areas, or one great power may have a small countries closely

⁵⁶ Christine Agius, "Transformed Beyond Recognition? The Politics of Post-Neutrality," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (2011), 295.

⁵⁷ Neal G. Jesse, "Choosing to Go It Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective," *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 27, no. 1 (Jan, 2006): 8. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20445034>; Morgenthau, "The Resurrection of Neutrality in Europe," 485.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁹ Ravdan Bold, *The Security of Small State: Option for Mongolia*, (Ulaanbaatar: Mongolia, The Institute for Strategic Studies, 2000), 32; Jessica L. Beyer and Stephanie C. Hofmann, "Varieties of Neutrality Norm Revision and Decline," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (2011): 287.

cooperate with it in rivalry with other great power states.⁶⁰ Neutrality, then, cannot be a viable policy for rim and buffer states. In a worst case scenario, if war erupted between two great powers, the great powers could violate the buffer and rim states' neutrality for reasons of geographically strategic importance or as a "military strategic necessity," as has been seen in the past. In particular, powerful belligerent states always consider buffer and rim states as strategically important places, and so desire to control these areas before losing them to a rival power.⁶¹ For instance, the Soviet Union tried to conquer Finland in the 1930s, and Germany violated Belgium's and Luxembourg's neutrality at the beginning of the World Wars.

According to Neal's defining based on the liberal's perspective, a state chooses neutrality based on domestic factors or international normative consideration and contribute to international institutions that create collective security with or without increasing directly the neutral's own security.⁶² She also states, "the liberal perspective believes that international institutions can and should be created. These institutions help to build collective security into the international system."⁶³ The objectives of collective security, which are international impartiality and a willingness to settle disputes in a peaceful manner, are similar to those neutral countries' efforts. Moreover, the liberal view of neutrality places greater emphasis on economic factors rather than geographic or military strategic ones as contributing to the security of neutral states. The most of European neutral states have a desire to join organizations that benefit their economy and trade development. Interaction of the states through international organization, and economic interdependence among the states are key factors for peaceful solution for any conflicts.⁶⁴ Neutrals have to be actively involved in international security activities in order to promote their own security as well as to improve regional and global security as

⁶⁰ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 82.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁶² Neal, "Choosing to Go It Alone," 14–15.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁴ Ganbaatar Baasankhuu and Damdinsuren Oyunsuren *Mongolia's Status of Permanent Neutrality: Challenges and Chances*, [in Mongolian] (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: University of Humanity, 2016), 39

part of a collective security effort promoting peace and stability, since liberals do not go to war against each other.

The constructivist perspective of neutrality is based on the country's identity and beliefs about the country's history and its significance in geopolitics. As Goetschel emphasizes, the concept of neutrality in relation to the constructive theory of international relations is that neutrality provides positive impacts on values, social structure, cultural and historical environment, and shapes the nation's identity based on the state's interests. Moreover, neutrality generates normative ideas on a state's foreign and security policies that affect a nation's identity.⁶⁵ For European neutral countries, the impetus for maintain neutral status may have changed or even waned. Yet, as Goetschel observes, "Even though neutrality has lost its realistic survival function, it continues to serve as provider of national identity for neutral states."⁶⁶ Since neutrality is quite a broad subject in international relations it would be interesting to see how different schools of thoughts view the neutrality.

Small states are interested in pursuing neutral policy due to its limited capacity of securing their sovereignty and favoring the privileges of security under the umbrella of international law for neutral states, while abstaining from others' conflicts or war. Every neutral state has its own reasons and fundamentals for becoming a permanently neutral state, but the general principle of being a neutral state is to avoid balancing against the certain policy of powerful countries and not to comply with any policy of the powerful countries.

Different schools of thoughts of international relations have their own perspective for explaining the neutrality based on their theories, all agree that states seek peaceful solutions for any conflict. Moreover, beyond this desire to seek peaceful solutions to potential conflicts, states need to maintain certain military capacities for defending their territorial integrity and sovereignty. Vulnerable small states with limited defense

⁶⁵ Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?," 117.

⁶⁶ Goetschel, "Neutrals as Brokers of Peacebuilding Ideas?," 312.

capabilities may have to seek neutrality; however, the neutrality may increase its security vulnerability by restricting some of the security cooperation.

3. Defense of the Neutral Countries

As Goetschel has affirmed, states with limited military capacities may pursue neutrality to maintain their security.⁶⁷ Although adopting a permanent status of neutrality is a state's political decision, which is thought of as significant only for the foreign policy of the state, the policy would affect all government agencies. In this regard, there is a need to study the potential impact of this status on defense cooperation, particularly, a small state's defense cooperation with foreign armed forces.

As states developed their own concepts of neutrality based on their unique requirements, they must also create different policies for their defense. In accordance with "The rights and duties of neutral states- Hague Convention V," a neutral state is permitted to use military forces to defend its neutrality against any belligerents that are violating its rights.⁶⁸ There is a controversy over whether military forces could be used by neutrals to defend their own sovereignty without having any effects on their neutral status. Furthermore, according to Fleck, "In connection with its duty to defend neutrality, it has been debated whether and to what extent neutrality obliges the neutral state to underline military efforts."⁶⁹ Regarding to this convention, there is no clear legal explanation in what extend the military forces could be used by neutral states, so that there are more controversies on military to military cooperation. The neutral countries' military cooperation with other military forces face challenges because in contemporary security environment requires security interoperability among the nations.

Neutral countries can be divided into two categories in accordance with military structures: neutrals with standing military forces and those without. A few permanently neutral states, such as Liechtenstein, Costa Rica, and Vatican City, do not have standing

⁶⁷ Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?," 119.

⁶⁸ Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts*, 495.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 496.

military forces. Those countries are fully dependent on their own security from their neighboring countries, due to their economic challenges to support their own military forces. Most neutral countries have standing military forces, however. For instance, although Switzerland did not have a standing army until the formation of the new Swiss Armed Forces in the early 1990s, it did have armed forces with compulsory services, and the main defense system is now based on defending its sovereignty.

Neutral policy creates challenges for military forces in light of contemporary collective security initiatives. Due to political and economic globalization and the development of sophisticated technology, the conflict environment has changed dramatically and threats have become transnational. All countries, whether they are big or small, are challenged with transnational threats and, in order to maintain peace and security in regionally as well as globally, nations must consider the increasing importance of collective security. The way of solving defense vulnerability for all states is to increase military cooperation with other military forces in order to enhance military capacity and coordinate with other militaries when facing transnational threats, such as terrorism or face the challenges alone.

B. BENEFITS AND LIMITS OF NEUTRALITY

This section examines the benefits and limitations of neutrality in general terms. These benefits and limits differ depending on the neutral state's significance in geopolitics, security environment, and own concept of neutrality.

1. Benefits of Neutrality

Apart from abstaining from others' wars and assuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity under international law as "the territory of neutral power is inviolable, during the wartime"⁷⁰ neutral countries have certain benefits.

The most important, but greatly challenged, benefit of neutrality is the guarantee of sovereignty provided by the international law of neutrality to safeguard the

⁷⁰ Fleck, *The Handbook of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts*, 494.

independence of the state in wartime. However, this guarantee requires a neutral country to earn credibility from the potential belligerents by reducing any ambiguity about the neutral country's behavior in wartime. This is the biggest challenge for neutral countries, and it arises from the historical behavior of neutrals as well as the military necessities of belligerent states. Karsh emphasizes the foreign policy behavior of the neutral states as a way to build credibility so that "[t]he foreign policy objectives of the small state will be viewed by the external environment as synonymous with the policy of neutrality, thereby increasing the probability of the successful preservation of neutrality at wartime."⁷¹ The neutral state has to maintain this foreign policy in peacetime within the framework of international law. By reinforcing the credibility of its neutrality the small state can reduce potential threats to its neutrality in wartime. Most neutral countries, in fact, declare their permanent neutrality and established bilateral or multilateral agreements with powerful states and potential belligerents for safeguarding their neutrality during wartime. Signatories also have a duty to respect these agreements and not to violate the neutrality in the course of war or armed conflict, and the belligerents are likely to do so if the neutral state has succeeded in making its neutral status credible prior to a conflict.

The most valuable advantage of neutrality for small states is playing the go-between or conciliator role between belligerents to settle disputes or conflicts peacefully. This tertiary service allows the belligerents to establish communication between them and settle the disputes, and neutral countries can boost their standing and reputation internationally in this role. Their policies as well as their efforts at international cooperation may gain global recognition.⁷² Switzerland has been an example for this tertiary service, and it qualified as a mediator among the belligerents to open "good offices" during the total wars, cold wars, and other conflicts in the twentieth century. For instance, during the Second World War, 35 countries requested support from the Swiss government in order to protect their citizens in war zones, and this country worked to implement laws of armed conflict during the course of war to protect military prisoners,

⁷¹ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 38.

⁷² Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 38; Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?," 121.

as well as the civilian population.⁷³ In addition, Swiss-based humanitarian organizations contributed to this role and reputation. As Max Habicht notes, “The International Red Cross in Geneva also established a card index for fifteen million civilians, military prisoners, and lost person on whose behalf it organized searches and exchanges of vital information.”⁷⁴ During the Cold War, Switzerland played a role for mediating between two conflicting power blocs such as providing supports to create different levels of agreements to reduce the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two powers. Furthermore, the first agreement between Gorbachev and Reagan, was signed in Geneva in 1985.

Within the framework of the neutral countries’ “peace loving” policies and international organizations goals to maintain global peace and stability, neutral countries’ military personnel may participate as defense and military experts in negotiation procedures. There are several examples of Switzerland’s military personnel actively participating in such tertiary activities, including as mediation and monitoring groups in the Korean War, and in the First Gulf War in the Middle East (Kuwait and Iraq). Moreover, certain experts from the neutral countries have worked in inspection groups for investigations of belligerent forces and of nuclear weapons development programs.

Furthermore, neutral states have gained the respect of and trust from powerful countries as well as international institutions by promoting the global peace and stability. Neutral countries have been responsible for conducting, supporting, and being actively involved in peaceful settlements of disputes as a fundamental diplomacy instrument. Moreover, neutral states and collective security initiatives share the same concepts and objectives for bringing peace to the world, so that neutrals’ active involvement in promoting peace within the framework of international collective institutions provides neutrals a role on the world stage.⁷⁵ Most of the neutral countries in Europe have joined regional collective security organizations, such as the European Union and Organization

⁷³ Max Habicht, “The Special Position of Switzerland in International Affairs,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 29, no. 4 (1953): 460, doi: 10.2307/2606004.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 460.

⁷⁵ Karsh, “International Co-Operation and Neutrality,” 66; Pertti, “Model of Neutrality: The Traditional and Modern,” 54.

for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), based on establishing political and economic stability in the region, in addition to peace. Geneva and Helsinki are well-known as centers for peace settlements and the promotion of human rights and humanitarian efforts, due to their active involvement in bringing peace and stability both in the region and globally.

In conclusion, when states pursue neutrality they can safeguard their independence and sovereignty while abstaining from other countries' conflicts. Moreover, neutral states can be places for establishing communications between belligerents in order to settle disputes peacefully; neutrals can also actively participated in international collective security institutions to promote diplomatic means for maintaining regional and global security.

2. Limits of Neutrality

There is still a question, however, of whether neutrality can guarantee the independence and sovereignty of neutral state in the case of war between powerful countries. There is no precise answer to this. Even small states earn the respect and trust of powerful states, and they can obtain guarantees of neutrality through agreements or treaties. Powerful states, however, when threatened by another superpower, can consider any agreement "a scrap of paper," declaring pre-emptive self-defense and military necessity.⁷⁶ Thus, neutrality cannot provide a full guarantee of sovereignty.

Neutral countries have been greatly challenged throughout history due to belligerents' uncertainty about or distrust of neutral states, as well as from pressures within the neutral states themselves. Depending on their fundamental concept of neutrality, geopolitical conditions, and the security situation in the region, neutral countries face certain limits and have become subjects of criticism, domestically and abroad, based on the rights and duties of the neutral countries.⁷⁷ Although neutrals have contributed beneficial efforts to maintaining peace, contemporary collective security

⁷⁶ V. Hull, *A Scrap of Paper: Breaking and Making International Law During the Great War*, 317–318.

⁷⁷ Goetschel, "Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?," 120.

always excludes the importance of neutrality.⁷⁸ Moreover, as Goetschel states, neutrality has been losing its importance and significance, particularly after the Cold War, in the collective security efforts due to the contemporary conflict environment and broader involvement of collective security institutions for maintaining peace. Furthermore, neutral status makes defense cooperation is difficult, which limits neutral states' ability to expand their security capacities and collaborate with other states for enhancing military technology; neutral foreign policy can isolate the state from international cooperation. For instance, Turkmenistan has challenged in its security with the border with Afghanistan, and it requires military assistance from the U.S; however, due to the neutrality the U.S. is reluctant to cooperate with Turkmenistan on this issue.⁷⁹

One of the most controversial challenges for neutral countries is whether to participate in sanctions against aggressors posed by powerful countries or international organizations such as the UN. In accordance with the international laws of neutrality being part of sanction is a way of violating neutrality because it is not being equally impartial toward belligerents. Nonetheless, most of the European neutrals, such as Switzerland, Sweden and Austria have been involved in certain sanctions posed by the UN and the European Union. They are respecting those sanctions for peace and stability purposes of the international community and in devotion to duty as members of the organization.⁸⁰ However, neutral countries' involvement in the sanctions is still questionable in regards to the international laws of neutrality.

Apart from not being involved economically, in terms of trade with, or sanctions on potential belligerents, neutrals must observe limits on defense cooperation, such as not joining military alliances. The military forces of neutral state have the sole goal of defending their country in self-defense in regards to the international norms of neutrality. Yet, contemporary security challenges with transnational threats such as terrorism, cyber security, and violence by non-state actors require the close cooperation and

⁷⁸ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 32.

⁷⁹ Joshua Kucera, "Turkmenistan Asks U.S. for Military Aid to Address Afghan Border Instability," *EuroAsianet.org*, last modified March 27, 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72761>.

