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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON GA
REVITALIZATION**

60TH SESSION

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Distinguished Co-chairs,

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to you for organizing this very important meeting. We are here today to discuss the role of the General Assembly in the selection of the Secretary-General, or rather ways and means of enhancing this role. I sincerely hope that this debate will help pave the way if not for a more involved, then for a more informed decision on our side.

We know that this issue has been extensively discussed within the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System from 1995 to 1997. The recommendations of the High-level Working Group were then adopted in a resolution of the General Assembly and contained a number of important measures such as “the process of selection of the Secretary-General shall be made more transparent”, or that “the General Assembly shall make full use of the power of appointment enshrined in the Charter in the process of the appointment of the Secretary-General and the agenda item entitled "Appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. There is little evidence of these recommendations having been implemented to date, or of most of them. It, thus, should not come as a surprise that the subject before us is receiving such a vivid attention from the Member States in the context of the GA revitalization.

Co-chairs,

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is not only a chief administrative officer of this organization. The Charter of the United Nations bestows on him a unique political role in Article 99 allowing “the Secretary-

General to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". Furthermore, as the United Nations has increasingly taken a central place in the system of international relations the role of the SG has grown accordingly to levels far beyond than that anticipated at the moment of adoption of the Charter. The Secretary-General has come to personify this Organization, and as such occupies a place in the first row of world leaders.

One may think, subsequently, that selection of such a figure should be a very intricate and complicated process. It is so in a way, yet the constituency that elects the SG has surprisingly little voice in or knowledge of the process. I will not go into details on how the SG has been selected to date, as everyone in this room is well aware of that. I would like, however, to recall the fact that the General Assembly had once at its days of glory decided on the second term for Secretary-General Trygve Lie, in absence of any prospect for a decision to be made in the Security Council.

It is in the GA with its universal membership and unique legitimacy, where Secretary-General derive his/her own legitimacy from. Yet for a long time this body has been very distant from real decision-making, serving as a mere rubberstamp for decisions made in another body. As a representative from a former communist country, it reminds me of the way elections were handled in Mongolia then - with a single candidature presented to the people by the Party, or Politburo of the Party, a body with a limited membership, yet immensely extensive powers. I am sure that colleagues in this room coming from countries who had the same historical experience in the last century would agree with me. We all look back at those years as history now - with notions of democracy, open and fair elections having firmly taken root on our soil. Why should the replica of that practice survive in the United Nations then? One might argue that it was the GA itself that adopted this process in a resolution. However, one cannot rule out a possibility that a new resolution can be adopted.

The selection process that provided for a single candidate to be presented for consideration of the General Assembly by the Security Council was adopted at the time of bitter ideological rivalry and Cold War divisions, and aimed, in our view, at evading bringing these differences into the selection process. It was also a time when the Organization and its Secretary-General were to be primarily involved in the maintenance of international peace and security. Today, the situation has changed. The development issues arose to the same or comparable level in importance with the task of maintaining the international peace and security if not higher. The world leaders acknowledged at their summit last fall that development, security and human rights form the indispensable foundations for collective security, that they are the pillars of the UN system. They reaffirmed that development is a central goal by itself and sustainable development constitutes a key element of the overarching framework of the UN activities. So, attainment of the MDGs, social and economic progress for all, has

come to the fore of the agenda of the United Nations and the international community as a whole. The new SG thus is envisaged to be one of important driving forces for the implementation of these historical goals and tasks. Accordingly, it might be advisable to ensure that a principal organ or even organs (GA and ECOSOC) that deal directly with development should have a greater say in the selection of the Secretary-General. I fully understand that it would be naive to think that a selection process that has been in place for decades can be changed overnight. But we have sound reason to expect that the time has come for the GA to fully implement its Charter duty.

Co-chairs,

In 2001 the Security Council made its recommendation to the General Assembly on re-appointment for second term of Secretary-General Kofi Annan well in advance of the expiration of his first term in office. This in fact was in line with the recommendation made by the Open-ended High-level Working Group in 1997 that "In order to ensure a smooth and efficient transition, the Secretary-General should be appointed as early as possible, preferably no later than one month before the date on which the term of the incumbent expires". My delegation would strongly favour to have that happen again this year, thus solidifying this emerging trend.

The GA in its resolution also recognized the importance of the due consideration to be given to regional rotation in the course of the identification and appointment of the best candidate for the post of Secretary-General. Mongolia fully subscribes to this view and along with other Asian countries is of the view that the next Secretary-General is ought to come from Asia. It gives me pleasure to note that the African Group shares this vision.

The next Secretary-General must be a person of highest personal and professional qualities and qualifications. With over 3 billion population, Asia is virtually a limitless pool of talent and wisdom to find a new Secretary-General. Moreover, we share the view that having candidates from a single regional group can greatly enhance the overall quality of the selection process, by allowing fair and objective consideration of individual abilities without being influenced by regional factors.

I agree with what has been pronounced by some delegations that the selection on the Secretary-General should be anchored in agreed criteria/qualifications. It is high time that the General Assembly starts consideration of different formulae. I note with interest in this respect the Canadian Non-Paper on the Process for the Selection of the Next Secretary-General, particularly the qualifications and criteria it suggests. Today's debate is a beginning of the substantive work on enhancing the role of the GA in the process of the next SG selection and my delegation stands ready to contribute to this common effort.

I thank you.