



Ulaanbaatar Process XI

26-27 November, 2025

Summary Document

Overall Introduction

Local peacebuilders from throughout Northeast Asia gathered in Mongolia on November 26-27, 2025, for the 11th annual Ulaanbaatar Process. This milestone gathering also marked the 20th anniversary of the launch of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2005. Convened by the GPPAC Northeast Asia regional network and hosted by the Mongolian non-governmental organization Blue Banner, this ongoing process aims to strengthen civil society's position and support local actors in enhancing and maintaining inclusive and sustainable peace across the Northeast Asian region.

The meeting brought together approximately 15 practitioners from key regional hubs, including Dalian, Hong Kong, Kyoto, Seoul, Siem Reap, Tokyo, Ulaanbaatar, and Vladivostok. The participants represented think tanks, feminist organizations, grassroots peace groups, and research institutes, reflecting a rich geographical and thematic diversity of expertise.

Opening Session

The opening session was held on a national holiday commemorating the adoption of Mongolia's first Constitution. The meeting was officially opened by Ambassador Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan, Chair of Blue Banner, who shared words in remembrance of the late H.E. Mr. P. Ochirbat, the former President of Mongolia.

Following the opening remarks, representatives from the National Security Council and the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS) delivered remarks detailing key security updates, specifically regarding the [Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security](#) and the Khaan Quest military exercises. These discussions highlighted Mongolia's active multilateral diplomacy policy and emphasized the vital complementarity between official, governmental-level diplomatic processes and civil society initiatives.

As local hosts, Blue Banner shared their recent activities and updates. This included their participation in a study of the experiences of the Kubuqi Desert in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, which had received the United Nations' highest environmental honor, the Champion of the Earth award, for its outstanding success in combating desertification. Blue Banner also reported on their ongoing collaboration with the Mongolian International University's Chinggis Khaan's Leadership & Mongol Empire Research Center.

Regional Security Challenges and Civil Society Perspectives

During the main discussions, participants exchanged updates on regional developments, focusing on how the current geopolitical situation impacts both the everyday lives of citizens and the vital work of peacebuilders. A primary theme of concern was the accelerating militarization observed throughout the Northeast Asian region. This trend is exemplified by heightening Japan-China tensions following recent comments by the Japanese Prime Minister regarding a potential contingency in the Taiwan Straits.

Furthermore, the region experienced significant political turbulence over the past year. In South Korea, a declaration of martial law on December 3—occurring just days after the preceding Ulaanbaatar Process meeting—was followed by a presidential impeachment and subsequent election. Additional worries were raised regarding the potential introduction of nuclear-powered submarines by both the Republic of Korea and Japan.

The discussions underscored a growing regional tendency toward political systems that reward nationalism, xenophobia, and militarization, leading to systemic regional instability. Participants emphasized the critical importance of avoiding emotional or exclusive nationalism to prevent further escalation, while actively fostering mutual understanding and cross-border solidarity. Peacebuilders warned that a narrow, highly militarized understanding of "security" is actively eroding human-centered, non-militarized approaches to peace. To counter this, priority must be given to dialogue, cooperation, and trust-building over military escalation, including the creation of safe dialogue spaces and networks across cities that actively resist nationalism, xenophobia, and hatred.

The Northeast Asian region currently feels more socially and politically divided than in previous years, a polarization deeply connected to unresolved historical trauma. Compounding this, many citizens feel too exhausted or stressed by everyday economic pressures to engage in constructive dialogue about history. Consequently, political parties frequently manipulate historical narratives to serve immediate electoral goals, further exacerbating societal tensions. At the same time, regional governments continue to invest heavily in massive military build-ups, even as their populations struggle with low salaries, rising living costs, and daily survival pressures. Peacebuilders emphasized that as long as militarization is prioritized over people's basic needs, establishing authentic and lasting peace will remain incredibly challenging. Finally, an appeal was made to promote regional dialogue and cooperation in Northeast Asia, explicitly supporting Japan's three non-nuclear principles and the Japanese peace constitution.

The host nation of Mongolia is also experiencing its own unprecedented political and social developments, highlighted by the simultaneous dismissal of both the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament on November 17, 2025. Amid these domestic and regional challenges, the Partnership for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was highlighted as a critical framework and venue for fostering ongoing interregional cooperation.

The urgency of the current security situation was echoed in a message from the Korean National Peace Committee (KNPC): "We believe that this meeting, held under the acute international situation in which the global security environment is threatened by the serious challenges and the geopolitical crises accompanied by the armed conflicts between states outbreak here and there, will be a significant occasion not only for the in-depth exchange of views between peace organizations respecting justice and truth but also for clearly exploring the direction and ways for the future activities of Northeast Asia regional group of GPPAC."

Peace Games

A central component of the process was the Northeast Asia Peace Games, a half-day, multi-party simulation designed to provide participants with experiential learning opportunities regarding negotiation and peacebuilding in Northeast Asia. Pioneered by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) across various global contexts, GPPAC has actively collaborated to develop and implement these games with regional partners in Mongolia, Japan, Korea, and beyond. To date, Peace Games events have been held in eight countries, engaging over 600 participants across more than 30 simulations, with educational materials translated into several local languages.

The Peace Games allow participants to explore the complex dynamics of conflict, negotiation, and peacebuilding in highly sensitive political environments. By engaging in role-playing, structured dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving, participants can experiment with diverse approaches to de-escalation and cooperation in a safe, constructive environment. The simulation acts as a powerful tool to deepen mutual understanding, strengthen relationships, and build practical negotiation skills that support long-term, locally grounded peacebuilding efforts.

At the 2024 Ulaanbaatar Process, participants trialled a Peace Games scenario focused on drafting a Regional Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) in Northeast Asia. Following recommendations to explore cooperation around natural resources, environmental protection, and climate change, the 2025 simulation was designed around the theme of "Northeast Asia Transboundary Collaboration for Biodiversity & Ecological Resilience."

The session benefited from the active participation of other key Mongolian GPPAC partner organizations, including the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS), the Mongolian Institute for National Security Studies (MINASS), the Mongolian Peace Intelligence (MONPI), and the United Nations Association of Mongolia. The successful simulation reinforced the high relevance of the Peace Games as an innovative methodology for creative cooperation, and served as a valuable forum to expand partnerships with youth-led and other civil society organizations. Consequently, partners agreed that the Peace Games will remain a highlight of the UBP, and to further develop the methodology for broader use both within the region and globally.

Future Plans and Strategic Focus

The gathering concluded with strategic planning, agreeing on the following upcoming priority areas:

- **Expanding Policy Networks:** building stronger networks with policymakers and legislators to bridge gaps and ensure diverse voices are represented in formal policy spaces.
- **Developing the Peace Games:** The simulation methodology will be further refined and expanded to reach new audiences and partners throughout the region and beyond.
- **Cooperation on Issues of Common Concern:** fostering joint action addressing the climate crisis, desertification, nature conservation and ocean protection. The importance of incorporating environmental and climate security into the regional agenda was emphasised, as Mongolia prepares to host the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 2026.
- **Education and Scholarly Exchange:** promoting educational initiatives, academic collaboration, and scholarly exchanges to deepen mutual understanding among future generations and researchers across the region, combined with regular publications and policy briefs.
- **Sustaining Civil Society Dialogue:** upholding the crucial importance of maintaining continuous, inclusive civil society dialogue within the region despite political headwinds.