⁸⁰ Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 119.

interoperability of the security forces among countries. Small states with limited military capacity would be more vulnerable facing such threats alone.

Moreover, most small non-neutral states cooperate with other countries' defense forces in order to upgrade military weapons systems since they have very limited capacity for development of their defense industries. Due to a lack of domestic resources, the state might be dependent on other powerful countries for military technology. Military cooperation for developing neutral states defense capabilities might be limited due to the international laws of neutrality. In this regard, a small neutral state may face great challenges in creating close cooperation with other defense forces. All military cooperation could be interpreted as alignment with other military forces or as cooperation with a belligerent in favor of defense investment, which is a violation of The Hague Convention V as an international law of neutrality.

Aside from the limits on or ambiguity associated with defense cooperation, neutral states face an even more ambiguous position in regard to their possible integration within international organizations. Non-integration, though, could cause isolation or detachment for neutral states. Particularly, contemporary international relations require every country's active involvement and contribution in the cooperative initiatives for maintaining world peace and stability, and all states, whether small or powerful, would enhance effectiveness, interstate collaboration, and decentralized cooperation of international organizations.⁸¹ As Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal observe, "It is impossible to imagine contemporary international life without formal organization."⁸² Small neutral states stand to lose economic, political, and security competitiveness if they are not pursuing an active foreign policy or are excluded by neutral policy from involvement in international organizations.

Due to globalization, rapid development of technology, and transnational threats, many countries have been working to increase economic and security integration with

⁸¹ Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal, "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 1 (1998): 29.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 4.

other countries, particularly in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In this regard, choosing to pursue neutrality would be a less effective choice for foreign policy. Some neutral states' recent experiences would support this idea. Sweden, Ireland, and Finland's neutral policies have come under question due to their membership in the European Union, and their closer relationship with military alliance NATO.

Indeed, the benefits and limitations of neutrality remains a controversial topic because, depending on a country's security strategy the country can be strengthened or isolated through its neutral policy. Moreover, global and regional political environments affect small countries' political, security, and geopolitical situations and a policy of neutrality may no longer be an attractive option for protecting the sovereignty and stability of a small nation.

C. POTENTIAL MOTIVATION FOR DECLARING MONGOLIA'S STATUS OF PERMANENT NEUTRALITY

Historically, Mongolia fought a long struggle to gain its identity and sovereignty. Since then, like many other small countries located near powerful countries, Mongolia defines its foreign policy very carefully, and it has pursued neutral foreign and defense policies since 1992. Nevertheless, it is still difficult to achieve a straightforward understanding of President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj's impetus to declare a status of permanent neutrality for Mongolia

1. Mongolia's Legal Fundamentals and Proposal

Mongolia has constituted its foreign policy under Chapter 1 of the *Constitution of Mongolia* as, "Mongolia shall adhere to the universally recognized norms and principles of international law and pursue a peaceful foreign policy."⁸³ According to her constitution, Mongolia prohibits stationing of foreign military on its territory; it even prohibits transferring foreign military through her border and territory. Mongolia has military forces for her territorial integrity and self-defense, allowed by her constitution,

⁸³ The Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia, *The Constitution of Mongolia*, Ulaanbaatar; Mongolia, 1992, www.parliament.mn/en/law/categories/2541/pages/4428.

and military power is based solely on homeland security. Furthermore, Mongolia is a non-alliance and an internationally recognized nuclear weapon free state.⁸⁴

The *National Security Concept of Mongolia* is a national strategic document, which it states that, as a principle of its sovereignty, Mongolia must always use soft power as political and diplomatic means to ensure its independence and sovereignty.⁸⁵ Furthermore, as her *Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy* states, Mongolia pursues an open, multi-pillar, and non-aligned foreign policy. It also asserts that, "The priority of Mongolia's foreign policy shall be safeguarding of its security and vital national interests by political and diplomatic means, and creating a favorable external environment for its economic, scientific and technological development."⁸⁶ In addition, the recently renewed *Basics of Mongolia's Defense Policy* states that Mongolia is willing to neither join any military alliances nor take part in armed confrontation unless Mongolia counters a military threat and Mongolia does not allow having foreign military stationed on its territory, or foreign military through its land or air spaces.⁸⁷

All these laws meet the requirement of The Hague Convention V and it is interpreted as a neutral policy. In his September 2015 address presenting the offer for the Parliament to discuss declaring permanent neutrality status, the president emphasized the aforementioned legal perspectives meet the stance of neutrality.⁸⁸ Furthermore, according to him, Mongolia needs to shape and validate its foreign policy by declaring the status of permanent neutrality.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ J. Enkhsaikhan, "Mongolia's Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status: Concept and Practice," *Asian Survey* 40, no. 2 (2000): 350; Li Narangoa, "Mongolia and Preventive Diplomacy: Haunted by History and Becoming Cosmopolitan," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 2 (2009): 360.

⁸⁵ The Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia, *National Security Concept of Mongolia*, last modified July 15, 2016, <http://www.nsc.gov.mn/sites/default/files/National%20Security%20Concept%20of%20Mongolia%20EN.pdf>.

⁸⁶ The Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia, *National Security Concept of Mongolia*.

⁸⁷ The Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia, *Basics of Mongolia's Defense Policy*, last modified July 15, 2016, <http://www.mod.gov.mn/index.php?com=content&id=133>.

⁸⁸ Tsahiagiin Elbegdorj, "Mongolia-Neutrality," *The Office of the President of Mongolia*, last modified January 8, 2016, <http://www.president.mn/eng/newsCenter/viewNews.php?newsId=1662>.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

The president also asserted that history, geographic location, and Mongolia's future are consistent with the fundamental principles of neutrality. According to him, neutrality encourages Mongolia to develop equal and balanced relationships with other countries because all the nations and global and regional organizations respect the permanent neutral policy.⁹⁰

In addition, the president emphasized that neutrality is the most stable policy over time. Due to constant and dramatic change in international affairs and world order, states' policies have also had to change. Neutrality is stable, because states can maintain their neutrality policy by amending, renewing, and even abandoning it without any other countries' involvement.

Mongolia plans to adopt a law establishing a status of permanent neutrality. The law would be enforced by the UN General Assembly resolution, following the same process as Turkmenistan, so that all the member states respect Mongolia's recognized status of neutrality.

Declaring a permanent status of neutrality might be a simple procedure; however, maintaining a status of permanent neutrality, particularly in the defense sector, will not be easy. Due to her location and geo-political situation, neutrality causes Mongolia to be detached from international politics and the political interests of current cooperating countries including neighbors.

2. Regional Security Environment

The law will be enforced by the UN General Assembly resolution, following the same process as Turkmenistan, so that all the member states respect Mongolia's recognized status of neutrality.

Declaring a permanent status of neutrality might be a simple procedure; however, maintaining a status of permanent neutrality, particularly in the defense sector, will not be easy. Three major economies and three military superpower states, as Russian Federation,

⁹⁰ Ibid.

People's Republic of China and the United States, are located in the region. Although the security situation is comparatively stable, the region has several potential security challenges.⁹¹ These security challenges include, but are not limited to the following issues.

Continued and unsettled territorial disputes are present in the region. For instance, China has disputed territorial claims with most of its neighboring countries to its west and south, including the South China Sea. In addition, Russia has territorial disputes with Japan over the Kuril Islands and other conflicts with its western and southern neighbors.

Potential transnational violent extremism in the region, due to the diversity of the population, religion, politics, and economics, causes instability in the region and transnational threats among the states.

Powerful countries in the region, Russia and China, extend their military capabilities, modernization, and develop advanced military technology. Moreover, Russia, China, the United States, and India have nuclear weapons, and several other countries have potential to develop nuclear weapons.

Overall, regional security coordination has been quite weak in Asia. There is no single security cooperation organization or institution present in the region to maintain the security. Regional disputes related to security are limited to only diplomatic talks or discussions during the regional meetings.⁹² States in the region are not closely cooperating due to their different political interests, which are based on competing political ideologies. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, led by China and Russia, has only six member states, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has ten member states. Lack of Asian security cooperation threatens constant instability and non-settlement of the territorial disputes.

⁹¹ Dennis C. Blair and John T. Hanley Jr., "From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements," *Washington Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (2001): 7.

⁹² Li Narangoa, "Mongolia and Preventive Diplomacy," 360.

The Asia-Pacific region is experiencing potential transnational threats as well, such as terrorism, international criminal activities including drug and human trafficking, and many other human security challenges by non-state actors crossing borders among the states. Moreover, there are threats from the proliferation of all types of weapons and potential threats from developing and proliferating sensitive technologies for weapons, including nuclear weapons, by state and non-state actors.

Within the strategic security environment, Mongolia is a country of East Asia and is situated between two of the world's most powerful countries with which it has close strategic partnerships and cooperation. At the same time, Mongolia is trying to choose to be a permanently neutral state. It is a very surprising stance since there is no potential threat to Mongolian security; however, both neighbors have potential disregard for other regional countries' behavior.

According to the *Concept of the Foreign Policy of Mongolia*, "Mongolia will not interfere in the disputes between two neighboring countries ..."⁹³ Not only will Mongolia void interfering in disputes between its two neighboring countries, it is not required to intervene in conflicts or disputes either of its neighbors may have with other states in the region. Mongolia is not a member of any military alliances and is an overall alliance-free country. The Mongolian Armed Forces have defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity as a main objective. A secondary objective of the Mongolian Armed Forces is participating in peace support operations, for defining Mongolia's diplomatic position on maintaining global peace and stability as a member of United Nations; they maintain close coordination and cooperation with neighboring countries as well as other European and regional countries' military forces, in order to enhance its military peacekeeping capacity and interoperability.⁹⁴

⁹³ The Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia, *Concept of Foreign Policy of Mongolia*, last modified July 15, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.mn/?page_id=26263&lang=en.

⁹⁴ Matei, "Developing Effective Armed Forces," 33; Mendee, *Mongolia's Peacekeeping Commitment*, 16.

As the president has stated, “It is not necessary for a state to seek support from any particular country or international organization to validate its neutrality status quo.”⁹⁵ Both Mongolia’s neighboring countries are greater players in the international arena; both have nuclear weapons and powerful military forces with modern technology; moreover, Mongolia’s neighbors are members of the United Nations Security Council. As such, they would have a great impact on Mongolia’s future neutrality.

Moreover, Mongolia would discuss joining The Hague Convention V, if it declares its permanent neutrality, in order to be protected by the international law. If Mongolia joins the convention, the country would be responsible for carrying out the law and to have certain rights with certain duties. As noted previously, this law would restrict certain policies, but this law is quite outdated. Nevertheless, no country has tried to update the law since the neutral policy itself has become less attractive and the number of neutral states is declining.⁹⁶ Furthermore, only two neighboring countries will be close guarantors for Mongolia’s neutrality, and they would determine whether to support Mongolia or to make Mongolia isolated or detached from rest of the world.

Based on constitutional legacy, Mongolia has implemented neutral security and foreign policies since its adoption of the new constitution in 1992. It is not clear what the real benefits for declaring a permanently neutral status would be. According to the president’s proposal, Mongolia can reshape its current foreign policy since it has not been clear in its position. Moreover, Mongolia can be a regional player, and Mongolia can be a neutral economic center in East Asia since it is permanently neutral. A permanently neutral foreign policy would have an impact on all of Mongolia’s security sectors, particularly defense cooperation. Mongolia’s defense cooperation, military capability, and interoperability have greatly been enhanced since it has participated in the UN and coalition peace operations. Continued defense sector cooperation would face potential challenges due to the permanent neutral policy. The challenges to defense cooperation will center on cooperation with NATO and some developing countries, as well as with

⁹⁵ Elbegdorj, “Mongolia-Neutrality.”

⁹⁶ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 105.

China's and Russia's military forces in order to enhance military capacity. The following chapters will discuss the challenges and analyze the potential challenges on defense cooperation in Mongolia.

D. CONCLUSION

As Christine Agius observes, "Neutrality belonged to the era of bloc tensions, territorial sovereignty and conflict between states."⁹⁷ Today, most countries prefer to settle the disputes through peaceful and diplomatic means by close coordination with regional and international organizations. Furthermore, many traditionally neutral countries are challenged by the interdependence and globalization of security and economic factors and the need for close cooperation of states to fight against transnational threats.

Since the end of Cold War, small states have changed from their approach to balancing or "bandwagoning" with powerful states; instead they have focused more on getting involved in and increasing their roles in the international organizations for maintaining global and regional peace and security, as the main actors in the contemporary international system.⁹⁸ Particularly, contemporary security environments and transnational threats require close coordination and cooperation among the military forces of countries in spite of their size. In this regard, neutrality is no longer a timely subject to discuss. Moreover, most of the small states that tried to become permanently neutral since the end of the Cold War, such as Turkmenistan, and some traditionally neutral countries, such as Finland and Sweden, comes under the questions on their neutrality.

According to the realist power balance theory, there are no external threats, no territorial disputes, and no intrigues to Mongolia from its only two powerful neighboring countries. Even in the worst case scenario, Mongolia has no ability to counter a physical

⁹⁷ Christine Agius, "Transformed Beyond Recognition? The Politics of Post-Neutrality," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (2011): 370.

⁹⁸ Jessica L. Beyer, and Stephanie C. Hofmann, "Varieties of Neutrality Norm Revision and Decline," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (2011): 285–311.

threat with its small armed forces and limited capabilities. Thus, Mongolia has no interest in having any type of conflicts with anyone.

Jargalsaikham Mendee states that, “The most logical and pragmatic way to survive in this complicated and rapidly changing landscape, and balance multiple political and economic aims is not to freeze the country’s pragmatic foreign policy via permanent neutrality, but instead strengthen its links to global, regional and bilateral structures.”⁹⁹ Whether Mongolia can successfully implement neutral policy or not is still debatable. From a military perspective, however, there is no regional collective security organization in East Asia that can support Mongolia’s neutrality like European neutrals have enjoyed with ideological support from European Union, NATO, and other international organizations.

⁹⁹ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, “Permanent Neutrality Debate in Mongolia,” *Asia Pacific Memo* 355, last modified December 7, 2015, <http://www.asiapacificmemo.ca/permanent-neutrality-debate-in-mongolia>.

