



## **Ulaanbaatar Process 2022 - Summary Document**

### **Introduction**

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Northeast Asia Regional Meeting and eight Ulaanbaatar Process meeting was convened in Terelj National Park, on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia between September 13-15, 2022. Hosted by the Mongolian NGO Blue Banner, the meeting was co-convened by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and its Northeast Asian Regional Secretariat, Peace Boat.

The overall goal of the Ulaanbaatar Process is to strengthen the position of civil society and support it to enhance and maintain inclusive and sustainable peace in the region. It complements official (regional and international) processes and provides recommendations from an all-of-society perspective. Since 2021 it is co-funded by the European Union's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

This was the first in-person meeting to take place since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, and although regular dialogue took place online during this period, reconfirmed the vital importance of safe and inclusive spaces to meet face-to-face. It was attended by 25 participants with diverse civil society backgrounds from places including Beijing, California, Hong Kong, Kyoto, Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo, Ulaanbaatar, Vladivostok, and Washington DC to exchange information, opinions, and experience to shape a peaceful future for Northeast Asia. Convenors also welcomed the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia and the EU Delegation to Mongolia in the opening session. Additionally, the third publication in a series, "Peace and Security in Northeast Asia: The New Normal" was launched at the meeting on September 13.

The dialogue came at an important time, as Mongolia marks the thirtieth anniversary of its unique single-state nuclear-weapon-free policy. As a state with such an internationally recognised status, and benefiting from political security assurances by the five nuclear weapon states, Mongolia maintains friendly diplomatic relations with all Six-Party Talk members and other states of the region. Reflections during a special session on the opening

day, which featured a keynote speech by the first democratically elected President of Mongolia, Ochirbat Punsalmaagiin, also President of NGO Blue Banner, reminded all of the significance of this creative and bold policy on the part of the country, and the role it has played in maintaining stability in the Northeast Asia region. Representatives of Blue Banner informed participants of the organisation's work to promote the concept and practice of establishing single-State zones and the need to call for the second comprehensive study of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in all their aspects. This context also highlighted the importance of the space for dialogue provided by Mongolia in its unique position.

## **Context**

During the three-day meeting, participants discussed pressing issues such as the peace process and denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, as well as the impacts of emerging threats such as the climate crisis and recent changes in the region, such as those brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic; wars and armed conflicts happening in the world today, including in Ukraine; increasing tensions and competition between states; and the shrinking of peaceful and democratic spaces in Northeast Asia as an impact of militarism.

Discussion particularly focused on considerations such as what failures of the international community have led to the current circumstances, and what can be done to improve this situation; and the need to redefine security, in order to reflect and respond to complex crises and cross-cutting security issues. An enhanced focus on the climate crisis was highlighted and put into action by participants planting trees as part of Mongolia's "Billion Trees Campaign." Further, issues related to sanctions were emphasized, as was the reminder of the importance of prevention rather than deterrence.

## **Principles for Inclusion and Collaboration**

Building upon agreements made throughout the Process to date, a concentrated focus on inclusivity was present throughout the meeting. It was noted that while participants from Pyongyang could not physically attend due to ongoing Covid-19 related travel restrictions, all efforts were made to include them through possible means, including sharing of written contributions and consultation by email and telephone. The importance of ongoing confidence building and maintenance of mutual respect are key in this regard.

Participants discussed the challenges of maintaining a balance between the need for closed, confidential space and at the same time open, public engagement. In doing so, principles of a people-oriented, peace first approach were reaffirmed. Additionally, the priority of learning from each other beyond traditional education, and pursuing further interconnectivity through expanding interregional cooperation, as demonstrated by the

representation of GPPAC's Southeast Asia network at the meeting, were highlighted. In this, participants underscored the importance of both complementarity and intersectionality.

### Looking forward

Through the three-day dialogue, the ongoing priorities of the Process were reconfirmed, namely, issues pertaining to peace and human security on the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of a Northeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. Participants acknowledged that the Korean Peninsula peace process is yet to achieve its objectives, and noted that the 70th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement in 2023 will be a key moment to revitalise efforts towards this. Discussions on concrete actions in relation to this, including how to best complement existing plans of ROK civil society, including the Korea Peace Appeal Campaign, as an international effort to be expanded to further cooperation, highlighted that there will still indeed be much to do even after a formal end to the Korean War has been declared. In relation to this, possibilities for policy change, and issues with current postures towards the DPRK, including that of the United States, were flagged for further discussion. And importantly, the incorporation of complex crises and cross-cutting issues such as climate, gender and youth were also a focus.

Based on these principles and issues, participants together developed a joint action plan for the coming year(s), with a focus on how ongoing capacity development, dialogue and advocacy efforts can be transformed into concrete change and contribution toward the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and of Northeast Asia.

