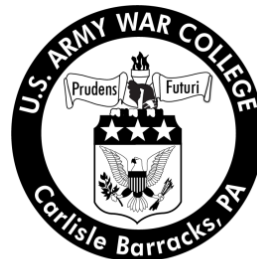


Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy: Impact on the Mongolian Armed Forces

by

Lieutenant Colonel Ganzorig Dovchinsuren
Mongolian Armed Forces



United States Army War College

Class of 2012

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Self-preservation in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment dictates a thorough assessed approach of using military force along with diplomatic, informational, and economic dimensions of a state power. Mongolia is becoming an arena of clashes of economic interests of developed countries, multinational corporations due its rich mining deposits. Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy is aimed to leverage the influence of neighboring countries in the national security issues of Mongolia. Mongolia uses its military as an assisting tool to its diplomatic effort to be a more respected, peaceful and well recognized country of the global community. Thus the Mongolian Armed Forces have to meet the requirements to cooperate with different types of military of different nations in order to be an effective tool of state power. This paper will assess whether the current Mongolian Armed Forces 2015 transformation program's endstates meet the requirements of the Third Neighbor Policy of Mongolia and possible improvements in the program in order to meet the Third Neighbor Policy requirements.

MONGOLIA'S THIRD NEIGHBOR POLICY: IMPACT ON THE MONGOLIAN ARMED FORCES

Modern policy of Mongolia is a result of implementation of the national security and foreign policy concepts developed by its own based on universal principles of national and international security, national traditions and mentality.

—L. Molomjamts, Professor
Advisor, lead researcher Institute for Strategic Studies,
National Security Council of Mongolia

Since beginning of the 21st century the spread of globalization, abetted by the growth and accessibility of technology, has impacted the economic and political sectors, and dramatically increased the interdependence of states. A multipolar powers system has begun to emerge in the global political arena.¹ These geopolitical and economic (some could say geo-economic) challenges have affected Mongolia. Even with its rich history it was the forgotten Asian country to most of the world's general community. Democracy, globalization and resource hunger rediscovered developing Mongolia as a mining resource and as a young democracy in the authoritarian regime area of Asia. Known to the world mainly as the home of Chinggis Khaan, and by its nomadic culture, Mongolia has a highly literate population, but with limited experience in the economic free market system. With its rich mining deposits, fast growing economy² and rapidly urbanizing population, Mongolia looks to strengthen its global community membership role in the international arena in the first decade of the 21st century.

On November 11, 2011, the Mongolian North East Asian Community, a non-governmental organization (NGO) celebrated its 11th anniversary in Ulaanbaatar by organizing a conference in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia. In opening remarks Mr. B.Batbayar³, the Mongolian North East Asian Community head, and

supernumerary advisor to the National Security Council of Mongolia, said that the foreign policy of Mongolia was directed to East Asia since 1990. And this course of policy was the right one since North East Asia will play key role in the development of the world economy in near 30-50 years. Russia, Mongolian natural resources, the technology of Japan and South Korea, the labor forces of North Korea and China are driving this development. Also, North East Asia is a hot spot; a remainder of the Cold War era, with a large concentration of military forces.

The Prime Minister of Mongolia, S. Batbold, announced during the “Discover Mongolia” mining forum in September 2011 that Mongolia entered into this phase of economic development after long transitional period from a centralized socialist political and economic system into a free market economy with a multi-party parliamentary system. Neighboring with only China and Russia, which have growing economies, Mongolia uses its opportunity to develop its economy and reduce the poverty level of its population by taking advantage of the resource hunger of Chinese industry. Realizing that a resource based economy is not sufficient for the comprehensive development of the country; the parliament of Mongolia released the Mongolia National Millennium Development Policy in January 2008. This policy directs the government’s ministries and agencies to implement the comprehensive program to develop Mongolia.⁴ Besides emphasizing the need to develop the country, Mongolia renewed its guiding security policy with documents such as the National Security Policy (NSP) in July, 2010. It points out that natural resources are not only a source of wealth, but also a danger to the independence of Mongolia, and its territorial integrity.⁵ To withstand the challenges of this security dilemma, Mongolia looks to find more flexibility in solving its security

matters by balancing the interests of the global and regional power players in Mongolia. Officially declared in the National Security Policy, the Third Neighbor Policy gives possibilities to deal with Mongolia's 21st century security challenges. As Professor Alan M. Wachman of Tufts University's Fletcher School rightly noted that "by tying its security to the interests of "third neighbors," Mongolia made clear its intention to act internationally without being constrained by the predilections of either Moscow or Beijing. However, the unspoken premise is that integration in the world outside its immediate ambit will help to assure Mongolia's security should it be undermined by the interests, or actions, of its immediate neighbors. This is a geopolitical gambit."⁶

Article 14.2 of the Mongolia's Foreign policy says that Mongolia shall to develop its relationship the USA, Japan, the European Union, India, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and other countries in the frame of the Third Neighbor Policy.⁷ In support of this effort, in a dynamic environment of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) Mongolia uses its military as an assisting tool to its diplomatic effort to be recognized and respected as a peaceful and equal member of global community.