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III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES AND THEIR EXPERIENCES

Since Chapter II explains the main concepts of neutrality and Mongolia's proposal to potentially pursue permanent neutrality status, Chapter III examines the defense and security policies of neutral countries. In supporting the main argument about potential effects of permanent neutral status on Mongolia's defense cooperation, analysis of these defense and security policies are based on the neutral states with armed forces. This chapter analyzes the security policies and defense cooperation of Switzerland, Austria, and Turkmenistan as model neutral states, while examining the defense policy and defense cooperation of Finland and Sweden, which have dramatically increased their cooperation with NATO while maintaining neutrality.

A. SWITZERLAND'S SECURITY POLICIES, AND ITS DEFENSE COOPERATION

Switzerland has the longest history of being permanently neutral, and its neutrality has fully integrated into the country's identity. The Swiss pursuit of neutrality status dates back to the battle of Marignano in 1515, after a long struggle to avoid becoming part of neighboring countries' wars. Finally powerful European states, France, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, in the nineteenth century recognized Switzerland's permanent status of neutrality and guaranteed its territorial integrity through the *Treaty of Paris* in 1815.¹⁰⁰ The country has benefited from permanent neutrality as an instrument by securing national solidarity since Switzerland has diverse of ethnicity; offering Swiss "good services" as a mediator among conflicting parties to settle disputes peacefully; and getting security guarantees from powerful countries in case of conflict situations. Critically, Switzerland, a non-aligned, neutral state, has its own military forces to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Switzerland's security behavior has changed due to the changes in the world's security environment. Switzerland had developed military forces based on mandatory

¹⁰⁰ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 54–56.

military conscription; however, they maintained no standing army until the end of the Cold War. Since 1990, Switzerland has conducted military transformations in its armed forces like many other European countries due to the changed security environment. One of these transformations is close cooperation with collective security organizations, which includes military alliance with NATO. Swiss military forces have participated in NATO-led peace support operations while it continues participation in UN peacekeeping, promoting peace and security in the region while developing its own military interoperability.

Switzerland developed defensive military forces without a standing army based on the self-defense capacity of neutrality in the case of threats. According to the Federal Constitution of Switzerland of 1874, Switzerland did not have standing military forces, and it had armed forces organized as militia or reserve personnel.¹⁰¹ Even though this state did not have standing military forces, it developed high capability to deploy a huge number of military personnel predominantly composed of conscripts in a short period of time when necessary. For instance, the Swiss Army was able to mobilize 625,000 troops with four fully equipped army corps and 300 aircraft support from Swiss air forces at the end of the Cold War, in order to defend its sovereignty and neutrality as self-defense from potential enemies.¹⁰² That was the height of their capacity.

In the twentieth century, Switzerland's neutrality was viewed as a positive security survival policy for a small state, particularly in light of the two world wars, and most significantly in considering the competing economic and political ideologies represented in the Cold War. During the Cold War, Switzerland's main foreign policy was based on key neutrality principles including not joining and coordinating with any military and political alliances; however, the state actively developed economic cooperation with other countries and participated in global humanitarian, peace, and stability activities. According to Andreas Wenger, in terms of Swiss foreign policy during

¹⁰¹ Tibor Szvircsev Tresch, "Transformation of Switzerland's Militia Armed Forces and the Role of the Citizen in Uniform," *Armed Forces & Society*, (2010):2–3, doi:10.1177/0095327X10361670.

¹⁰² Laurent Michaud, "Swiss Armed Forces and the Challenges of the 21st Century," *Military Review* 84, no. 5 (2004):89.

the Cold War, Switzerland increased its economic interests through cooperation while reducing security cooperation with other countries.¹⁰³ Wenger also asserts that Swiss promotion of economic development caused Switzerland to neglect its defense and military policy as part of Swiss foreign policy. The foreign policy was dominantly based on foreign trade and economic cooperation policy.¹⁰⁴ Swiss defense cooperation was limited.

Switzerland deployed its first company-size military force to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in the Korean War; the commission's main task was to supervise the armistice between the two Korean military forces. Furthermore, Swiss military have participated in UN peacekeeping operations since 1960, with a limited number of personnel and only in UN-mandated peacekeeping operations. Swiss military personnel have served the UN military observers mainly as experts, medical, and logistic personnel in UN peacekeeping operations. Switzerland's participation in military operations is still limited due to the neutrality policy. Due to Switzerland's peace loving initiatives and offering "good offices" for settling any disputes or conflicts peacefully, Switzerland has become an esteemed diplomatic state and home of international organizations in Europe. Although Switzerland joined the UN in 2002 after a referendum on becoming a member, the state had been an active player in UN peace promotion initiatives with modest participation in peacekeeping operations.

The basic military strategic objective of the Swiss defense was convincing possible adversaries that occupying or conquering Switzerland would cost them a lot and be nearly impossible. The Swiss citizens have been supportive of these objectives during the era of total wars. Furthermore, Switzerland has high potential to produce its own armament and military equipment. For instance, the *BRÜGGER & THOMET* series of submachine gun, *SIG SAUER* series of semi-automatic pistols and rifles, military trucks made by *SAURER MOTORS*, and *MOWAG PIRANHA* family of armored fighting

¹⁰³ Andreas Wenger, "Swiss Security Policy: From Autonomy to Co-Operation," in *Swiss Foreign Policy, 1945–2002*, ed. Jurg Martin Gabriel and Thomas Fischer (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 28.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

vehicles are productions of the Swiss military industries. Military armaments are mainly of domestic origin and manufactured at state owned and private armament companies of Switzerland; however, the state is not able to produce all military supplies on its own.¹⁰⁵ In this regard, Swiss military has purchased foreign military equipment in order to enhance its military capacity, but mainly from Western countries including the United States. Together with high numbers of well-equipped military personnel, highly fortified man-made and natural defensive areas of the Alpine mountains provide a daunting prospect to any potential adversary.¹⁰⁶

During the Cold War, Switzerland's military forces maintained their capacity to defend the country, particularly against potential offensive operations by Warsaw Pact countries.¹⁰⁷ Switzerland was well integrated into the Western political, economic, and technological sphere compared to Soviet bloc countries. Furthermore, powerful Western countries, especially the United States, obtained Switzerland's willingness to support the Western bloc's embargo against the Eastern bloc through diplomatic and economic pressure.¹⁰⁸ In this regard, Swiss military had access to military equipment and know-how on military technology from the Western countries without joining their alliances. This dependence and informal behavior of Switzerland brought its neutrality into question.¹⁰⁹

As have other countries in the world, Switzerland has conducted military transformation in its military forces based on the new security threats and challenges that emerged at the end of the twentieth century. Due to globalization, every state has had similar concerns regarding common complex and diverse transnational threats such as terrorism, asymmetric threats by state and non-state actors, cyber security, illegal

¹⁰⁵ Mikael Nilsson and Marco Wyss, "The Armed Neutrality Paradox: Sweden and Switzerland in US Cold War Armaments Policy," *Journal of Contemporary History* (2015), 351. doi: 0022009414564804.

¹⁰⁶ Stefan Markowski, "Switzerland-The Pragmatic Approach to Defence Procurement," *Defence and Peace Economics* 9, no. 1-2 (1998): 100, doi:10.1080/10430719808404896.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁰⁸ Nilsson and Wyss, "The Armed Neutrality Paradox," 352.

¹⁰⁹ Marjorie Andrey, "Security Implications of Neutrality: Switzerland in the Partnership for Peace Framework," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 9, no. 4 (2010): 83.

immigration or mass refugees, and natural disaster and environmental problems in the current century. As Ian K. Adam states, “Globalization has encouraged formerly unattainable aspirations in developing countries with the effect that increased cooperation is essential for future progress.”¹¹⁰ Switzerland renewed its security policy based on the evolved global security environment of the first decade of this century.

In the early 2000s, Switzerland developed a new security strategy, “Security through Cooperation,” that motivates Swiss military cooperation with other countries and alliances for mitigating military self-defense challenges. As Wegner asserts, “Participation, rather than neutrality or an independent national defense strategy, will safeguard the government’s freedom of action in today’s political environment, which is characterized by transnational problems.”¹¹¹ Swiss Armed Forces have implemented a reform, Army XXI, to reduce the number of the military reserve forces, and develop professional military forces with enhanced training through cooperation with other countries. Furthermore, participating in the activity of promoting peace and stability has become one of the three main missions of the Swiss Armed Forces along with defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity, supporting the civilian authority, and promoting peace within an international context.¹¹²

Switzerland is not a member of the EU and NATO; nonetheless, it cooperates closely with those organizations. Swiss personnel have participated, as previously mentioned, in peace support operations only under the UN Security Council or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) mandated operations in accordance with the Swiss Military law of 1995.¹¹³ Moreover, Swiss Armed Forces have

¹¹⁰ Ian K. Adam, “The Character of Conflict,” in *Conflict and Cooperation in the Global Commons: Comprehensive Approach for International Security*, ed. Scott Jasper (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012): 42.

¹¹¹ Wenger, “Swiss Security Policy: From Autonomy to Co-Operation,” 38.

¹¹² Tresch, “The Transformation of Switzerland's Militia Armed Forces and the Role of the Citizen in Uniform,” 244.

¹¹³ Andrea Baumann and Marco Wyss, “Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Switzerland,” *Center for Security Studies (CSS)*. ETH Zurich. Last modified January 2016. <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/04/03/contributor-profile-switzerland/>.

participated in the NATO and OSCE-led peace support operations with limited number of personnel. For instance, Swiss military, with a limited number of personnel, participated in OSCE-led peace operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and NATO-led operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan, because the UN Security Council mandated those operations to their respective security organizations. Furthermore, Switzerland is an active member of an European Union (EU), OSCE, and Partnership for Peace (PfP) program run by NATO to promote regional and global peace and stability. However, Switzerland still maintains only modest participation in military operations; no full-size combat military units have deployed in the peace operations due to Swiss neutrality.¹¹⁴ The UN peacekeeping operations require more robust military operations due to the global common security challenges. In this regard, Switzerland still keeps modest participation in peacekeeping operations while actively developing cooperation in order to enhance its military interoperability, contributing its efforts for collaborative security and military training.

International military cooperation is an essential element for the Swiss Armed Forces to enhance its military interoperability and to be part of the international solutions to transnational threats. Furthermore, Switzerland and other European neutral states cooperate with NATO through the PfP program, and they explain that this cooperation is compatible with neutrality policy. According to Andrew Cottey, the PfP is compatible with neutrality: not requiring states to be a member of NATO; not involving alliance planning activities; and not requiring deployment of military force.¹¹⁵ Also, as Andrey states, “The PfP is not an organization but an instrument, the main advantages of which are the principles of voluntary participation and self-differentiation.”¹¹⁶ Switzerland, as have other European neutral states, has benefited through the cooperation by enhancing its security capacity and military interoperability through the exchange of training and experience with other PfP members; contributing its initiative to deal with contemporary

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Andrew Cottey, “The European Neutrals and NATO: Ambiguous Partnership,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 34, no. 3 (2013): 457, doi:10.1080/13523260.2013.842295.

¹¹⁶ Andrey, “Security Implications of Neutrality,” 85.

security challenges; and mitigating security challenges through multilateral efforts.¹¹⁷ NATO also benefits not only its members by their participation in security related cooperation but also non-member states as it extends its influence globally. Beyond its work with NATO, Switzerland maintains modest military cooperation with other military forces. For instance, Swiss military cooperates with other countries military forces, including NATO members, only in training and developing interoperability levels.

Switzerland's neutrality has been counted as a successful implementation of permanent neutrality for the longest time, and its neutrality is a main foreign policy instrument. Swiss neutrality has imposed a quality of aloofness on Swiss military interaction with other military forces. Although neutral, Switzerland developed massive military forces to protect its sovereignty in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During this time, Switzerland has developed military forces composed predominantly of conscripts and developed military industries to produce most of its own military equipment. Switzerland, as have many other European countries, has countered contemporary security challenges, such as transnational threats, through close cooperation with other countries and integrated efforts. In this regard, the Swiss military cooperates with other countries military forces, as well as NATO through PfP program, to enhance its capacity to deal with contemporary security threats. However, as contemporary security circumstances demand that countries cooperate more extensively and substantively, the limits on cooperation posed by neutrality and related international law—particularly in security areas—may marginalize Switzerland.¹¹⁸ At the same time, the active engagement with NATO by other European neutral countries, such as Austria, Finland, and Sweden, has become a debatable issue among the scholars, in regard to how that cooperation with NATO calls into question the neutrality of these states.

¹¹⁷ Cottey, "The European Neutrals and NATO," 457.

¹¹⁸ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 105.

B. OTHER EUROPEAN NEUTRAL COUNTRIES DEFENSE POLICIES AND THEIR DEFENSE COOPERATION

Other European neutral states, Austria, Finland, and Sweden, chose to become neutrals based on their security situation, particularly during conflicts among the powerful countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition, since all of them are democracies, they formulate their military doctrine and integrate their military culture into the Western military sphere. Since the Cold War ended, those European neutrals have developed military cooperation with the regional military alliance, NATO, without joining the alliance as members. And, the neutrality of Austria, Finland, and Sweden has come under question due to their closer relationship with NATO.

1. Austria

In 1955, Austria chose to become a neutral state in order to regain its sovereignty from the World War II victorious countries. Due to its neutrality, Austria succeeded in ending the Allied occupation and became a buffer state between NATO and Warsaw Pact allies. As Spring emphasizes, “[Austrian neutrality] was also a sign of anti-fascism, anti-socialism, and anti-Germanism. It was a measure to find a new national identity that was detached from east and west as well as from the historical trauma of the Second World War.”¹¹⁹

In contrast to Swiss permanent neutrality, Austrian permanent neutrality has closely integrated into the international collective security organizations. Austria joined the UN in 1955, the same year it declared its intention to pursue neutrality and developed its neutrality policy concept, “active neutrality.” According to active neutrality policy, Austria would actively engage in and develop cooperation with other countries and international security organizations.¹²⁰ Later, Austria not only became a member of the UN, it also earned a seat as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in

¹¹⁹ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 74.

