Foreign Policy of Mongolia

Theory and Challenges
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• What is a Foreign Policy?
• Understanding our neighbors and region
• Mongolia’s immediate neighbors
• Third Neighbor policy
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Foreign Policy

A policy pursued by a state in regards to other nations to achieve objectives or maintain/construct a favorable international or regional environment.
What dictates foreign policy?
Neighbors
Russia’s perspective
We should acknowledge that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the century

- Putin /2005/
Central Asian Enclaves

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China’s perspective
China’s Geopolitical Imperatives

• Maintain internal unity (especially within the Han Chinese regions)

• Maintain and exercise control over the buffer regions

• Protect the coast from foreign encroachment
Maintain the Buffer Region

- Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, ‘Manchuria’ limits Russia (Soviet Union)

- Tibet hinders conflicts with India
  - Water source for major river systems

- North Korea blocks direct confrontation with the United States
‘Our’ region
Mongolia’s Foreign policy
‘peaceful, open, multi-pillar foreign policy’

Immediate neighbors

RF

PRC

Third neighbors

USA, FRG, ROK, Japan, ROI, ROT

UN, OSCE, EU, NATO

You can choose your friends

But not your neighbors
Mongolia’s Relations with Its Neighbors

• National Security Concept
  “Good neighbor friendly relations and wide-ranging cooperation with the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China shall be developed [...] ... as well as a general balance of relations with neighbors shall be sought”

• Foreign Policy Concept
  “Mongolia’s top priority in the foreign policy to pursue good friendly relations with the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China and to maintain equal and balanced relations while developing extended cooperation with both countries as a good neighbor.”
with Russia
Mongolia-Russia’s political relations

1921 Diplomatic Relations

1993 Agreement on Friendly Relations and Cooperation

2009 Strategic Partners
with China
Mongolia-China political relations

1949 Diplomatic relations

1994 Agreement on Friendly Relations and Cooperation

2003 Good-neighborliness Partnership

2011 Strategic partners

2014 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
‘Third’ neighbor policy
“Third Neighbor” Policy

- Balance of Power
- Balance of Threat
- Who are we balancing against?
“Third Neighbor” Policy

• National Security Concept
  “Pursuant to a “Third Neighbor” strategy, bilateral and multilateral cooperation with highly developed democracies in political, economic, cultural and humanitarian affairs shall be undertaken”

• Concept of Foreign Policy
  “…will seek to avoid becoming overly reliant or dependent on any particular country.”
  “…expand bilateral relations with Western democracies.”

  “... will establish and expand its partnership and cooperation with Western and Eastern countries such as the U.S., Japan, European Union, India, Republic of Korea and Turkey within the framework of its “third neighbor” policy.”
In 1990, then-Secretary of State James A. Baker referred to the United States as Mongolia’s *third neighbor*.

“…The United States is “proud to be called” Mongolia’s “third neighbor.”
The Bogd Khaant
Mongolia (1911 – 1924)

An official letter sent out by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bogd Khaant Mongolia to France, the UK, Germany, the U.S., Belgium, Japan, Denmark, the Netherlands and Austro-Hungarian Empire on November 18, 1912.
Communism (1924 – 1990)
Democratic Mongolia
(1990 – Present)
Practical Implications

POLITICAL SECTOR:
• Mongolia’s nuclear free zone status
• OSCE: a participating country, NATO: a partner across the globe
• Mongolian chairmanship of the Community of Democracies ASEM Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2016

ECONOMIC SECTOR:
• National Security Concept: "design a strategy whereby the investment of any foreign country does not exceed one third of overall foreign investment in Mongolia"

CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS:
• Biggest Mongolian communities abroad*
  1. Republic of Korea – 40,000
  2. United States of America – 28,000
  3. United Kingdom – 9,000
Challenges
Immediate neighbors

- Both neighbors are not liberal democracies
- Too much influence
- Very sensitive to changes in IR
‘Other neighbors’

- Very little economic interest from Third Neighbors
- Very little participation in economic initiatives
- Non-traditional security threat
- Future of the ‘third’ neighbor policy
Q&A