This research paper will analyze the strategic goal of the defense reform of Mongolia with its relevance to the Third Neighbor Policy, identifying both strengths and areas for improvement in order for the Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) to be an enhancing tool of the foreign and, particularly, the Third Neighbor Policy of Mongolia.

As framework for this analysis the defense reform context will be assessed by the thorough study of the Development program of the Armed Forces of Mongolia 2015, and comparing it with Russian and Chinese modernization and reform initiatives through 2020. To ensure an understanding of the regional geo-political environment, the paper

will give general political and other dimensions of the key players in Asia such as China, Russia, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Included is a threat analysis of possible future conflicts that impact on the details of the reform or transformation to clearly define the aim of the transformation and reforms.

Third Neighbor Policy

The Third Neighbor policy of Mongolia aimed to leverage the influence of noncontiguous countries in support of Mongolia's National security interests. Seeking support from the positive effects of the Third Neighbor Policy Mongolia actively engages international organizations.⁸ Ratification of the renewed National Security Policy officially framed the Third Neighbor Policy as a principal means to implement the national security of Mongolia.⁹ In the frame of the Third Neighbor Policy Mongolia advances bilateral and multilateral relationships with developed and democratic countries in the political, economic, cultural, humanitarian areas.

There are some scholars who posit that the Third Neighbor Policy is not new for Mongolia. In the early 19th century Mongolia was looking to establish good relationships with Western countries and Japan.¹⁰ It was defined by different words but has same meaning. Today regional countries such as China, Russia, Japan, rapidly developing India, Indonesia and many other Asian Tigers attract the attention of the world. Thus, Mongolia, with its natural resources and products, democracy, and free trade economy is taking advantage of the opportunity to shape its own fate as an equal member of the global and regional community. Appreciating its geographic location, landlocked between two giants, and lacking a free trade route,¹¹ Mongolia has implemented a multi-pillar foreign policy. "Mongolia chooses the principle of equality in relations with two

neighbors as well as the adopted new security approach” – Third Neighbor Policy.¹²

Mongolia’s Third Neighbor Policy implementation strategy has a dual focus. In addition to strengthening economic ties with developed and democratic countries, Mongolia uses it to increase its international prestige. Participation in peace operation-activities gives Mongolia the opportunity to be recognized as a peaceful nation that respects universal human rights and democracy. Therefore, participation of the Mongolia’s military in UN and other international peace operations is very important in support of Mongolia’s foreign policy.

The Mongolian Military’s Engagement in a Peace Operations

As mentioned earlier, the parliament of Mongolia ratified the Mongolia’s Millennium Development Program. Chapter 7.5., The Development of Legal and State Institutions, contains the three main strategic goals of Mongolia’s Defense reform and development. One of these goals is the participation of the MAF in UN peacekeeping and international/multinational stability operations. These operations are becoming one of main focus areas of the MAF.

Regardless of the small size of its population and its military Mongolia is on the list of the top 20 troop contributing countries for United Nations Peace Keeping operations.¹³ Article 3.1.1.6 of the National Security Policy of Mongolia declares that Mongolia shall cooperate and develop relationships with neighboring countries, the USA, NATO members, countries of the European Union and Asia-Pacific in security and defense issues, and participate in international stability and peace operations. Currently, Mongolia contributes a small military contingent to ISAF in Afghanistan, and a medical level II hospital in Sudan. Also, Mongolia is preparing to send a military contingent to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and a battalion to the UN

peacekeeping mission in Southern Sudan.¹⁴ Assessing all these facts, Mongolia's military has a limited, but very important foreign policy support role in the international arena that enhances Mongolia's reputation as a member of the global community.

Political Tendency of Asia and its Application to the Military

The Asia-Pacific region is a priority in the Mongolian foreign policy, with special focuses on North-East Asia and Central Asia. It is well associated with Mongolia's interest to use existing favorable external situations for national progress and to ensure the vital interests of national security.

Full exploration of all the positive external factors, preventing the negative effects of weak security and stability situations from impacting on economic development, and strengthening democracy are the main priorities of the Government of Mongolia. Under this policy, Mongolia is interested in strengthening its position in Asia through active participation in regional economic and political activities, and by contributing to the multilateral security dialogues for the solving regional security issues such as Korean Peninsula.

Asia is a region of the contradictions; it seems stable and prospering but at the same time it is like bomb with a timer. The regional economic relationships could be a basis for the solving stability issues, and provide a common ground for the settlement of confrontations. But since the 1990's, only countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have solved their border/territorial disputes, while numbers of disputed land and sea areas exist between non-SCO member Asia-Pacific states.