¹²⁰ Martin Krüger, “Austria,” in *Neutrality and Non-Alignment in Europe Today*, ed. Hanna Ojanen, (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003), 9–10.

1973–1974, 1991–1992, and 2009–2010.¹²¹ Austrian Armed Forces have participated in peace and stability operations as an important task of being part of the international community, particularly the UN peacekeeping operations since 1960. Austria was one of the leading contributors of troops to the UN peacekeeping operations, as second and fifth largest contributor, before 1990. It deployed not only experts and staff officers to UN peacekeeping operations, but also deployed infantry battalions to the UN missions in Cyprus in 1971, UNEF in Egypt in 1973, and assigned an infantry battalion to the UN Standby Arrangement System until 1990.¹²²

After the Cold War ended, Austria joined the EU and has cooperated with NATO through the PfP program since 1995 as other neutral countries, such as Ireland, Switzerland, and Sweden have done, in order to enhance its capability and interoperability. Austrian military personnel have taken part in UN peacekeeping operations, also in the OSCE, EU, and NATO organized peace operations such as the NATO-led operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo. Recently Austria deployed infantry battalion to the EU-led operation in Chad, and has currently deployed a few staff officers in Afghanistan. The Austrian National Security Council did not approve Austrian military participation in the operation in Iraq, because the operation was not within the framework of international law and UN approval. The council activated the law of Austrian neutrality, and it was part of Austrian permanent neutrality status.¹²³

Moreover, Austrian Armed Forces implemented reforms in 2005 that let Austria reduce its conscription and increase its professional military forces with more mobile, professional units. Also, the armed forces main doctrine has changed from area defense to domestic disaster relief, and peace support operations and disaster relief and

¹²¹ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 71–73.

¹²² Erwin A. Schmidl, *Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Austria*, Institute of Strategy and Security Policy, Austrian National Defense Academy, last modified June 2016, <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/04/03/contributor-profile-austria/>.

¹²³ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 76.

humanitarian operations abroad.¹²⁴ Austria still maintains its neutrality while developing security policy toward international security cooperation. Austria has contributed and still has the potential to contribute extensive numbers of military forces to the UN, NATO, and EU-led peace operations, including infantry battalions, special operations units, logistic and support units such as medical, engineering, and air support elements. According to Austrian security strategy assessment, Austria is vulnerable to transnational threats and potential domestic disaster relief capacity, and Austria's main security strategy is based on international cooperation particularly in regional security organizations.

2. Finland

Finland initially became a neutral state after gaining its independence from Russia in 1917. Finland pursues the neutral policy and has tried to maintain its sovereignty under the neutrality, but neutrality has not provided sovereignty to Finland throughout its history. Finland engaged in war against the Soviet Union's invasion in the early stage of World War II, joined the German Axis power to fight against the Soviet Union for survival, and fought against the Axis power alongside the Alliance power at the end of the war. After World War II, Finland continued its neutral policy and succeeded in having Soviet troops withdraw from its territory in 1955 and joined the United Nations in same year.

During the Cold War, Finland initiated the Nordic Nuclear Weapons Free Zone to restrict nuclear weapons in the region when leading NATO and Warsaw Pact countries escalated the production of weapons of mass destruction. After the Cold War, Finland implemented military transformation as other neutrals have done and reduced its conscript-based armed forces, but it still maintains a larger military due to the potential threat from Russia. Thus, territorial defense is still considered a main task. Finland decreased its military from 730,000 to 540,000 in 1994, to 430,000 in 1997, and 250,000

¹²⁴ Marco Wyss, "Military Transformation in Europe's Neutral and Non-Allied States," *The RUSI Journal* 156, no. 2 (2011): 45-46, doi: 10.1080/03071847.2011.576474.

in 2009, respectfully.¹²⁵ Finland joined the EU and has cooperated with NATO through PfP since 1994. In addition, Finland cooperates closely with the Swedish-led Nordic Defense Co-Operation. This is cooperation among Sweden, Finland, and Norway in the areas of arms procurement, training, and research.¹²⁶

Finland has participated in UN peacekeeping operations, as well as EU and NATO-led peace support operations in Kosovo, and recently in Afghanistan. Finland and Sweden have increased military cooperation with NATO and its member states, including actively participating in NATO military exercises.¹²⁷ Finland has cooperation with all European countries, including Russia, for purchasing and selling its military equipment as well, since the country has strong potential for military industry.

Finland, together with Sweden, develops military cooperation with NATO and its member states, and these activities have increased dramatically. As Marco Wyss states, Finland together with Sweden still maintains military neutrality and NATO membership still remains open. By increasing their military cooperation with NATO, Finland and Sweden have drawn the attention of Russia, and Russian officials have criticized Finland's and Sweden's potentially seeking membership in NATO.¹²⁸ Although Finland and Sweden are increasing cooperation and deepening their partnership with NATO, they are not seeking membership in the organization. However, Russian critics and threats of military retaliation could cause the countries to consider joining NATO to receive potential protection under NATO membership.¹²⁹

Finland still commits its main security to territorial defense and international cooperation in order to defend its sovereignty and build capacity against transnational threats. It does so through cooperation with security organizations while enhancing military capacity on territorial defense. In this regard, Finland still maintains stronger

¹²⁵ Ibid., 46–47.

¹²⁶ Wyss, “Military Transformation in Europe's Neutral and Non-Allied States.” 47.

¹²⁷ David S. Yost, *NATO's Balancing Act* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2014), 300–301.

¹²⁸ Yost, *NATO's Balancing Act*, 297–99.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 301.

military forces consisting of conscripts while developing cooperation with NATO through PfP, the EU, OSCE, and Nordic Defense Cooperation.

3. Sweden

Sweden initiated a policy of neutrality in the nineteenth century due to the regional security concerns. Sweden was among the powerful states that included Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, and it lacked the military strength to sustain its sovereignty. Although Sweden first chose to pursue a policy of impartiality in the early nineteenth century, it renewed this policy later during the Crimean War. Finally, the first war between Germany and Denmark caused Sweden to follow the neutrality policy that Spring refers to as “factual permanent neutrality.”¹³⁰ Sweden’s neutrality is more ambiguous than other neutralities due to its behavior during the World War II, and its closer cooperation with the military alliance of NATO.

Furthermore, Sweden’s neutrality is not as permanent as Swiss neutrality. One of the reasons for this would be the geopolitical situation in Northern Europe, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century. After World War I, Sweden directly joined the League of Nations and played active role in the collective security organization. During World War II, Sweden remained a neutral state; however, the Wehrmacht violated Swedish neutrality and moved its military forces through the territory of the neutral state. As Spring asserts, “Swedish people were of the opinion that it was the lesser evil for Scandinavia as a whole that Sweden had to accept some violations of the laws of neutrality in order to stay out of the conflict.”¹³¹ Sweden adopted neutrality during war time and maintained neutrality as a non-alignment policy, but was actively involved in international cooperation toward peace and stability. Particularly, Sweden has always maintained close cooperation with its regional or Nordic countries. Sweden joined the UN in 1946 and at the same time joined Nordic countries defense alliances, but Sweden did not continue this membership when Denmark and Norway joined NATO as members.

¹³⁰ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 89.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

Sweden faced greater challenges after the World War II when the ideological division had occurred. Due to its geographic location, Sweden was a buffer zone between communism and capitalism. Sweden chose to closely integrate with the Western bloc as a democratic state, and it developed a closer relationship with NATO while maintaining neutrality. Moreover, Sweden developed a closer relationship with the UN, and this relationship became one of the important roles associated with Swedish security policy. Sweden was the first neutral state elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 1957–1958, and was later elected again two more times in 1975–1976 and 1997–1998. Sweden was an active player in UN peacekeeping activities, usually acting as mediator of various conflicts and chairing multilateral discussions, particularly when the two contradicting blocs were involved.

With regard to military forces, Sweden maintained self-defense military forces, predominantly composed of conscriptions, until 2000. Main military doctrine was based on defending territorial integrity sovereignty and neutrality, using deterrence and dissuasion that would make any invasion by Sweden's potential adversaries too costly. Sweden also has a strong potential for military industries as developed as Switzerland.

Beyond its borders, Sweden has contributed its military forces to UN peacekeeping operations since 1953 during the Korean War and further extended its contribution with infantry battalions in the UN peacekeeping efforts in Congo and Egypt. Sweden's military deployment has only been in UN-led military operations; however, this contribution policy was changed in the 1990s when Sweden contributed its military forces to NATO and EU-led missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and now in Libya. After the 1990s, Swedish participation in UN peacekeeping operations has decreased as has the participation of other European neutrals. They have more interest in cooperating with the EU and NATO than in UN peacekeeping operations, since there is more possibility to enhance military interoperability and capacity.

After the Cold War ended, Sweden reformed its security policy and transformed its military forces toward the new security environment. Sweden joined the EU in 1995 and has cooperated closely with NATO through the PfP program. Security policy has shifted from a single approach concentrated on territorial defense to include international

peace building and domestic disaster relief. Sweden has reduced the number of standing military personnel; however, Sweden has enlarged its numbers of professional military personnel while it gradually abolished conscription by 2010. Sweden has underlined the importance of security cooperation to enhance interoperability, strategic mobility, and joint operations. Furthermore, Sweden military develops closer cooperation with NATO, has even participated in various NATO exercises, and it has caused Russia to worry about NATO's potential enlargement in the region.¹³²

Sweden's active participation in the EU and NATO security initiatives, including its increased military activities within the framework of NATO, calls into question Sweden's neutrality. As Spring observes, "Swedish position [has changed] to a status of military non-alignment, the country no longer counts as a factual neutral state. Their policy of neutrality has become irrelevant as it failed to provide an appropriate international role in the post-Cold War era."¹³³ Sweden still remains as a non-aligned country while it closely cooperates with NATO and other regional security organizations without membership, for the purposes of enhancing its security.

C. TURKMENISTAN'S PERMANENT NEUTRALITY AND DEFENSE COOPERATION

Turkmenistan is one of the sovereign states resulting from the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and has pursued "positive neutral" foreign policy since 1995. Turkmenistan has chosen to be a permanently neutral country due to the geopolitical situation in the region, the necessity of internal solidarity and isolation from the external potential threats, and for building political and economic independence from powerful countries in relation to its rich natural resources.¹³⁴ After Turkmenistan's independence in 1991, the country faced security instability challenges in the region. Its neighboring country Uzbekistan had suffered internal conflicts including civil war.

¹³² Yost, *NATO's Balancing Act*, 297–99.

¹³³ Spring, *The International Law Concept of Neutrality in the 21st Century*, 95.

¹³⁴ Murad Esenov, "Turkmenistan's Foreign Policy and Its Impact on the Regional Security System," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, no. 1 (2001), http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2001/journal_eng/cac-01/06.esene.shtml.

Afghanistan encountered the Taliban regime that created instability not only in Afghanistan but also in the Central Asian region. It also caused global instability. Today, Turkmenistan has maritime border disputes over Caspian resources with its Caspian neighboring countries of Iran and Azerbaijan. Moreover, Turkmenistan's economic independence and need for mutually beneficial economic relations with other countries have been crucial due to Turkmenistan's hydrocarbon rich natural resource. Considering all these challenges and Turkmenistan's authoritarian political structure, the country sought to become a permanently neutral country and a non-aligned state determined to avoid the influence of powerful countries on its economy and politics.

Neutrality causes certain countries to abstain from international cooperation. Turkmenistan's neutrality has become a reason for the country's isolation or for its limited access to multilateral economic and security cooperation with other countries. Turkmenistan's neutrality allows multiple bilateral relations to be maintained rather than multilateral cooperation. This causes isolation and prevents Turkmenistan from interacting with other states through multilateral approaches.¹³⁵ This isolation, though, is largely self-imposed and can be attributed to the interests of its ruling party; as Barbara Kiepenheuer-Drechsler states, the political leaders use neutrality as a tool to create seclusion of the state from international development for their own regime's benefit of the country.¹³⁶

Turkmenistan has not been part of Russia's initiatives to build economic and defense multilateral norms such as The Eurasian Economic Community, Collective Treaty Organization, and Shanghai Cooperation Organization.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, Turkmenistan's bilateral economic cooperation with other countries, including China and Russia, has been comparatively successful for the economy of Turkmenistan. Moreover, bilateral cooperation with neighboring countries has enabled Turkmenistan to become a

¹³⁵Barbara Kiepenheuer-Drechsler, "Trapped in Permanent Neutrality: Looking Behind the Symbolic Production of the Turkmen Nation," *Central Asian Survey* 25, no. 1-2 (2006), 129.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹³⁷ Stephen J. Blank, *Turkmenistan and Central Asia after Niyazov*, Strategic Studies Institute, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 2007), 10.

hub of regional trade and transportation through its rich natural resource based economy.¹³⁸ For instance, Turkmenistan started building a pipeline in 2015 to transfer natural gas from the Caspian Sea to Pakistan and further to India through Afghanistan. In contrast, defense cooperation has been limited due to the neutrality policy.

Potential instability in countries in this region, led Turkmenistan under President Niyazov to pursue a unilateral defense policy. Turkmenistan has developed limited cooperation with NATO through the PfP program, but only for training. Turkmenistan maintains its own military forces, composed of army, navy and air forces, in order to protect the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Turkmenistan joined NATO's PfP program in 1994 as the first Central Asian country in order to get the benefits of military interoperability. However, due to Turkmenistan's commitment to the neutrality policy, this cooperation has remained limited. Within these limits, some officials attend meetings and NATO organized training. Turkmenistan usually sends its personnel as observers to civilian emergency, scientific, and environmental training organized by NATO. In 2002, Turkmenistan hosted the civil emergency training in Ashgabat.¹³⁹ In addition, in 2003, Turkmenistan connected to NATO's Virtual Silk Highway computer networking project for Caucasus and Central Asia. However, Ashgabat still does not want to coordinate with NATO and other partners through multilateral cooperation. Furthermore, Turkmenistan does not contribute its military forces to any peacekeeping activities.

