

**Report on Mongolia's Chairmanship of the Council of
Members States of the International IDEA**

/Wednesday, 7 December, 2016/

Ambassador Urs Bucher,
Ambassador Cristina Ronquillo de Blodorn,
Director Bradley,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests and Colleagues,

First of all, on behalf of the Chair country of the Council of International IDEA Member States, I would like to thank the Office of the International Institute for Democratic and Electoral Assistance to the European Union and the Mission of Switzerland for hosting this Meeting and welcome all Representatives of International IDEA Member States to the EU here today.

Allow me to begin by highlighting, in brief, the priorities and activities, proposed by Mongolia during its Chairmanship of the Council of International IDEA Member States.

For its chairmanship, Mongolia selected the topic "Learning from Democratic Transitions", with a view to inspire dialogue and make available global knowledge and expertise on democratic change. In this context I would like to highlight a few points about Mongolia's experience.

As you all know, 26 years ago Mongolia chose its development path to embrace rule of law, democratic governance, market economy and open society. In 1990 democratic parliamentary elections were not only first of its kind in the region, but it was fully free and fair. Since then, we have already had 7 Parliamentary elections. Mongolia was able to become from one of the world's closest countries to one that is most open. And today I can proudly say that not only Mongolians but all of the world community acknowledges that Mongolia not only stands firm on the path chosen and its democracy has solid foundations but also committed to contribute to the promotion of democracy worldwide.

Mongolia as a Chair, in cooperation with International IDEA, suggested to share our experience of transitions focusing on 3 main themes in line with the International IDEA's programmes. These themes, which we call 3 pillars, are elections observations, accountability and transparency, and citizen's ownership of the 2030 Development Agenda.

In order to achieve these goals, in March 2016, Mongolia hosted a workshop entitled "Democratic Transitions in Asia" in Ulaanbaatar, in collaboration with International IDEA. The workshop hosted 35 international participants from government and non-governmental organizations from countries like Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, People's Republic of Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste, in addition to more than 20 participants from Mongolian organization. The workshop provided an excellent opportunity for the participants to not only share their unique experiences of democratic transition but also exchange views on the very essential issues and challenges of democratic development in Asia.

As the main event of the Chairmanship, Mongolia hosted Annual Democracy Forum in August 2016, entitled "Learning from Democratic Transition in Asia and Pacific: An Inter-Generational Dialogue", in collaboration with International IDEA and the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation (NAM CSSTC). The two day forum hosted more than 100 participants from prominent international, local, governmental and civil society organizations, like Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations, the Community of Democracies and of course International IDEA. 5 thematic sessions: Constitutional Transitions, Role of Security Sector in democratic transitions, Women in Democratic Transitions, Role of International Community in Transitions, held during the forum, served as a unique platform of dialogue that allowed exchange of views and experiences on transition and development of democratic institutions.

Mongolia, as a Chair, has also been actively engaged in activities of International IDEA here in Brussels, throughout 2016. Ambassador Davaadorj, who has returned home

in early November upon completion of his duties as Ambassador of Mongolia to the BENELUX and the Head of Mission to the EU, has not only been actively involved in the activities but also tried to provide substance to the workshops, seminars and roundtable meetings with his remarks and interventions.

Based on our experience and lessons gained in building democracy at home, during its Chairmanship, Mongolia set forth a commitment not only to share with other countries its achievements but also contribute to the international effort to develop and strengthen democracy in Asia. In this regard, the major initiative we have proposed is establishment of the Regional Training Centre for Election observers in Ulaanbaatar.

The main goal of establishing a Regional Training Centre in Ulaanbaatar is to assist new and emerging democracies from Asia in training their election observers to help them fulfill the observation missions in their own countries, as well as to participate in observation missions in other countries. It also aims its activities at deepening theoretical and practical expertise on election observation missions, providing participants with practical skills.

The Concept paper of the Regional Training Centre has been developed in collaboration with the International IDEA and distributed to the member states and to such international organizations as Community of Democracies, OSCE and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

From Mongolian part the Government decision has been already made and we are working with the International IDEA to launch the Centre in January, 2017. At this point it has been agreed that the International IDEA will appoint 1 expert with his financing while Mongolia provides 2 staff and premises for the Centre. As Secretary-General Yves Leterme noted in his opening remarks of the Annual Democracy Forum in Ulaanbaatar, “the Centre will contribute to the professionalization of the electoral field allowing Mongolia to share its knowledge on electoral observation with its regional counterparts and thereby contributing with expertise to consolidating and deepening democracy in the

Asian region". Although, we are facing some difficulties with financing of the staff and administrative expenses, due to the economic slowdown, Mongolia stays committed to launch the Center and continues to work with its international partners to ensure the necessary support.

In conclusion, I truly hope that Mongolia successfully accomplished its duties as a Chair of the Council of International IDEA Member States in 2016 by implementing the priorities and activities proposed. I also would like to thank the Office of International IDEA and all Member States for the remarkable cooperation and assistance provided during the course of Mongolian Chairmanship of this very important international organization, an organization dedicated to support the very essence of democratic development in the countries and the regions that need it most.

Thank you.