Considering this reality regional and global power brokers see Asia as an arena for future military conflicts and struggle. US President Barack Obama's November 2011 speech at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Hawaii , announcing

the stationing the US Marine Corps troops in Australia, probably spurred the Chinese modernization of the People's Liberation Army and made China more suspicious toward the USA.¹⁵

Military distrust is balanced against their interdependent, interrelated economies keeping the relationship between China and the USA stable. China and the USA need each other in the economic sphere, which drives most other pillars of state power and national interests. The military distrust fuels the continuing development Asian military capabilities adding to the global arms race and arms sales.

The continued emphasis on the modernization of military capabilities in the region is emphasized by remarks such as those made by Russia's Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Nikolai Makarov. Speaking at the Public Chamber of the Duma on November 17, 2011, General N. Makarov talked about the increasing possibility of an armed conflict or war between NATO and Russia directly on the territory of the Russian Federation or its periphery.¹⁶

US military troops have been heavily involved in nation building and combating terrorism in Asia during the last decades. The effectiveness of the military in such missions very much depends on coordinated, defined responsibilities of all departments of the US government, involved in such nation building missions. But will there be a "favorable peace" in the Global War on Terrorism? Most certainly, there will be no such peace. For that reason, the use of force remains a consideration, and the USA will stay in Asia.

Effective military force is crucial for the state. Even organizations such as the United Nations accept the value of military force in peace operations.¹⁷ So, use of force

is very essential not only for the states, but also for the inter-governmental organizations in implementing policy toward “a better kind of peace” .¹⁸

Characteristics of modern warfare enhance and toughen war’s nature. Political behavior, economic growth and military development in the USA, Russia, and the People’s Republic of China will certainly influence the characteristics of future armed conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region. The political development of the Asia-Pacific region is important to the security of Mongolia and the success of its Third Neighbor Policy because of the importance of Russia and China as the direct neighbors and the USA as the third neighbor of Mongolia. The UN and Shanghai Cooperation Organization will also have influence on political and military conflict resolution in the Asia and Asia-Pacific regions.

The Russian Federation

Competition with the Western world in an arms race they could not win, the democratic movement of 1980’s in Europe, and the 10 year long war in Afghanistan were some of reasons for the collapse of the USSR into independent republics in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and in a Central Asia in 1991. The Russian Federation took the place of the USSR in the world community, going through a long period of economic recovery. Even today Russia faces serious economic difficulties. Energy resources and their price growth helped Russia to float on the surface of the economic challenges of a building free trade economy. It also allowed Russia to collect funds sufficient to start to think on regaining Soviet era influences on the Euro-Asian continent. But these imperialistic interests clash with growing Chinese power along with increasing Western interests. Russia mediated China’s concerns with long term energy and natural resource supply contracts, by selling Russian military technology to the

Chinese defense industry, and by providing a transit route to the European market (away from the US naval influences). These initiatives were supplemented by other treaties, signed bilaterally or in the framework of the SCO and other organizations. These treaties are beneficial for the both sides until they decide to wrestle with each other. The STRATFOR 2011 Annual Forecast predicted that Russia will again emerge in the international politics as a growing power and regain Soviet era influences in Eurasia from the US interests.¹⁹ Russia looks to establish a foot print in South and Central America, too. Re-establishment of the military arm's trade with Cuba, agreement with EXXON/Shell to exchange oil exploration in Russia's northern sea for oil exploration in Texas, the visit of Russian Prime Minister V. Putin to Venezuela in 2010 are foot prints of the Russia's expansion policy.²⁰ Russia seeks to re-establish Soviet era influences in Eurasia, using the benefit of its rich energy resources, the European financial and political turmoil, and the attraction of the US attention to China, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mongolia is not excluded from this Russian expansion policy. Russia and Mongolia have long historical ties, but today's relationship is not as clear and as good as it had been before due to Mongolia's distrust of the "older brother" (as Mongolians called Russia), and Russia's arrogant behavior toward the developing Asian states.

Knowledge of Russia's internal political and social situation is important in the assessment of its policy. The Russian government faces challenges of instability in regions of the Russian Federation. Terrorism, corruption, population decline, legal and illegal immigration, political struggles among parties, and well organized, aggressive crime groups must also be addressed. The Russian government tries to address all

these internal problems by conducting social programs, centralization of the authority in the Kremlin²¹, and reform of its law enforcement and security agencies, and the Armed Forces.