The Armed Forces of Turkmenistan consist of both contracted and conscripted personnel; according to Turkmenistan's constitution all males must fulfill two years of compulsory military service.¹⁴⁰ Aside from the limits placed on them by neutrality, the

¹³⁸ Richard Pomfret, "Turkmenistan's Foreign Policy," *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 6, no. 4, 2008, 29.

¹³⁹ Simon J. Smith and Emilian Kavalski, "NATO's Partnership with Central Asia: Cooperation a La Carte," in *The New Central Asia: The Regional Impact of International Actors*, ed. Emilian Kavalski, (Sydney, Australia: World Scientific, 2010), 45.

¹⁴⁰ Michael Denison, "Security Sector Reform in Turkmenistan," in *Security Sector Reform in Central Asia: Exploring Needs and Possibilities*, ed. Hartog, Merijn, (Centre for European Security Studies (CESS), 2010), 50.

Armed Forces of Turkmenistan have faced difficult challenges due to internal corruption and financial difficulties. Furthermore, they have few opportunities for defense cooperation. Until recently, the Armed Forces of Turkmenistan have limited coordination with Russian military, and only in the field of military training and technical assistance.

However, recent developments in the regional situation, radical activities, and transnational threats in the region have caused Turkmenistan to initiate military cooperation and deepen its military ties with Russia, the United States, and other potential powerful countries. As John C. K. Daly emphasizes, “Regional events, however, have recently caused Ashgabat to solicit international perceptions of Central Asia’s evolving strategic dynamics, causing Turkmenistan to cautiously reach out to potential foreign partners, despite this country’s neutralist policies.”¹⁴¹ He also states that Russia cooperates with Turkmenistan to provide military training and a military-to-military relationship.¹⁴² Furthermore, Turkmenistan is developing a military cooperation with China to combat terrorism as part of a strategic partnership agreement signed between the two countries in September 2013.¹⁴³ Regional stability, particularly in connection with Afghanistan’s instability, brings Turkmenistan to pursue active and cooperative measures on security because the state has not been able to deal with security issues alone for the last few decades.

In conclusion, the positive neutrality of Turkmenistan is based on rejecting the influence of powerful countries, particularly the Russian Federation, on the country’s economic independence. Moreover, the regional security situation has deterred Turkmenistan from developing its resource rich economy. Regional instability and Turkmenistan’s political structure have strongly affected its positive neutral foreign policy forcing it to become an isolationist policy. Although Turkmenistan has developed active diplomacy based on bilateral cooperation with other countries for economic

¹⁴¹ Joshua Kucera, “Turkmenistan Asks U.S. for Military Aid to Address Afghan Border Instability,” *EuroAsianet.org*, last modified March 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72761>.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Jim Nichol, “Turkmenistan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests,” Library of Congress, (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, December 12, 2013), 13.

development since 2007, the state's security relationship is still not actively engaged in the framework of international security cooperation. Recently, however, Turkmenistan initiated cooperation with Russia, China, and the United States in the field of developing armed forces capacity. And, Russia and China have expressed their intention to develop further cooperation with Turkmenistan.

D. APPLICATION FOR MONGOLIA

Based on these studies, we can show that neutral states such as Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Turkmenistan have become permanent neutrals due to the security conditions in their regions. They also all share concerns about potential threats to their sovereignty and independence. Mongolia has not been challenged in its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In fact, Mongolia is situated well to isolate itself from potential transnational threats, including terrorism, extremism, and religion-based radicals, and threats from its two powerful neighboring countries. Yet, it is still vulnerable and lacks military capability to engage against transnational threats alone. In this regard, a military-to-military relationship with other military forces including those of neighboring countries is vital for enhancing capability.

Swiss neutrality has been a model for most of the small states that have implemented permanent neutrality, and neutrality has become part of the Switzerland's national identity. As John Dreyer and Neal G. Jesse assess, Swiss neutrality has been successful due to the following three unique features: sustaining an armed defense; providing "wide collective goods" such as banking and good offices; and obtaining its neutrality as an international norm.¹⁴⁴ Switzerland has maintained armed neutrality since its independence.

Nonetheless, these factors that contributed to Switzerland's successful neutrality cannot be factors for Mongolia as a neutral country. Switzerland's geographic location and demographic situation as key features of defense and security are completely

¹⁴⁴ John Dreyer and Neal G. Jesse, "Swiss Neutrality Examined: Model, Exception or Both?" *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 15, no.3, (2014): 62.

different from Mongolia. Switzerland is located in a favorable defensive area of Europe, where the Alpine mountains provide great protection. In terms of demographics, Switzerland consists of different nationalities, so neutrality has been a tool for solidarity or unity within the state. In contrast, Mongolia is located between two powerful countries, and its territory is more than 37 times bigger than Switzerland, making it difficult to defend. Furthermore, Mongolia does not possess any geographical features that could pose as obstacles to potential aggressors, making neutrality a less attractive policy for defense, nor is it needed as a tool to promote national unity. The population of Mongolia is comparatively homogeneous. Thus, the Mongolian military's primary missions are territorial defense and support of the border protection agencies in case of emergency situation.

Furthermore, Switzerland and other European neutrals have had a history of sustaining powerful military forces dominantly consisting of conscripts since the Cold War. However, early in this century, European neutrals began decreasing the size of their armed forces and even abolishing conscription. In addition, European neutral states have strong potential to produce their own military weaponry and equipment in their own military industries. Although Mongolia maintains standing professional military forces as well as conscripts, it has not developed a military industry yet. The Mongolian Armed Forces purchases and gets donated support for most of its military equipment including weaponry through close cooperation with other military forces such as those of its two neighboring countries. Furthermore, due to their democratic political systems, European neutrals share the same military doctrine and culture as most Western military, so they face few challenges when they deploy in the peacekeeping operations. Due to its completely different military doctrine and culture, Mongolian military personnel have met challenges, including language barriers, in interoperability while deploying in various peace support operations. In this regard, training with other military forces is vital for the Mongolian Armed Forces.

As noted previously, Switzerland contributes military personnel to UN-mandated peace support operations; however, due to the neutrality policy and military law of Switzerland, only a limited number of personnel has participated in certain activities as

part of peacekeeping operations. Austria and Finland also actively participated in UN, EU, and NATO-led peace support operations. In terms of Finnish participation in peace operations, Finland prefers to participate more in EU and NATO-led operations rather than in UN operations. By contrast, Mongolia contributes infantry battalion together with individual military personnel as military observers and liaison officers, as well as police advisors, in UN peacekeeping operations. In addition, Mongolia contributes its military forces to NATO-led peace support operations and developing cooperation with Western military forces including the United States and in military alliance with NATO. Russia and China have not expressed support for Mongolia's military cooperation with Western countries and military ally NATO. If Mongolia pursues a permanent neutrality policy, these neighboring countries are likely to pressure Mongolia to stop the cooperation even though it is limited only to peacekeeping operations enhancement.

Like the European neutrals, Turkmenistan cannot be a model for Mongolia. Turkmenistan's potential security problems are challenging, and Turkmenistan has to manage internal and external threats alone due to its neutral policy.¹⁴⁵ However, Turkmenistan seeks to develop military-to-military cooperation with other countries regardless of its neutrality. Potentially, some countries, including the United States, would view Turkmenistan's neutrality as an obstacle to developing a military-to-military relationship between states. From a defense cooperation perspective, Mongolian defense cooperation has been much broader than that of Turkmenistan, and through such cooperation, the Mongolian military has already enhanced its own image on the international security cooperation stage.

Indeed, the potential status of permanent neutrality might have benefits for Mongolia in terms of the economy and politics of the country; however, it certainly promises no benefit for Mongolia's current foreign defense cooperation. The Mongolian Armed Forces are seeking broader cooperation with other countries' military forces in order to enhance its peacekeeping capacity, military interoperability, and conventional

¹⁴⁵ Pomfret, "Turkmenistan's Foreign Policy," 19–34; Najia Badykova, "Regional Cooperation in Central Asia: A View from Turkmenistan," *Problems of Economic Transition* 48, no. 8 (2005): 62–95.

military capacity. The next chapter examines Mongolia's current defense cooperation with its neighboring countries as well as with other countries in Europe, Asia, and Asia-Pacific region.

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IV. CURRENT MONGOLIAN FOREIGN DEFENSE COOPERATION

Before analyzing the potential effects of permanent neutrality policy for Mongolia, Chapter IV examines Mongolia's current defense cooperation with other countries' defense sectors, including those of neighboring countries, and how Mongolia's military benefits through such relationship.

Mongolia's current foreign policy, well known as the "Third Neighbor Policy," aims to promote mutually beneficial partnerships with the other developing democratic countries, while maintaining friendly and strategically important relations with neighboring countries.¹⁴⁶ This encourages the Mongolian Armed Forces to develop friendly cooperation with other countries' military forces while actively engaging in global and regional security activities. In the framework of foreign policy objectives, Mongolia diversifies its partnership with other developing countries for gaining their interest and support in the international arena.¹⁴⁷ The Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) have successfully developed mutual and multilateral cooperation with the defense sectors of other countries, which has become one of the essential diplomacy tools of Mongolia.¹⁴⁸

The MAF successfully enhances cooperation with neighboring countries' military, while developing defense relationships with other countries' military forces, including those of Germany, Turkey, France, and other European countries; India, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan, and other Asia countries; and Canada, Australia, the

¹⁴⁶ Dorjjugder Munkh-Ochir, "Same Rules, New Dimensions for Mongolia's National Security: Adapting to the New Geo-Economic Environment," *Brookings Northeast Asia Commentary*, no.32, October, 2009, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/same-rules-new-dimensions-for-mongolias-national-security-adapting-to-the-new-geo-economic-environment/>.

¹⁴⁷ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Mongolia's Quest for Third Neighbours: Why the European Union?," *EUCAM Policy Brief* 25, (July 2012), http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/PDF/PolicyBriefs/mongolia_quest_for_third_neighbours_why_the_eu.pdf.

¹⁴⁸ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Mongolian Defense Diplomacy," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 10, no 180, October 9, 2013, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41467.

United States, and the Asia-Pacific regional countries. Mongolia's defense relationships with other defense forces are based on developing military-to-military cooperation, increasing Mongolia's military interoperability, and enhancing the MAF capabilities, particularly, the peacekeeping capability. The MAF benefits from cooperating with other military forces by enhancing its peacekeeping and conventional military capacity through various types of military education and training; assistance and support of military equipment including the purchase of some necessary supplies, such as strategic airlifts, the purchase of military weaponry and equipment, or in the form of donations within the framework of the military assistance program; and military transformation and enhancement of interoperability.

A. MONGOLIA'S DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH HER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Defense relationships with neighboring countries are significant to Mongolia's defense cooperation. Mongolia has mutually beneficial partnerships and strategic cooperation agreements with the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. Mongolia and Russia signed a *Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation between Russia and Mongolia* in 1993.¹⁴⁹ Later, both countries signed a *Declaration of Strategic Partnership* in 2009, which provides a broader relationship between the two countries. In addition, Mongolia and China signed a *Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation* in 1994, which declares mutual respect for the each other's independence and territorial integrity.¹⁵⁰ Also, *The Joint Declaration of the Establishment of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership* between Mongolia and China was adopted in 2014.

Based on those cooperation agreements, the MAF have developed military-to-military relationship agreements such as the *Military and Technical Cooperation Agreement* with both neighboring countries. Under the framework of the agreements, the MAF have educated military personnel in order to enhance military capabilities and to

¹⁴⁹ Tsedendamba Batbayar, "Mongolian-Russian relations in the past decade," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 6 (2003): 958.

¹⁵⁰ Alicia Campi, "Sino-Mongolian Relations from Beijing's Viewpoint," *China Brief* 5, no. 10 (2005): 7-8.

advance military equipment with modern technologies in the support of the neighboring countries defense.

The MAF cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the People's Liberation Army of China are crucial not only to building relationships among these three countries, but also it builds confidence for both neighboring countries that Mongolia's defense cooperation with other countries is not threatening to those countries' security. Mongolia is developing military relationships in order to enhance peacekeeping capacity and to carry out Mongolia's diplomatic effort to participate in the global peace and stability activities.

1. The MAF Cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation

Although the MAF have adopted some Western military socialization through its reformation and as effects of the peacekeeping deployment, Russian military standards still have a strong impact on military doctrine, procedures, training, and some customs and rules. The MAF maintain a close relationship with the Russian military based on mutually beneficial cooperation through military and technical cooperation agreement and strategically important, friendly neighbor, and military-to-military relationships.

Compared to military cooperation with other countries, the MAF have the longest relationship with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, especially throughout the twentieth century. Due to the great security challenge, lack of resources, and lack of other external support, the Mongolian military adopted the Soviet Union's military customs, training, military doctrine, and procedures in the twentieth century after its independence in 1921. Mongolia even allowed Soviet military presence on her soil three times in the twentieth century, due to her security vulnerability and security challenges from Japan and China.¹⁵¹ After World War II, Mongolia's military relationship with the Soviet Union grew much stronger. The Mongolian military fully transformed the cavalry forces to mechanized military. Furthermore, during the Sino-Soviet crisis in the 1960s, the

¹⁵¹ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization: Mongolia as a Case Study," *Armed Forces & Society* (2012):9, doi: 0095327X12441323.

Mongolian military was resupplied with modern military equipment with the assistance of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet military presence from 1967 to 1992, Mongolia developed its military institution with more heavy influences of Soviet military customs, doctrine, and some regulations. Moreover, military interoperability, training, and equipment had drastically improved due to active interactions with the Soviet Union and other communist countries.¹⁵² After the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the cooperation between the two militaries significantly decreased due to the political and economic challenges of both countries; however, the relationship developed again in early 2000s.

Currently, the MAF maintains a robust cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation by strengthening military education, enhancing interoperability between the two armed forces, and upgrading military equipment and their maintenance within the framework of the military and technical cooperation agreement between the two armed forces.

