

# 2015

## Ulaanbaatar Process and Roundtable on Northeast Asian Security

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GPPAC<sup>1</sup> NORTHEAST ASIA (GPPAC/NEA) Regional Steering Group in collaboration with “Blue Banner”, a Mongolian NGO devoted to promoting nuclear non-proliferation and Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status, are planning to officially launch the *Ulaanbaatar Process* and within that process hold a regional roundtable meeting on Northeast Asian Security. The meeting will be held on 23-24 June 2015 under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia.

Launched in 2003, the Six Party Talks (SPT) involve government representatives of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Russia, Japan and the US. The talks are the closest alternative to an institutional mechanism for promoting regional peace and security, and so far is the only practically available tool to address pressing regional security issues, especially the issue of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

The SPT have achieved some results, demonstrating that with understanding and political will progress is possible. However, suspension of the SPT since 2009 and increasing calls for hard-line responses to some regional developments leave little room for early resumption of the talks.

On the other hand, increasing inflammable rhetoric and escalation of territorial claims underline the need to

provide space for dialogue and trust-building. Thus, since the suspension of the SPT, track-2 initiatives have provided space for such dialogue and exchanges.

According to GPPAC/NEA, Mongolia can play a strategic role in this respect. As a country with internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free status that maintains friendly relations with all the states of SPT, it can play a unique role as provider of venue and generator of ideas for productive talks.

The Blue Banner NGO and the Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have supported the goals and activities of GPPAC by hosting in Ulaanbaatar regional GPPAC meetings in 2007, 2010 and 2014 respectively, focusing on issues of reducing nuclear threat through regional dialogue.

These meetings were practically useful for the civil society organizations not only to openly discuss regional security issues but also to express their common views on how best to address them. Hence, in 2014 it was decided to launch the *Ulaanbaatar Process* to formalize this useful mechanism of civil society organizations of all states of the region, and to serve as a possible unofficial forum even for official channels, including the SPT.

The *Ulaanbaatar Process* is open for cooperation with all the interested civil societies, governmental or non-governmental organizations to jointly seek ways to address common regional issues and challenges. In this sense, it is open to cooperate with the Mongolian Institute for Strategic Studies to promote the ideas and principles of the *Ulaanbaatar*

*Dialogue for Northeast Asian Security*, proposed in 2013 by Mongolian President Ts. Elbegdorj.

In addition to well known scholars of Mongolia in the field, representatives of GPPAC/NEA focal points and scholars from Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Seoul, Pyongyang, Vladivostok, Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Washington, as well as peace activists from several countries will attend the *Ulaanbaatar process meeting*. Some members of parliament and government officials of Mongolia, representatives from diplomatic missions and international organizations based in Ulaanbaatar will also be invited to attend the opening ceremony.

On 19 June the Mongolian Parliament adopted a resolution on raising Mongolia’s foreign policy regarding its nuclear-weapon-free status to a new level. Thus, it has instructed the Government to promote the status at the regional level, ratify some IAEA-related multilateral conventions, inform annually its standing Committee on Security and Foreign Policy on the activities undertaken in implementing the law of Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status and to consult with the National Security Council before taking major decisions regarding the status or international cooperation in the areas of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

1 Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is a world wide civil society network that promotes conflict prevention and peace building through a network and multistakeholder approaches.