The Reform of the Russian Armed Forces

The Russian Armed Forces are an important means for the implementing of Russian policy. The Russia-Georgia five days war is a recent example of using military power to achieve the political goal of expanding its sphere of influence. Russia pays close attention to the reforming of its military. The president of the Russian Federation D. Medvedev signed Russia's new military doctrine in 2010.²² Nikolai Sokov, CNS Senior Research Associate, noted that in its current Russian military doctrine "Russia plans to follow the same trajectory as the United States and equip a growing share of its strategic delivery vehicles with conventional warheads."²³ Also, this doctrine allows Russia to use its military in order to protect Russia's citizens "in the frame of the international law and legal norms."²⁴ In 2008 Russia, recognizing the Western powers' success in the military campaigns in the Middle East, started to introduce a district-army-brigade organization. This introduction reduced the chain of command on one level.²⁵ Russia adapted three types of brigades: light, medium and heavy types. According to the speech of the Russian president D. Medvedev, the Russian Armed Forces will face major changes in the structure, command and control, support and supply chain, technical modernization and renovation starting from the year 2011.²⁶ This renovation and modernization program should be fulfilled by the year 2020. Also, military technology science institutions will have more funding from the Russian government as an important foundation of the transformation of the Armed Forces for its return as a prestigious regional if not global military power.²⁷

The Russian Armed Forces' military districts were transferred into a four regional combatant command structure by end of the 2010.²⁸ The area of responsibilities of the regional commands covers Eurasia and its adjacent oceans. Thus, the Russian Armed Forces will be reformed in order to be able to conduct limited regional wars and armed confrontation, to project power in the Eurasian region, and to permanently show force in Eurasia. Thus, self reliance of the regional commands shows that Russia in the future expects only regional armed conflicts but not major war.

In addition to the regional combatant commands, Russia formed Air-Space Defense (ASD) Troops. These troops started 24/7 active duty from December 1, 2011. "The ASD can destroy the projectiles of ballistic missiles of the probable enemy, observe space objects, and identify threats to Russia from space, and if necessary - to respond to such threats, launch spacecraft into orbit, as well as perform other tasks", - said Colonel Alexei Zolotukhin, official representative of the Air-Space Defense Troops.²⁹ The Russian Armed Forces' cyber capability is not exposed in media or other publications and therefore hard to assess. However, cyber capability of the Russian Armed Forces is probably represented in its two radio-electronic jamming brigades. The Federal Security Service agency is in charge of Russian Federation state cyber security.

Russia is implementing a comprehensive program to reform its Armed Forces. Along with the military Armament program that concentrates on the modernization its nuclear arsenal and missiles and strategic delivery systems,³⁰ and the replacement and recapitalization of unit equipment,³¹ Russia is paying attention to the personnel issue too. Russia is starting to develop non commissioned officer corps; it is decreasing the

number of officers, increasing the pay for the military and conducting programs aimed to improve social and living conditions of military personnel and their families. Russia's reform in military personnel system makes deep changes in the Russian military affair. Development of non commissioned officer corps means that Russia follows Western Army standards and aimed to have a professional Army comparable to the US Army.

Despite Russian media news that implementation of the reform of the Armed Forces is going according to the government plan, there are some skeptics among independent military reviewers. Victor Litovkin, a regular commentator on Russian Defense Policy, expressed the opinion that the Russian Army needs to develop support and supply capabilities but not firepower. The Russian military logistic, supply and support systems are far behind when compared with Western military capabilities. Russian newspaper's military publicist Pavel Felgengauer observes that Russia does not have a strong enough economy to support a defense industry capable of implementing such program (Armament's Program).³²

Assessing the Russian "State Armament Program 2011-2020", and the Russian Armed Forces' structural re-organization (regional combatant commands, air-space defense troops) the following conclusion comes out: Russia watches the US and a Western military operations very closely, and accepts their lessons learned as a value. Based on its own experience of combat operations in Chechnya, Georgia, and Afghanistan, it implements reform policy in order to compete with Western military capabilities (especially the US) in regional and local armed conflicts. Thus, Russia builds a new type of military similar to Western militaries with a Napoleonic staff structure. The government of Russia gives more priority to the regional commands

South and East. Show of force and precise assaults will be main means of projecting military power by Russia.

Mongolia is not priority of Russian defense planning. Though its current military doctrine poses no direct threat to Mongolian sovereignty, Russia is still a potential threat to Mongolia's National Security due to its economic and political interests in Mongolia. Effective execution of Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy is required for Mongolia to leverage this possible Russian threat.

The People's Republic of China

China is an emerging power of the world community. Its goal is to become a strong global power with all the super power attributes of the USA. In the 21st century, China has taken the opportunity to challenge the world economically, and, in return, is being challenged by the world economy. From the national values and interests perspectives, China laid the foundations for this move to regional hegemony in the late 20th century. With the integration of the mainland, the resolution of border disputes with northern neighbors, and the return of Hong Kong and Macao, China established a strong base for economic growth. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) modernization focused on creating force that could protect national interests in the region and in the world. Today, Taiwan is the only remaining main issue for Chinese territorial integrity and national pride.