In the area of military training, Russia has offered broader military training opportunities to Mongolian officers and non-commissioned officers in all levels of military training, including young cadets, enabling them to study in Russia's Military School named after Field Marshal Alexander V. Suvorov. According to Alicia J. Campi's interview with Mongolia's Ministry of Defense, approximately 60 percent of Mongolian military personnel who studied abroad did so in the Russian Federation.¹⁵³

Furthermore, both countries have initiated the organizing of bilateral military exercises in order to tighten their military relationship, enhance interoperability, and enhance military capacities. The MAF and Russian Armed Forces have organized bilateral military exercises annually since 2008. The location of the exercise rotates between Mongolia and Russia. Both countries referred to the exercise as *DARKHAN* from 2008 to 2010, and the name changed to *SELENGA* as of 2010. The main theme of

¹⁵² Mendee, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization," 9.

¹⁵³ Alicia J. Campi, "Mongolia and Russia Show Military Sheen," *Asia Times Online*, March 21, 2013, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/CHIN-01-210313.html>.

this annual exercise is to enhance military interoperability of both military forces, to develop counterterrorism coordination with conventional military operations and tactics, and to maintain combat operational readiness of the armed forces.

Mongolia's conventional military equipment is mainly from Russia. Christopher Pultz affirms, "The MAF has relied heavily on Russian support for the majority of its conventional military equipment and training."¹⁵⁴ Since the MAF deployed its personnel to the peace support operations, the Mongolian peacekeeping forces have faced challenges with its military equipment and material support during the execution of the peacekeeping missions. For instance, the UN peacekeeping missions in Africa require certain capabilities of transportation, protection of the personnel, and modern military surveillance equipment due to the nature of the environment as well as the nature of conflict. For mitigating these challenges and upgrading military equipment with modern technology, the MAF purchases certain conventional military equipment and weaponry from Russia.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, Russia has provided military technology, conventional military equipment, and maintenance services to the MAF as assistance within the framework of the military and technical cooperation agreement.¹⁵⁶

Cooperation with the Armed Forces of Russian Federation plays a significant role for the MAF in enhancing its capabilities in personnel training and modernizing military equipment. These efforts allow the MAF to actively engage in global peace operations with capable military personnel and equipment to meet the modern military operations environment. As Campi notes, "Ulaanbaatar's bilateral military relationship with

¹⁵⁴ Christopher Pultz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy: A New Paradigm for Security," *Asia Policy* 17, no. 1 (January 2014): 141–142, https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asia_policy/summary/v017/17.pultz.html.

¹⁵⁵ Mashbat Otgonbayar Sarlagtay, "Mongolia's Immediate Security Challenges: Implication to Defense Sector and The Regional Cooperation," *Security Outlook of the Asia Pacific Countries and Its Implications for the Defense Sector*, The National Institute for Defense Studies, Joint Research Series, no 7 (Tokyo, Japan: 2012), 110.

¹⁵⁶ Anthony Rinna, "Mongolian Neutrality and Its Significance for Russian Security," *Russian Direct*, May 3, 2016, <http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/mongolian-neutrality-and-its-significance-russian-security>.

Moscow remains a priority for Mongolia, which sees Russian support as a key factor in training the Mongolian armed forces for modern security realities.”¹⁵⁷

2. The MAF Cooperation with the Chinese People’s Liberation Army

Apart from economic and political cooperation between these two countries, security affairs cooperation between Mongolia and China is one of the oldest in human history. According to Mendee, the modern defense cooperation between Mongolian and Chinese military has focused on confidence building as the main purpose of the interaction.¹⁵⁸ In the twentieth century, both militaries developed defense relationships between 1946 until 1963, through which high officials paid official visits to each other and military cultural exchange (military ensemble and sport) activities were initiated. However, due to Soviet and Chinese contradistinction, territorial disputes, and confrontation during the Cold War, the Mongolia and Chinese defense relationship was quite cold until the late 1980s.¹⁵⁹ The defense cooperation between two countries normalized in the 1990s and high level military delegations paid official visits and established several cooperation agreements to build mutual trust, and to improve the military-to-military relationship and to enhance Mongolia’s peacekeeping abilities.

The Mongolian and Chinese military relationship has developed based on good and friendly neighbor policies, developing mutual confidence and benefits through cooperation, enhancing security cooperation agreements, military and technical assistance programs, and enhancing Mongolia’s peacekeeping capabilities. Both countries have the same interest in actively participating in UN peacekeeping operations as their foreign policy tools and contributing military and police forces to the UN peacekeeping operations.

Under the framework of the military and technical cooperation agreement, Mongolian military personnel have attended training in the Chinese military training

¹⁵⁷ Campi, “Mongolia and Russia Show Military Sheen.”

¹⁵⁸ Mendee, “Asymmetrical Military Socialization,” 8.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

institutions, and Chinese officers have attended Mongolian language training in Mongolia. Moreover, within the framework of developing the military-to-military relationship and enhancing military capabilities and military interoperability, both military forces have organized several bilateral exercises annually since 2008.¹⁶⁰ Both countries conducted a bilateral peacekeeping exercise in China in 2008, a disaster relief exercise in Mongolia in 2013, and a counterterrorism exercise in Mongolia in 2015. The themes of the exercises are focused on UN peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism, and disaster relief operations.

The MAF have received technical assistance from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) within the framework of the military and technical cooperation agreement between the two armed forces. The MAF purchases non-combat military equipment and materials, military construction engineering and transportation equipment, and other materials. The PLA also has provided military engineering and transportation equipment for enhancing Mongolia's peacekeeping capacities, and funding for the MAF's peacekeepers' recreation center in 2011 as assistance to the MAF.¹⁶¹

The Mongolian and Chinese military are mainly focused on building trust between the two military forces and coordinating to enhance interoperability through training, and sharing the experience and supply lines of both armed forces for UN peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

B. MONGOLIA'S DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH U.S. MILITARY

The MAF opened new pages in its modern history by deploying its military personnel to the UN peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Western Sahara in 2002, after a long preparation and cooperation with the UN. Moreover, the Mongolian government decided to support a U.S.-led operation in Iraq and Afghanistan, and later a NATO-led operation in Afghanistan and Kosovo. These

¹⁶⁰ Pultz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy," 143.

¹⁶¹ Pultz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy," 143.

involvements contribute other significances for Mongolia's military cooperation in building peacekeeping ability and affect the evolution of the MAF doctrine, culture, and some of its structure.

The MAF's military cooperation with the United States has played a significant role in Mongolia's defense reform on developing professional military training, particularly NCO development training, peacekeeping operations training, and English language training; enhancing military interoperability through training while developing Mongolia's military peacekeeping capabilities and improving its military-to-military relationship with the U.S. military and other countries' military through close cooperation and joint training and deploying peace support operations; and assisting on military technological improvement for peacekeeping capability.

Mongolian military personnel have participated in the various levels of military training at the U.S. military institutions, including in English training through the U.S. security assistance program International Military Education and Training (IMET). Also, the MAF English language training together with developing English instructors has been funded through this program.¹⁶² Those trainings have contributed significantly to enhancing Mongolia's peacekeeping capacity in the training of the professional military personnel, interoperability of the MAF, and developing Mongolia's military cooperation with other countries. Moreover, the MAF has developed its NCO corps through an NCO development program implemented by the great support from the U.S. military. The MAF's NCO corps has become a primary component to carry out professional military tasks, particularly in the peacekeeping operations since the MAF do not deploy conscripts in the peace support operations.

In regards to the development of the MAF's peacekeeping capacity, the U.S. government funded the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) program, which promotes various types of peacekeeping operations training opportunities for the UN peacekeeping contributing countries. This program has played a magnificent role in

¹⁶² Pultz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy," 137.

enhancing Mongolian peacekeeping capabilities. Mongolia has been a beneficiary of this program by funding for Mongolia's and other countries' participation in regional peacekeeping exercises, and funding for upgrading the training environment of the peacekeeping training center. Through the training opportunity offered by the GPOI program, Mongolian peacekeeping forces have attended other military exercises which have been organized in the Asia-Pacific region annually, and individual officers and NCOs have attended the peacekeeping courses funded and co-organized by the GPOI in different countries in the region. In addition, Instructors of the Peace Support Operations Training Center (PSOTC) of the MAF have experienced teaching in the peacekeeping courses in the regional peacekeeping training centers. Moreover, the GPOI program has funded the upgrading of the PSOTC facilities and recognized the PSOTC as the regional peacekeeping training center in 2016. Now, this training center is fully functional to carry out a brigade-size unit's command and staff exercise, two full-sized battalion's conventional or peacekeeping field exercises, and is capable to accommodate more than 2,000 personnel in all seasons.

The United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) also provides various training opportunities for the MAF in order to enhance Mongolia's military interoperability. The MAF has co-organized numbers of bilateral and multilateral peacekeeping operations exercises with USPACOM in order to promote military-to-military relationships and enhance interoperability of the military personnel, while promoting security cooperation with other military forces. The MAF and the USPACOM co-organize the multinational peacekeeping operations exercise "Khaan Quest" annually, and the exercise has become one of the largest regional exercises, with the number of participating countries in the exercise increasing dramatically. Countries from Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa, and South America have participated in the "Khaan Quest 2016" multinational peace support operations exercise co-organized by the MAF, the GPOI, and the USPACOM in Mongolia, which proves that the significance of the exercise has been increasing. In addition to "Khaan Quest," several other exercises, and the UN courses are organized as bilateral or multilateral training co-organized with the GPOI or USPACOM. Among these are the non-lethal weapons execution exercise, medical capability enhancement

training, and engineering capability enhancement training. Those exercises are vitally important for enhancing the peacekeeping capacities of the MAF personnel and contribute to the success of the MAF accomplishment. Furthermore, with support of the U.S. military, the MAF personnel have engaged with regional military forces through multilateral military activities such as joint and combined training and security meetings in the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁶³

This engagement and participation also provides vast opportunities for the MAF to interact with regional military forces in order to share experience, to develop active cooperation through peacekeeping exercises, and to enhance military cooperation on enhancing peacekeeping capability. In addition, Russia has participated in the “Khaan Quest” multinational peacekeeping operations exercise since 2006 with observer’s status. China also participated in this annual exercise as observers between 2006 and 2014; in 2015 and 2016, China sent its troops to participate in the “Khaan Quest” operations exercise in order to share common peacekeeping knowledge and experience among the participating military forces.¹⁶⁴

The United States provides and funds for non-lethal military equipment and transportation equipment such as personnel protection equipment, night vision devices, and commercial utility vehicles to the MAF for upgrading its equipment to meet the requirement of the peacekeeping operations.¹⁶⁵ The U.S. military also provides certain military equipment support, such as military trucks, for carrying out tasks in the mission area; moreover, the United States also provides strategic airlift to the Mongolian contingents in Afghanistan.

In support of USPACOM, the MAF have actively participated in the regional peacekeeping operations training and exercises in order to share its peace support

¹⁶³ Thomas C. Bruneau and Florina Cristina Matei, *The Routledge Handbook of Civil-Military Relations*, ed., (New York: Routledge, 2012), 209.

¹⁶⁴ Ankit Panda, “A First: China Sends Troops to US-Mongolia-Led Khaan Quest Exercise,” *The Diplomat*, June 23, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/a-first-china-sends-troops-to-us-mongolia-led-khaan-quest-exercise/>.

¹⁶⁵ Pultz, “The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia’s Military Strategy,” 137.

operations experience and learning from the other military forces. GPOI and USPACOM have organized a regional peacekeeping operations annual exercise in the region. The MAF has actively participated in the exercises with its personnel in the staff exercises, field training exercises, and instructors at the field training exercise. Those exercises are conducted annually in the Asia-Pacific region with the support of USPACOM and GPOI. Those annual exercises provide a valuable opportunity for the MAF to learn from the best practices as well as to build its confidence and capacity to carry out the peace support operations. The PSOTC of the MAF is a member of the Association of Asia-Pacific Peace Operations Training Centers (AAPTC) and actively engages in the activities including exchange of instructors among the training centers of the association. MAF personnel have attended training and courses organized by association member centers. Moreover, the MAF has actively participated in the seminars and regional forums in regards to regional security concerns.

Due to its close cooperation with the U.S. military, the MAF has mitigated certain challenges such as reforming military training and structure, and adopting some Western training standards to its military training. In this regard, Mongolia's military performance in the peace support operations has been significantly increased. As Mendee asserts, "for Mongolia, their defense cooperation with the United States brought them one level above other developing nations, who are not in closer alliance type relationship with Pentagon."¹⁶⁶ Mongolian soldiers proudly carry out their given tasks in the UN peacekeeping operations as well as NATO-led peace support operations with high performance and accomplishment.

C. MONGOLIA'S DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Based on Mongolia's current foreign policy, Mongolia develops military cooperation with other countries besides its immediate neighboring countries' military forces. The MAF have made efforts to develop military-to-military relationships with the ROK, Japan, India, and other Asian countries, and other regional countries, such as

¹⁶⁶ Mendee, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization," 13.

Canada and Australia. Furthermore, these relationships extend to Germany, Turkey, and other European countries, as well as regional organizations of NATO. The MAF taps these relationships to enhance its military capacities to participate in the global peace support operations, to increase military interoperability, and to increase Mongolia's national security while actively involving it in the international security activities. This effort has significantly increased, particularly since Mongolian military personnel have deployed in the UN peacekeeping operations since 2002, and other international security operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo since 2003.

1. Countries in the Vicinity, Including Asia Pacific Regional Countries

Mongolia's military foreign cooperation is greatly extended not only through cooperation with neighboring countries, but also with Asia-Pacific region and Asian countries' military forces. The MAF cooperation with military forces of India, the ROK, Japan, and other Asian countries, and further, with Canada, Australia, and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region enhances the MAF's peacekeeping operations capacities through partnership. These partnerships enable the MAF to exchange peacekeeping operations best practices while enhancing military interoperability and promoting peace and stability through active participation in regional security activities.

