

STATEMENTS AND INTERVIEWS

THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE-ECONOMIC SECURITY

J.Enhsaikhan, Secretary of Mongolia's National Security Council granted the following interview to the Mongol Messenger

MM. Can you please tell us about the status, structure, composition and the scope of activities of the National Security Council of Mongolia?

Enhsaikhan: The Council was established about one a half years ago right after the adoption of the Law on the National Security Council. According to the Constitution of Mongolia, the President of Mongolia is the head of the Council. Besides him. The Speaker of the Parliament and the Prime Minister are its other members. The law provides that if need arises, the President can make changes in the composition of the Council.

Why aren't the ministers of defense, of external relations or the head of the state security board members of the Council?

It is believed that the executive branch is represented in the Council by the Prime Minister, and that the composition of the Council should reflect the balance of powers of the three political institutions. Besides, unlike in many other countries, the Council is not vested with broad powers. Rather it is a state consultative body designed to elaborate state policy of ensuring national interests and national security as well as to coordinate its execution According to the law mentioned above, the Council can make recommendations and is accountable for its activities before the State Great Hural. It is to conduct its activities on the basis of the national security concept, adopted by the later.

Besides the three members, the Council has a Secretary of the Council, advisers, reporters and groups of experts. The secretary of the Council, who is appointed by the President of Mongolia, organizes and coordinates works on research studies for the Council, coordinates preparatory works for the meetings of the Council and looks after the Council's day-to-day activities.

The Vice Chairman of the State Great Hural, chairmen of the standing committees and advisers to the President of Mongolia are ex officio advisers of the Council. They take part in the elaboration of draft decisions of

The Council and give advice to Council members in line with their sphere of expertise and profession. Members of Government, heads of special boards and the Chief of the General Staff of the armed forces are ex officio reporters of

the Council, and as such they make study, prepare reports, draft proposals and recommendations on security related questions and present them for the Council's consideration. After the decision is taken, they are responsible for executing them.

Highly qualified scholars and professionals may be appointed as full-time or part-time experts of the Council, with the responsibility of making research and analysis on specific questions and drafting proposals. They are responsible for the substantiation of their conclusions and draft proposals. The experts are appointed by the President.

What are the functions of the Council?

The Council is responsible for the coordination, elaboration and implementation of the state national security policy, such as strengthening state and social structure as stipulated in the Constitution of Mongolia, strengthening national unity, guaranteeing human rights and freedom, protecting the security of the population and the Mongolian genetic heredity, ensuring economic security. Protecting and developing national culture, the intellectual heritage, conducting a unified foreign policy, elaborating state defense policy. Besides this, the Council is charged with making analysis of the country's political and social life as well as of the world social, economic, scientific, technological, military and political situations and determining the necessary measures to be taken.

Has the Parliament adopted the national security concept?

No. Not yet. The NSC has elaborated a draft concept and has already presented it to the Parliament for its consideration.

What kind of document is the draft concept of national security?

It is the result of the collective work done by representatives of various organizations, including governmental and research. Some members of parliament have also taken active part in preparing it. The draft tried to reflect today's realities, look into the future, take into account Mongolia's geographical, economic, social and cultural specifics. Definitions of "vital national interests" and "national security" are given. It also describes the means of ensuring them, the factors that affect the national security, security guarantees and so on. The draft proceeds from the fact that the main guarantee of Mongolia's national security is the people itself and the State. Besides the classical understanding of national security; economic, ecological, cultural, scientific- technological and informational aspects of security are given proper attention. Special emphasis is made on the importance of early warning, preventive and active measures.

What do you think is the most pressing security problem for Mongolia at present?

Economic security, as has been reflected in recent opinion polls.

The public is of the view that the step taken to turn Mongolia into a nuclear-weapon free zone is the first concrete result of the NSC activity. The non-nuclear status of Mongolia will surely positively affect its security. But how will it be realized in practice?

The support of our initiative by all nuclear-weapon states and by some non-nuclear state, such as Japan, in itself is a positive, encouraging sign. Russia has pledged to respect our status and policy in the bilateral treaty of friendly relations and cooperation signed by Presidents P. Ochirbat and B. Yeltsin. The United States has gone beyond the nuclear issue and stated that "...Mongolia ever faces a threat and decides to refer the matter to the United Nations Security Council, the United States, along with other members of the council, would consider appropriate steps to be taken." It is an important political statement.

Was it US Embassy statement?

No, it was an official statement of the United States, which has been disseminated not only b) the US Embassy here in Ulaanbaatar, but also by the US Department of State in Washington.

As to the question of practical implementation of the initiative, I think that the first, most important step has been made recognition by nuclear-weapon states, especially by our neighbors. The next logical steps would be. In my view, first, to adopt a special legislation on the status, which would define our rights and obligations as well as those of other states, and second, make the unilateral pledges by nuclear-weapon states, which are at the same time permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, into a multilateral obligation. An other step should be to work for turning Central Asia into a nuclear weapon free zone, and if possible, into a test free zone. This would be in the interests of not only of Mongolia, but also of all the people that inhabit this sub-region.

Will the continued use of uranium deposits in eastern Mongolia as well as negotiations with some Russian and American companies on the joint mining of uranium in the Gobi area affect our nuclear-weapon-free status?

No, it will not, International law not only does not prohibit such activities, but it even regulates peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Besides, though uranium is being mined in Mongolia, it is not processed or enriched here.

How will the end of the ‘cold war’ errand of the bipolar world affect such notions as ‘enemy’ and ‘ally’. Will these changes be reflected in the military doctrine?

The end of the “cold war” and the ensuing transformations in the world have changed our geopolitical environment and our national security policy. We do not see any state or nation as our enemy, unless there are valid reasons not to do so. The enemy shall be determined by the attitudes and policies of other states towards Mongolia and her vital interests. As to the notion ‘ally’ we will try to be on the best of terms with all the countries and nations and at the same time we shall keep to the principles of non-alignment. As to our immediate neighbors, Mongolia shall be neutral’ to their disputes, if they even arise, unless Mongolia’s interests are directly affected. I think that all this should be reflected in the military doctrine that is being work

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