Growing economic and other relations with regional and global partners challenge the isolated security view of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In order to protect the nation and its citizens, the PRC adopted new doctrine which allows it to use its military assets to protect its citizens and their capital abroad. Unarguably, the wellbeing of its citizens is critical for maintaining stability in the country. Thus, following

the USA, Russia, and other developed Western countries, China declared in their military doctrine use of force to protect its national and citizen's interests, capital, and safety around the world. Consequently, the economy of China is one of the factors which drive the use of the force and modernization of the PLA along with core national interests such as territorial integrity.

Globalization, the financial and economic crisis in the world, the rise of the national independence movements among minor nationalities, religious extremist movements, terrorism, and bordering with hot spots like Afghanistan generate external and internal security problems for PRC.

The top priority of the PRC is the integration of Taiwan into mainland China. The integration of Taiwan is a matter of Chinese (PRC) national prestige. Also, the traditional Chinese way of protecting its country is to eliminate hostile neighbors, to isolate itself and to build buffer areas. Therefore, China will work on increasing their influence in neighboring countries through diplomatic, economic and military means. China cannot isolate itself from other countries in era of globalization due to its economic interdependence with other partners across the globe.

The PRC is working towards reunification with Taiwan by employing all elements of national power: diplomatic, information, military and economic. Thus, considering a requirement for possible forceful unification of Taiwan in case of failure of non-military means, the PRC methodically prepares to stand against the USA, without going into major military conflict. The forceful reunification of Taiwan would threaten PRC's sea line of trade and communication with the world; endangering the supply of oil and other necessary goods and material for the Chinese industry and economy. Thus, before

going into Taiwan and preparing for its consequences, the PRC is working with Central Asian countries to establish alternate channels of commerce – to ensure an uninterrupted supply of energy and other materials into China. This re-establishing of the Silk Road will allow for the transportation of goods between Europe and China in much shorter time.

Collapse of the EU and its economy will hit the world economy, especially the USA and European countries, very hard. Both China and Russia are preparing for the collapse of the European Union as an economic entity.³³ China is not going to give assistance to the EU from its foreign exchange reserve, but China will keep its strong hold in economies of the Western European countries such as Spain, Italy, and Greece.

Modernization of the PLA

Recent developments in global international affairs, such as the USA and Australian declaration of increased military cooperation mentioned above,³⁴ spurred the PRC to accelerate its PLA modernization, and to look for trade with economically stable partners in South America (Brazil) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan). Therefore, China will work on strengthening relationships with Asian countries, keeping a hold on economies of the European countries and the US, and reducing energy supply dependence via the sea in the south. Militarily the PRC will prepare to stand against the US, integrate Taiwan to mainland China (occupy Taiwan), and protect Chinese interests in the Indian and Pacific oceans, and in the Persian Gulf.

China's ability to effectively conduct anti-access and area-denial strategy in periphery of the Chinese influence is enhanced by having the largest naval force in Asia, a developing aircraft carrier program, improvement in its over-the-horizon

targeting capability, construction of a Navy base in Hainan Island, and increasing its numbers of nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines.³⁵

China continues to upgrade the PLA Air and Air Defense Forces (PLAAF). The PRC is working on the creating a fifth generation jet-fighter aircraft with stealth technology. The PLAAF continues acquiring more modern sophisticated military aircraft, aircraft parts of domestic and Russian production .³⁶

China is also conducting modernization with its ground troops, equipping them with new main battle tanks, multiple rocket launch systems, and a new generation of amphibious assault vehicles.³⁷

The ongoing acquisition of naval amphibious capability, the development of the space technology to enhance navigation type weaponry and systems provide evidence of military on shore or near shore operations in the future. Certainly the provision of the modern main battle tanks to the ground troops means increasing preparedness for the conventional type of war in Central, East and South Asia.

The development of doctrine and policy, and conduct of realistic training has kept pace with other modernization initiatives. Guided by the Deng Xiapin's opinion on future war, and impressed by the US military action in Gulf War, the Chinese military and military scholars grasped the synergies of Joint military operations. Most importantly, in Joint operations, the Chinese military involve provincial leadership and leading personnel from other organizations.³⁸

The cyber capability of China is growing rapidly. Possible evidence of this growth is the numerous media reports that identify China as the originator of various cyber attacks on US governmental and non-governmental organizations' networks. The

comments by General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Reuter news article identifies “China and Russia as the most active and persistent nations that are using cyber espionage to steal U.S. trade and technology secrets.”³⁹

China is expanding its space capability rapidly. Probably, no one expected that China would destroy a satellite in space using an anti-satellite weapon.⁴⁰ This means that “China is developing multi-dimensional program to improve its capabilities to limit or prevent the use of space-based assets ... during times of crisis or conflict.”⁴¹

Paul J. Bolt and Adam K. Gray in a 2007 Institute for National Security Studies paper noted that “denying the U.S. Navy’s access to space is an important first step in neutralizing the strengths of the U.S. Navy and degrading its capacity to intervene in a Taiwan conflict.”⁴² Thus, space technology gives opportunities to China to counterweight the US military might overall.