The MAF maintains a military-to-military relationship with ROK Armed Forces and Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the development of peace support operations, military interoperability, and enhancing military capacity. Mongolian military personnel, including military cadets, have attended military training in ROK and Japanese military training institutions as well as at institutions for security studies. Both countries have contributed their military personnel to UN peacekeeping operations and developing the peace support operations capability. The ROK and Japanese military personnel have participated with MAF personnel in multilateral peacekeeping exercises, seminars, and courses actively. The MAF have conducted a bilateral exercise annually with Japanese Self Defense Forces to enhance military engineering capacity and interoperability since 2014 and conducted a bilateral exercise with ROK military forces in 2007 on

counterterrorism. Moreover, the ROK provides military equipment, including personnel protection and military transportation equipment as assistance.

The MAF and Indian Armed Forces have developed a bilateral relationship on developing military capacities and enhancing interoperability. Mongolian military personnel have attended military training in Indian military institutions such as The Defense Services Staff College of India and also in various types of peacekeeping training and exercises in India such as the UN Military Observers Course, staff officers' course. MAF personnel also have benefited from English training in India, and India has also offered Indian military officers to conduct English training in Mongolia in 2011.

Within the framework of developing military capacity through military-to-military partnership activities, Canada, Australia, and India have a role in providing military education and training assistance. MAF personnel have attended English and French language training in Canada, and the Canadian defense force offers peacekeeping operations training and other military training through Canada's Military Training Assistance Program (MPAT). The MPAT has played a significant role in promoting Canada's foreign policy interests, and it has widened its activities to include non-NATO members. It offers language training and peacekeeping operations training.¹⁶⁷ It has been a great opportunity for the MAF to develop personnel education on peacekeeping operations and learning from the vast peacekeeping experience of Canadian military. As Mendee asserts, "The MTAP provides excellent opportunities to increase Mongolia's capability of peace support operation, and, at the same time, advances mutual understanding and friendship between militaries of two nations for future common goals of international security."¹⁶⁸ Canadian military personnel have actively participated in the annual "Khaan Quest" exercise since its beginning in 2006; moreover, instructors from the PSOTC of the MAF have worked as guest instructors at Canada's Peace Support Training Center in Kingston in 2010–2014.

¹⁶⁷ Jargalsaikhan Mendee, "The Military Training Assistance Program (MTAP): An Instrument of Military Diplomacy," *Canadian Military Journal* 2, no 3 (August 2001), 63–64, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo2/no3/doc/63-64-eng.pdf>.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

In addition to already having an economic, educational, and political relationship with Australia, Mongolia currently develops military cooperation with the Australian Defense Forces. MAF personnel recently joined to study in Australian defense institutions and Australian Defense Forces personnel have participated in the “Khaan Quest” exercise frequently since 2006. The Peace Operations Training Center of the Australian Defense Forces has invited the instructors to serve as guest instructors for their training in 2014. Moreover, there are a number of areas for Mongolia to develop bilateral cooperation with Australian Defense Forces, including peace support operations training and English training.

The MAF have developed a wide range of foreign cooperation in Asia-Pacific regions in order to enhance its peacekeeping capabilities, sharing its experience while learning best practices, and has actively participated in regional security activities.

2. The MAF Cooperation with European Countries Military and NATO

In addition to bilateral defense cooperation with China, Russia, and the United States, the Mongolian Armed Forces has developed military-to-military relationships through bilateral military cooperation agreements with European countries, such as Germany, Turkey, Belgium, the UK, France, Luxembourg, Poland, and Italy. Cooperation with the European military forces focuses more on Mongolia’s military interoperability and capability building through closer partnership.

Mongolian military interaction with Germany and Turkey are in a broader range of cooperation among other European countries. Mongolian military personnel attend all levels of the military training in German and Turkish military training and security training institutions. The MAF is one of the beneficiaries of the military cooperation agreements with those countries in personnel and armed forces capacity development.

The MAF military contingents have deployed together with German military forces in the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan since 2008. The joint pre-deployment training was conducted to train the contingents since this unit uses Germany’s military equipment and weaponry in the mission area.

The German military personnel have actively participated in the “Khaan Quest” multinational peacekeeping operations annual exercise as staff officers in the staff exercise. In addition, instructors from the UN Training Center of the German Armed Forces worked as instructors at the field training exercise the since 2008. Moreover, instructor exchange activities between the UN Training Center of the German Armed Forces and the PSOTC of the MAF have been conducted several times in order to share experience and enhance training capabilities.

The Turkish and Mongolian military bilateral exercise has been conducted annually since 2003 in order to enhance military cooperation between the two armed forces and boost counterterrorism capacity and interoperability.

Both Germany and Turkey have contributed military equipment, such as night vision devices, personnel protection and other military supplies for overseas deploying units, to the MAF within the framework of military and technical support agreements. The German Armed Forces has also provided ten military jeeps to the MAF and some other military trucks and equipment as assistance to the PSOTC.

The MAF has military cooperation with the Belgian armed defense forces for enhancing peace support operations capability. The MAF deployed small size military units with Belgium’s forces in Kosovo and Afghanistan within the framework of cooperation with Belgium Armed Forces. Before deploying to the mission in Kosovo, the Mongolian unit conducted pre-deployment training with Belgium’s forces in 2005 and 2007, in order to train the troops in NATO standard training, equipment familiarization, and training on specific tactics and procedures of the Belgian forces. This pre-deployment training and cooperation in the mission contributed tremendous lessons on interoperability and enhancement of the MAF peace support operations capacities, as well as experience for future deployments.

The MAF has valuable support from other European military forces in cooperation with them. For instance, the UK has implemented the “Peacekeeping English Project” in the MAF in order to support English training for Mongolia’s military personnel, particularly military English training for peacekeeping operations. Within the

framework of the project, the MAF peacekeeping battalions and the PSOTC have established general and military English training sections to conduct English training, and it has impacted enormously the effectiveness of the MAF peacekeepers in the mission.¹⁶⁹

In order to train military personnel, the MAF have engaged in cooperation with military forces of Luxembourg, Italy, Poland, and France. The MAF personnel have attended military training and education programs in France, including French language training. Due to deployment in some African countries, the MAF has widened the cooperation for French language training and education with France. The Armed Forces of France also offered military training and education to MAF personnel at different levels of military training in France, which includes French language training.

In addition, Poland and Italy have offered military education and training for the MAF, while other countries such as Luxembourg have trained several officers and NCOs in English training.

Mongolia's European partners have actively supported Mongolia's effort to enhance military-to-military relationships and promote global peace and security while developing its own military capacity. France, the UK, Germany, and Poland have participated in the "Khaan Quest" exercise frequently, have offered their trainings to the MAF, and have supported Mongolia's steps to enhance interoperability with NATO. In addition, with the support of the UK military, Mongolia successfully co-organized a multilateral peacekeeping operations field training exercise with the military forces of four permanent members of the United Nations Security Council in 2004.¹⁷⁰

Mongolia has developed relationships with European democratic countries as part of its proactive diplomacy since Mongolia peacefully changed its political regime in 1990. In accordance with Mongolia's foreign policy, Mongolia develops close relationships with other democratic countries, including European countries, to counterbalance its two neighboring powerful countries. It accomplishes this while

¹⁶⁹ Mendee, "Finally, A New Era in NATO-Mongolia Relations," *Voices From Central Asia*, no. 1 (June 2012), 4.

¹⁷⁰ Mendee, "Finally, A New Era in NATO-Mongolia Relations," 4.

managing non-alignment and not locating any military presence on its territory as described clearly in its security, foreign, and defense policies.

NATO announced its decision to cooperate with Mongolia within the framework of the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program (IPCP) in March 2012.¹⁷¹ Mongolia has had a long-standing initiative to closely cooperate with NATO since the 1990s. As part of diversifying its foreign relations, Mongolia expressed its interest to be part of the Partnership for Peace program together with the newly independent countries in Central Asia and Eastern Europe in 1996.¹⁷² It would have provided greater opportunity to the MAF to develop its peacekeeping capability earlier; however, some members of NATO refused to include Mongolia in this program and create closer relationship due to geopolitical concerns of NATO.¹⁷³ Mongolia worked closely with NATO members in order to validate its cooperation with NATO members as a beneficiary, as well as a supporter, of NATO's peacekeeping activities and as a troop-contributing country to its operation in Afghanistan.¹⁷⁴

Mongolia and NATO have developed cooperation for enhancing Mongolia's military interoperability with NATO forces by Mongolia's participation in peace operations training, courses, and programs to enhance military capacity building through military education such as the Defense Education Enhancement Program. Furthermore, the PSOTC MAF joined NATO's network of Partnership Training and Education Center as a 29th member in 2014 in order to be part of peace support operations training, and it will offer its trainings to NATO members and partners to share its experience and train others in the peacekeeping operations according to the NATO training standard.

The relationship between NATO and Mongolia will extend not only to the military but also to the civilian field, particularly in the areas of cyber security, upgrading

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 1–3

¹⁷² Ibid., 2.

¹⁷³ Robert Helbig, "NATO-Mongolia Relations: Limited in Scope, But with Room to Grow," *Research Paper*, no. 116 (June 2015), NATO Defense College, Rome, 7–8, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/192871/rp_116.pdf.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

information technology systems, counterterrorism, and rehabilitation of former military sites through NATO's Science for Peace and Security.¹⁷⁵

Nonetheless, both of Mongolia's powerful neighbors are unaffected by this relationship and have expressed no position on this cooperation; NATO and Mongolia only focused on enhancing peacekeeping capacity and capacity building. According to Robert Helbig, NATO's cooperation with Mongolia will develop in certain limited areas; it does not affect Mongolia's bilateral relations with both neighboring countries. However, the partnership will continue based on the interests of both sides, and it will be genuinely public to avoid arousing the suspicion of Russia, China, and Mongolia's public.¹⁷⁶ The future of this cooperation and Mongolia's desire to import NATO's training standard to train professional military forces to enhance its conventional military capacities and peacekeeping capacities are not clear, if Mongolia becomes a permanently neutral country. There are questions to answer, such as whether NATO will have interest in continuing the cooperation, and how might neighbor countries view Mongolia's behavior and cooperation with the military alliance as a permanently neutral country.

The MAF have successfully diversified foreign cooperation, which has become a diplomacy tool of Mongolia's foreign policy by creating close cooperation with European military forces. Through this cooperation, the MAF is not only a beneficiary but also a contributor to global peace and stability. Furthermore, the MAF have been able to transform the military, while cooperating with Western countries by upgrading some non-combat equipment, extending its peacekeeping training with European participation, and contributing troops to peace and stability operations through close cooperation with NATO members, and most importantly, by importing valuable education and training to its personnel through this cooperation.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 8.

¹⁷⁶ Helbig, "NATO-Mongolia Relations," 11.

D. BENEFITS OF THE DEFENSE COOPERATION

With successful development of defense cooperation and partnership, the MAF have achieved certain benefits: the MAF have conducted military reform; enhancing their peacekeeping and conventional military capacities and interoperability; and successfully completed participation in a UN peacekeeping operation and NATO-led and U.S.-led peace operations.

The MAF have undergone successful processes for military transformation and building capable forces to conduct peace support operations through cooperation with other military forces, including those of neighboring countries. For instance, the MAF have modified the former Soviet-style military organizational structures within it to achieve a contemporary common military structure. This is based on the former military structure with adjustments for Western-style military staff structure. Furthermore, the MAF organized a peace support operations standing brigade within the framework of enhancing peace support operations capacities. These activities have succeeded after successful implementation of the mid-term development plans and close cooperation with other countries.¹⁷⁷ This brigade is fully responsible for developing peace support operations plans, training the battalions for peace operations as UN peacekeeping stand-by forces, as well as training to enhance MAF conventional military readiness.

Military personnel who have trained in other countries' military institutions have a significant role for this restructuring and the reform activities of the MAF; moreover, foreign military purchase, funding, and assistance in accordance with the military and technical agreements between the MAF and other armed forces have vital importance for the improvement of the military's combat and non-combat equipment. Scott Jasper defined the transformation as, "a process that shapes the nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of emerging technologies, streamlined organizational structures, innovative process, and adaptive personnel developments."¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Pultz, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Mongolia's Military Strategy," 143.

¹⁷⁸ Scott Jasper, "The Capabilities-Based Approach," in *Transformation Defense Capabilities: New Approaches for International Security* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009), 3.

In this regard, due to financial and technological vulnerabilities, the MAF transformation has been conducted through the direct and indirect support of defense cooperation.

The MAF has developed a relationship with other military forces and benefited from such successful cooperation to enhance its interoperability through close partnership. The MAF has organized annual bilateral exercises with Russia, China, India, and joint pre-deployment training semi-annually with Germany. Moreover, the MAF co-organizes a multinational peacekeeping exercise with USPACOM and several other bilateral exercises with the U.S. military. The MAF closely coordinates with NATO only for training of military personnel, and the PSOTC of the MAF became a member of NATO's network PTEC (Partnership Training and Education Centers) in 2014. Through this network, the MAF personnel are able to attend peacekeeping training throughout NATO's partnership training centers, and other members of the network also are able to join the training that PSOTC of the MAF organizes. The PSOTC also is a member of the AAPTC and actively engages in their activities, including instructor exchanges among the training centers of the association. The MAF peacekeeping training capacities have been enhanced dramatically through this cooperation.

The Mongolian Armed Forces personnel have also successfully participated in the various peace support operations. That includes NATO-led and U.S.-led coalition operations in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and the UN peacekeeping operations earlier in Sierra Leone, Chad, and Georgia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and currently in Darfur and Abyei regions of Sudan, South Sudan, Western Sahara, and Democratic Republic of Congo. One of the outcomes of successful participation has been the technical support, which includes using modern military equipment, and the training support provided by the cooperating countries.

E. CONCLUSION

Mongolian defense diplomacy has developed based on enhancing Mongolia's defense capabilities and interoperability through military-to-military partnership; reforming military forces by diversifying military cooperation; and contributing its forces to global security and stability activities as a diplomatic tool while strengthening

Mongolia's international status. As Dorjjugder Munkh-Ochir acknowledges, "Mongolia's peacekeeping commitments evolved from [Mongolia's] multi-pillar foreign policy."¹⁷⁹ The Mongolian military has benefited from the close cooperation with neighboring countries while developing close defense cooperation and gaining their interest to cooperate with Mongolia's military.