Generally speaking, China is implementing very comprehensive modernization program for the PLA and defense industry in order to meet the future military challenges.

The pace and quality of the modernization of the PLA are hard to assess by the outsider. The Chinese military engagement in the UN Peace keeping operations demonstrate that the PRC military seem to be a disciplined force, but only a relatively small number of the PLA personnel can use modern information technology assets. This indicates that modernization of the PLA is ongoing but has not achieved its full desired effects. But, considering that the Chinese younger generation is immersed in modern technology this information technology illiteracy in the PLA will easily be overcome in few years. Also, in some cases the show-effect for the leaders and visitors

is most desirable in training among Chinese military.⁴³ But at the same time, strict compliance with military rules and requirements means that the training of the Chinese military is well organized and conducted. The military anti-terrorist exercise conducted in the framework of the SCO in 2007 in Chelyabinsk, Russia, effectively demonstrated China's capability to transport more than 4000 combat ready troops using mainly railroad and air in short notice and project power over more than 5000 km in seven days, which is not bad speed for the ground movement. Official and unofficial assessments of the exercise and the level of the integration of the military of different countries and other issues of the training differ.⁴⁴ Therefore, controversy exists in defining military might and capabilities of the participating in countries in that exercise. Concluding, the PLA modernization aimed to have capability to conduct missions "that go beyond China's immediate territorial interests. Some of these missions and associated capabilities have allowed the PLA to contribute to international peacekeeping efforts, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, counter-terrorism, and counter-piracy operations."⁴⁵ Also, the stronger PLA is becoming an enhancing tool for China's diplomacy and foreign relationships within the region and with neighboring countries.⁴⁶ Mongolia certainly could not stand against PLA capability and defend its territory unless the international community exerted influence to stop military action from the PRC toward Mongolia.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in a relatively short time has become an international organization with significant influence on global policy making. China and Russia, backed by the treaty and cooperation within this organization, became the backbone of the SCO and express a more aggressive or challenging policy toward

western powers and other emerging powers. Territorial size (30 million km², about three fifths of Eurasia), geopolitical position, population (1.455 billion, about a quarter of the world's total), the total economic and military power, energy and other natural resources of the SCO's member countries will play very important role in world power balance, and in formation of the new world order. The SCO, which was founded in Shanghai in 2001, consists of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan have SCO observer status, Sri Lanka and Belarus are its dialogue partners. The SCO's role in Asia will increase and interfere with the USA interests not only in Asia-Pacific but in the Middle East and Europe.

Members of the SCO unifying interests include: to keep the balance of great powers in the region in order to gain flexibility in security, fear of the containment policy (China), economic benefit (Russia and other members of the SCO), natural resources and market (for China) and stability in the region for the certain amount time (at least 10 years). So, the SCO policy is generally inward oriented. Chinese premier Wen Jiabao in his remarks at the SCO Summit in Saint-Petersburg, Russia on 7 November 2011 pointed out that 2012 will be a remarkable year for the SCO.⁴⁷ What does it mean or what expectations China has for the SCO is a big question.

The military relationship of the SCO member-states is important. The combined military might of the SCO is credible and can have a big impact on the U.S. military presence in Asia. Thus, the SCO's call to withdraw U.S. military forces from the region is regarded as an explicit call for the reduction of U.S. military presence in Central Asia.⁴⁸ Therefore, the SCO will be the most important player and a force multiplier for China and Russia (at present) in Central and East Asia.

The SCO is an instrument to defend the interests of its members. Thus, the member states recognize and accept the interests of other members. Due to Chinese efforts defense ministers of the SCO member states accepted Taiwan as a part of China during the summit in 2002.

The member states of the SCO are taking practical steps to increase the interaction between them in order to develop economic, political, military and other spheres for benefit of all member states of the SCO. Also, they are making progress to make the SCO truly international organization accepted by the leading international organizations such as the UN and others.⁴⁹

UN Peacekeeping Operations Troop Requirement

The number of the UN member state's military personnel participating in UN Peace keeping operations (UN PKO) is increasing. This means that participants in UN PKOs will face the challenges of working with different cultures, and different types of military organizations, military procedures, drills, doctrine, national limitations and other sometimes clashing issues.

The UN has guiding documents for the most of the general issues. The usefulness of these guiding documents is limited since they do not always solve the above mentioned problems of the differences in training and doctrine of the participating nations' military personnel.

The UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO) pointed out that the nature of the peace keeping mission puts demands on the universal type of soldier. "The most common sort of UN peacekeeper is the infantry soldier. However, increasingly we need specialized personnel who we refer to as 'enablers'. These skilled soldiers include engineers..., helicopter crew... and other specialist

enablers...⁵⁰ Therefore, the UN peace mission requires more personnel capable in building of the nation, assisting in humanitarian relief and other such types of operations.

“Modern peacekeeping operations are often very complex, and place high demands on the personnel we deploy. High levels of training are required before deployment... Troops must know what to do ... in ambush, for example, and must be capable of responding appropriately, even robustly, if necessary”⁵¹ The level of training is not common ground for the interoperability of the different nations’ military. Certainly, military training around the world has more similarities than differences, but each nation’s military sometimes define the same things with a different name. This terminology difference could lead to a dramatic misunderstanding and cause a fatality. Thus, this message of the UN DPKO should be interpreted in such way that the UN seeks disciplined soldiers-diplomats with technical skills in their field, able to understand and act properly to achieve the mission goals. In her Keynote address at the International peacekeeping community conference at the Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in November 2011, Victoria K. Holt, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, said that “We can only hope and pray that the peacekeepers... who have been deployed have the best strength, ...best leaders, ...best training because what they do is what we care about”.⁵² Participants at this conference defined the top peacekeeping issues as: obstacles to movement (freedom of the movement), security, the quality of consent by the host nation, weak political processes, expectations for ‘peace-building’, and mandates for ‘protection of civilians’.⁵³

The Development Program of the Mongolian Armed Forces 2015

Mongolia is obligated to have Armed Forces according to its Constitution. The size of the Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) is determined by the size of the overall population and economic constraints, not by its geography or extensive land borders. Mongolia shaped its own security policy after the collapse of the USSR. In the 1960s-70s, when sharp tension in the relationship between its immediate neighbors led to mutual military confrontation, Mongolia had been involved as field of war between Soviet Union and China. At that time the People's Republic of Mongolia had a full standing Army located in the border area ready for military action against China.⁵⁴ The size of the military in Mongolia was reduced very sharply in several demobilization procedures starting from 1985. The Mongolian People's Army readiness was degrading constantly until the 1990s when collapse of the social system, and the economy almost completely knocked down its military capability. The MAF started to recover in 1997. Since that time several programs/plans aimed to develop capabilities of the MAF have taken place. The current Development Plan of the Mongolian Armed Forces 2015 ('MAF 2015') was adopted in 2005. This 10 year development program is going to end soon. The Mongolian Minister of Defense L. Bold during his report on the annual defense and military activities to the personnel of the MAF said that it is time to advance a new development program for the MAF until 2022. "Mongolian Armed Forces 2022" program will be formulated in order to meet near future requirements for the development of the military operating in both the internal and external security environment, and capable of supporting Mongolian National Security policy and strategy.⁵⁵ This will require assessment of the status of the current development program, military warfare tendency, the Mongolian National Security policy's goals, and National military/defense

policy objectives.⁵⁶ Therefore, developing a new development program for the MAF will require at least formulation and publication of new National Military/Defense Policy adapted to the current National Security Policy's goals.

The MAF 2015 sets the requirement for the re-structuring of the MAF, solving the personnel and renewal of equipment and weaponry issues.⁵⁷ Enhancement of the peace support capability program in the framework of the MAF 2015 is mainly directed to support the foreign policy of Mongolia by strengthening Mongolia's role and commitment in the international security and stability of the world. Also, enhancement of the peace support capability provides the opportunity for MAF personnel to gain foreign military engagement experience, get some level of combat experience, increase the prestige of military service among youth, promote public diplomacy in mission areas, increase their professional skills in the field, and to encourage members to learn a foreign language.

Assessing the enhancement of the peace support capability program in the frame of the MAF 2015, the Mongolian Armed Forces could say that it almost achieved all goals of this subprogram (except of one infantry battalion, which was delayed due to financial constraints and the support battalion's Transportation Company). The third battalion will be established by 2012 according to Minister of Defense Mr. L. Bold in his annual report to the personnel of the MAF in November 2011. Thus, establishing a new 10 year development program for the MAF or at least for its peace support operation's capability is required right now. Some could argue that thinking about only participation in peace operations is a diversion from the main mission of the MAF – to protect territory and sovereignty from an external adversary. Professor L. Molojamts, retired

Major General, advisor, and lead researcher at the Institute for Strategic Studies of National Security Council of Mongolia, noted that in a "...direct sense, Mongolia neither has sufficient capability to protect itself nor to threaten others." Farther he explains that "in case of need, the country [Mongolia] would have to apply for international legal and military assistance and protection."⁵⁸ Therefore, using military as a public diplomacy vehicle is useful for Mongolia in order to strengthen its position in international affairs.