The MAF has significantly benefited through those diverse partnerships that enable its military personnel to be educated in different countries' training institutes. Those personnel who earned the different types of military education have become the core of the MAF reforms that have developed highly capable professional forces.

During the last two decades, the MAF has successfully integrated with other armed forces including those of its two neighboring countries in order to enhance its peacekeeping capacity as well as to transform the armed forces. Mongolia's permanent status of neutrality might impose constraints and limitations for Mongolia's continued successful cooperation. In addition, the status of permanent neutrality could lead to the potential seclusion of Mongolia from future international defense cooperation.

¹⁷⁹ Dorjjugder Munkh-Ochir, "Same Rules, New Dimensions for Mongolia's National Security: Adapting to the New Geo-Economic Environment," *Brookings Northeast Asia Commentary*, no. 32, (October 2009).

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V. CONCLUSION

The Mongolians have debated Mongolia's potential declaration of permanent neutrality status since September 2015, but the final decision had not been made as of September 2016. In these debates, there has been no input on what the potential effects of permanent neutrality status might be on Mongolia's current foreign defense cooperation.

This thesis analyzed the potential effects of permanent neutrality on Mongolia's current defense foreign cooperation based on a study of the concept of neutrality; an examination of the defense cooperation experience of neutral countries such as Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, Austria, and Turkmenistan; and evaluation of Mongolia's current defense cooperation. Mongolia's current defense cooperation, particularly its active engagement in global peace and security operations, and enhancement of Mongolia's military capacity and interoperability through military training with other armed forces, will face challenges due to the proposed neutrality policy. Moreover, Mongolia has implemented military transformation through close relationship with other military forces; neutrality might impact the reformation of the MAF.

A. **POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF PERMANENT NEUTRALITY STATUS ON MONGOLIA'S FOREIGN DEFENSE COOPERATION**

Permanent neutrality might have positive effects on Mongolia's politics, economy, and other branches of the state institutions. This thesis analyzes potential effects of permanent neutrality status only as regards Mongolia's current foreign defense cooperation, as a subject that needs more consideration.

Permanent neutrality status would challenge Mongolia's defense cooperation with other military forces by discouraging other countries' interest in partnering with Mongolia. Mongolia might also receive potential direct or indirect pressure from powerful neighbors to eliminate defense cooperation, leading to lost opportunities for developing military capacity through cooperation.

According to Mongolia's current foreign policy, Mongolia seeks mutually beneficial, strategically important cooperation with its powerful neighboring countries.

Moreover, Mongolia develops cooperation with other countries in order to balance against the two powerful neighbors' potential dominance in economic and political spheres. Within the framework of foreign policy, Mongolia's defense cooperation has increased successfully since the 1990s and become a foreign policy diplomatic tool to gain other countries' interest and to enhance Mongolia's peacekeeping capacity. The MAF has dramatically increased its cooperation with neighboring countries while enhancing its cooperation with the armed forces of other countries in Europe, Asia, and the Asia-Pacific region. Through the MAF's improved peacekeeping capacity, the MAF has benefited by enhancing its military training, reforming the military forces, and expanding its military capacity while developing military technology through military-to-military relationships.

Consequently, some countries are interested in cooperating with Mongolia at least in the defense sector. European neutral countries have their own potential to defend their sovereignty and neutrality though their well-developed and well equipped military forces should their sovereignty be threatened or violated. They all have transformed their military forces and reformed their military forces based on professionally oriented forces while maintaining conscription. Furthermore, they all have developed military industries, and they manufacture a certain amount of weaponry and military equipment in these domestic military industries. All European neutrals are democracies and closely coordinate with the European Union and in military alliance with NATO without membership.

In contrast, Mongolia has not developed any military industries and has no potential to produce its own military technologies. Mongolia has mitigated the challenge through cooperation, purchase, and support through military technical agreements with other countries, including its neighboring countries.

Mongolia's contribution to the UN peacekeeping operation has also mitigated challenges of military technology and proper equipment. The MAF is dependent on foreign assistance and support for its military equipment and is managing these challenges through close cooperation with neighboring countries and other developed militaries. A policy of neutrality would create unfavorable conditions for enhancing

necessary military equipment and technology. One clear example is provided by Turkmenistan's military forces, which faced a similar issue on developing military technology. Turkmenistan's security situation requires that development, so the country is seeking assistance and cooperation from developed countries such as Russia and the United States.

Furthermore, in the case that Mongolia pursues permanent neutrality, the MAF could experience pressure from neighboring countries related to that status. China and Russia do not have any effect on Mongolia's decision to become a permanently neutral country; however, they might require Mongolia to eliminate some of the military cooperation based on its neutrality status and legal limits on defense cooperation and military alliances. Even though Russia, China, and NATO are not particularly belligerent, Russia and China are always careful about NATO and Western countries' military cooperation in the region. For instance, Mongolia has to terminate its cooperation with NATO, particularly Mongolia's contribution in the NATO-led military operation. Contemporary relationships between NATO and Russia are quite cold due to Russia's behavior toward Ukraine and on the controversy over NATO's missile defense system in Eastern European countries.

Currently, Mongolia and some of its cooperating countries' militaries have gone through challenges due to the hesitation of China and Russia to support Mongolia's defense cooperation. For instance, Russia has delayed air clearance for NATO's airlift for transporting Mongolia's military loads to Iraq and Afghanistan, and Turkish military aircraft to participate in a military exercise in Mongolia.¹⁸⁰ The U.S. military has experienced long procedures for Chinese air clearance as well as delays for "Khaan Quest" multinational exercises. Furthermore, Mongolia cancelled France-supported peacekeeping participation in Lebanon in 2008 due to Russia's refusal to support the activity.

¹⁸⁰ Mendee, "Finally A New Era in NATO-Mongolia Relations," 3.

If Mongolia adopts permanent neutrality, Russia would not need to doubt Mongolia's behavior in military cooperation with China or other countries.¹⁸¹ Nonetheless, Russia could request Mongolia to eliminate the cooperation with NATO, although the cooperation is only for peacekeeping purposes. Helbig states that currently the Kremlin does not oppose Mongolia's cooperation with NATO as long as it would not affect the Mongolian and Russian relationship.¹⁸² This cooperation and participation in the NATO-led peace support operation in Afghanistan is a fragile cooperation for Mongolia.

Similarly, Mongolia's southern neighbor does not currently have any influence on Mongolia's cooperation with Russia, European countries, Asian countries, and particularly NATO; however, it might become concerned about Mongolia's defense cooperation with the United States. As Helbig states, "Beijing is especially concerned over U.S. engagement in Mongolia for geopolitical reasons, fearing that Mongolia is a pawn on the U.S. chessboard in the Pacific region."¹⁸³ China might enact measures to limit Mongolia's defense cooperation with the U.S. military, NATO, and other regional military forces.

European neutral countries are all democracies and have already built stronger relationships with other democracies. They also benefit from the potential support of NATO such that they have felt no pressure on them due to their neutrality. However, in the Mongolian case, there is no existing source of potential support to encourage defense cooperation and no guarantee against external pressures on the MAF to eliminate the defense cooperation.

The MAF have contributed combat units in the form of a mechanized infantry company or battalion to the UN peacekeeping operations. These contributions signify that Mongolia actively engages global peace and stability as a member of the international community. In addition, the MAF have benefited by enhancing combat and peacekeeping

¹⁸¹ Rinna, "Mongolian Neutrality and Its Significance for Russian Security."

¹⁸² Helbig, "NATO-Mongolia Relations: Limited in Scope, But with Room To Grow."

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

capability through cooperation with other countries' military forces through joint training exercises such as multilateral and bilateral training exercises, the training of officers and NCOs for UN peacekeeping operations, and by participating in the coalition peace support operations as well as UN peacekeeping operations.

In contrast, European neutral countries, particularly the Swiss military, contributes only military experts and non-combat units to UN peacekeeping operations. Austria, Sweden, and Finland's contribution to the UN peacekeeping operation is the modest; however, they actively contribute combat units and sustain stand-by military units for UN peacekeeping without active participation. Those countries contribute a certain amount of enablers and combat units with limited capacity to the NATO-led operations in Afghanistan. Furthermore, Finland's and Sweden's closer cooperation with NATO has created a huge debate about their neutrality at home and in countries in their region. In particular, Russia strongly condemns and even threatens them for potentially seeking membership in NATO.¹⁸⁴ In this regard, if Mongolia decides to pursue permanent neutrality, Mongolia would receive certain pressure from its neighboring countries in connection with military cooperation, which may result in discouraging the interest of current military partnership countries.

Those cooperation challenges could lead to the irrelevance of the Mongolian military internationally, and further, it would cause a lack of capacity in peacekeeping operations, particularly combat capability to participate in the peace support operations and to defend the sovereignty of the country.

The MAF has benefited from the military cooperation with U.S. military forces and other military in the Asia-Pacific region through USPACOM, which enhances the MAF's peacekeeping interoperability and contributes its experience to share with other UN peacekeeping contributing countries in the region, including Chinese military. In addition, training and educating the military personnel within the framework of the defense cooperation is another essential tool for enhancing military capacity and

¹⁸⁴ Yost, *NATO's Balancing Act*, 297–299.

reforming Mongolia's military forces for developing capacity. One question without answer at this moment is whether the U.S. and other countries' military have an interest in cooperating with a permanently neutral country. Would they be interested in cooperating with Mongolia's military forces even it is only for capacity development and interoperability enhancement?

In addition, neutrality could create challenges for military forces related to contemporary collective security. Due to the political and economic globalization and the development of sophisticated technology, the conflict environment has changed dramatically, and threats have become transnational. All countries, whether they are big or small, are challenged with transnational threats. To maintain peace and security in the region as well as globally, countries are placing greater emphasis on collective security. There would be issues for neutral countries cooperating with military alliances in order to enhance military capacity and coordinate with other militaries when facing transnational threats, such as terrorism. Neutrals could be forced to face the challenges alone.

Mongolia's geographic location provides an advantage of isolating it from some of the transnational threats such as extremism and insurgents. As Otgonbayar Mashbat states, "Mongolia is isolated and protected from many kinds of regional security challenges. No military threat will come to our land from a third nation over Russia and China."¹⁸⁵ However, Mongolia is vulnerable to most contemporary transnational threats, such as terrorism, drug and human trafficking, and cyberattacks. Mongolia can only deal with contemporary international threats through close cooperation with neighboring countries and other countries' security agencies and forces. Neutrality status or policy would isolate Mongolia from defense cooperation with other countries' military forces as well as from partnering with other international security organizations in order to enhance capacity and mitigate potential challenges through cooperation.

¹⁸⁵ Mashbat Otgonbayar Sarlagtay, "Mongolia's Immediate Security Challenges: Implication to Defense Sector and The Regional Cooperation," *Security Outlook of the Asia Pacific Countries and Its Implications for the Defense Sector*, The National Institute for Defense Studies, Joint Research Series, no 7, (Tokyo, Japan: 2012), 105.

In the president's proposal and the draft neutrality law, the text expresses that permanent neutrality would not affect Mongolia's current bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation agreements. However, when any of the cooperation agreements expire or need improvement in certain areas, there would be an issue surrounding the interest of the partner country or organization in continuing the agreements, particularly on defense cooperation. Neutrality could lead to pressure from Mongolia's neighboring countries and might discourage partners from resuming the cooperation.

Mongolia's foreign defense cooperation and active participation in the peace support operations provide positive impacts on the development of peacekeeping and combat military capabilities and building a fundamental international profile in international cooperation. Permanent neutrality would cause Mongolia's defense to step backward at least two decades, and long developed cooperation with other partners, including Mongolia's neighboring countries' defense, would become useless.

B. RECOMMENDATION

Mongolia's current non-aligned, nuclear free, and ad-hoc neutrality based on its constitution and other constitutional strategic documents is the good enough for Mongolia. It does not need to pursue permanent neutrality from a foreign defense cooperation perspective. Neutrality policy can provide potential protection for the small and weak states' sovereignty and territorial integrity, for instance Switzerland and Austria; however, it can also lead to certain irrelevance and isolation from the integration and interdependence of the contemporary globalized world, as it has in the case of Turkmenistan.

With regard to Mongolia's active participation in global peace and security activities as a foreign policy tool and Mongolia's active development of foreign defense cooperation, permanent neutrality status is not a policy to support further development of the military-to-military cooperation to other countries. Mongolia stands to lose these opportunities for continued cooperation, which have proven extremely beneficial, and will leave Mongolia with limited military capacity to participate in the global peace and security operations, or even to defend its own sovereignty.

The twenty-first century's security environment has dramatically changed. Transnational security challenges every state, including developed countries; a state cannot deal with such threats alone. Even the strong and powerful countries such as the United States, Russia, and China have sought potential partnerships to strengthen their own security as well as that of their partners through closer security cooperation. Mongolia is a small, weak state in terms of its demography, economy, and geopolitical influence in East Asia. This country is greatly challenged by potential transnational threats, and has tried to gain the interest of other powerful countries together with its neighboring countries to build economic and political capacity. The defense sector's foreign cooperation has played a significant role for Mongolia's military reform and for enhancing its limited capacity. Mongolia has to continue the process and extend its contribution to global peace and security, and it must develop close cooperation with other defense forces for enhancing the interoperability.

Mongolia has built a military image in the world's peacekeeping environment through its contribution and close cooperation with other countries' military forces including the armed forces of its two powerful neighboring countries. Mongolia's foreign defense cooperation has played a key role for building ability and enhancing capacity and interoperability of the MAF.

Indeed, based on the analysis in this study, permanent neutrality policy would not be the policy to suggest from the perspective of Mongolia's foreign military cooperation. The policy would discourage partnering countries' interest in cooperating with Mongolia, and Mongolia would be challenged to enhance its military capacity and interoperability through training exercises and participation in peace support operations. Since Mongolia already faces challenges concerning its capacity to carry out certain tasks, military-to-military relationships and cooperation are still vital, particularly in this challenging contemporary security environment.

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