In order to be an enhancing tool for the Third Neighbor Policy, Mongolia should refine its legal issues at national level in order to speed up the decision making process of sending the Mongolian military to UN PKO and international peace support operations. The decision making process of the sending troops to UN PKO takes time. Evolvement of mission does not wait for the Mongolian government to make a decision to send troops to a mission. Therefore, amendments in the law "Participation in Peace Support Operations" should be enacted.

The "Participation in a Peace Support Operations" law directs that the Armed Forces, border troops, police, intelligence, National Emergency Agency, and correction agency personnel shall participate in the peace support operations. Mongolia's different security and law enforcement agencies do not have any common training. Therefore, either separate missions should be chosen by the decision making authority according to their function, or universal training standards must be approved and followed by each agency in order to have interoperability in mission area.

Secondly, taking into consideration UN peace keeping operations demands, the MAF must increase the number of troops ready to be deployed as 'enablers'. This means that one engineer company is insufficient to participate in the UN PKO. PKO

readiness planning indicates that the MAF should have three engineer companies ready to be deployed considering the rotation and deployment periods. The same approach is required for the other specialty units or teams. Thirdly, the MAF has to increase its capability to assist in humanitarian relief programs.

The MAF shall seek the recognition of its Peace Support Operations training center as the North East Regional Peace Operations Training Center by Russia and China, in order to facilitate multinational peace and stability operations military training for immediate and third neighbor countries Armed Forces personnel.

Finally, Mongolia's reliance on international legal and military assistance to guarantee its sovereignty requires that a MAF 2022 focus on reinforcing stability in the region, and strengthening the MAF's international role.

Conclusion

The political turmoil in Eurasia and industrial hunger for raw materials, while raising Mongolia's international profile, has also exposed its vulnerabilities. To successfully deal with these political, economic, and security challenges, Mongolia focuses on the political and diplomatic instruments of power to improve its local neighborhood and encourage support from the international community. Mongolia's multi-pillar Third Neighbor policy is designed to improve its flexibility in solving security, economic and other problems by tying interests of developed democratic countries and two neighbors.

Conducting any policy requires supporting tools such as money or other resources as implementers and drivers. Today, Mongolia's weak economy does not support an effective Third Neighbor policy. The mining sector of Mongolia, which contributes the most financial revenue to country, could pose a danger of military

intervention without strict and careful regulation and management. Natural resources are nonrenewable and limited in quantity. Mongolia should look at its natural resources and mining as temporary boosters of the economy.

The Mongolian Armed Forces have very limited capabilities to protect its territory, but the MAF have been well recognized among partners of peace operations as experienced and disciplined troops. Until a certain point in future, or, until the economy of Mongolia plays a bigger role in the region or in the world, the participation of the Mongolian Armed Forces in peace and stability operations will be an enhancing tool for the Mongolia's multi-pillar Third Neighbor policy.

The limited amount of defense military resources should be focused on developing a small professional military, which will form the cadre for the future expansion and development of defense capabilities. Therefore, doctrinal and structural changes along with weaponry and equipment are required to be defined, formulated and implemented.

Doctrinal changes should address mobilization, the preparation of defense resources (include personnel/human), and defense resource utilization in the current and future reformed defense system during peace, conflict and crisis.⁵⁹

Acknowledging the fact that the military institution is a system of interdependent units, and that giving to one high priority will lead, in the long term, to a reduction of the functionality of whole system; a careful balanced approach is needed in reformulating the development program for the MAF.

Taking into consideration the state priorities, the peacekeeping capability takes priority in the development of the MAF. Its participation in peacekeeping and

multinational peace and stability operations should be broadened since it strengthens not only military relationships, but deepens Mongolia's Foreign Affairs relationships with international community.⁶⁰ Thus, the MAF as a diplomatic implementer is important in the development of the multi-pillar Third Neighbor policy. Considering the future tendency and requirements of UN peacekeeping operations, the MAF should develop "enabler" capacities: such as engineer, construction, and transportation capabilities. Consequently, the government of Mongolia has to pay more attention to the development of its Armed Forces in order to achieve desired effect in conducting the Third Neighbor policy.

Endnotes

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⁴ Mongol Ulsiin Myanganii Hogjliin Zoriltod Suurilsan Undesnii Hogjliin Tsogts Bodlogo(National Development Comprehensive Program based on the Mongolia's National Millenium Development Goals), Parliament, Ulaanbaatar, January 31, 2008, no. 32, State Palace, Mongolia.

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⁴⁶ Incidents with Vietnam, seizure of fishing ship by Japanese in 2009 shows that PRC took more aggressive stand in foreign policy in relationship to the weaker countries.(Author).

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⁵⁹ Mobilization is vital in the military defense of Mongolia due to its small size of the Armed Forces and size of territory, boarder length. (author notes).

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