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МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИ  
UK - MONGOLIA  
1963-2023



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# THE MONGOL KHAN



A THEATRICAL SENSATION INSPIRED BY THE NOMADIC TRADITIONS OF THE STEPPE

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HERO ENTERTAINMENT





## EDITOR'S WELCOME

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this exclusive publication celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK. *Diplomat* magazine has been delighted to work with the Embassy of Mongolia in London on this special report and we are especially grateful to Ambassador Enkhsukh Battumur and his efficient team for their dedication and guidance in the preparation of the magazine.

Together, we have compiled a unique collection of messages and articles from senior ministers in government, plus figureheads from business, academia and organisations in both Mongolia and the UK. We hear from Mongolia's Minister of Environment and Tourism and its Foreign Minister among others, as well as the UK Minister of State for Indo-Pacific in the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. They are all in agreement that diplomatic engagement has flourished across a broad spectrum from political cooperation and trade to cultural exchanges and educational initiatives, which offers a strong foundation to build on for the future.

The UK stands as one of Mongolia's 'Third Neighbours,' an important facet of the country's foreign policy, as it moved towards democracy and market reforms while exploring opportunities beyond its geographical position. Landlocked between two powerful nations (China and Russia), Mongolia is keen to make friends in Europe and elsewhere, while balancing these high priority relationships.

Today, the UK is the largest foreign direct investor in Mongolia, largely due to Rio Tinto's investment in Oyu Tolgoi, one of the world's top copper mines. But given that at most, only a quarter of the country has been properly surveyed for mining, there is huge potential for further engagement. Mining could become the driving force for the Mongolian economy for years to come, offering a wealth of investment opportunities, and providing the critical minerals the world needs to support the global transition to greener new technologies.

Meanwhile, Mongolia's Tourism Minister is aiming high; he wants to attract a million tourists next year, about double the numbers of visitors this year. Mongolia's wide-open spaces and its unique, nomadic lifestyle certainly offer compelling reasons to visit. Visitors can head out to the taiga, steppe, lakes or desert to camp, hike or ride horses, or visit monasteries, and then there's Mongolia's incredible biodiversity, including the Snow Leopard, Gobi Bear, the endangered Wild Camel and Mountain-hawk Eagle, among others. Tourism is vital for the future conservation of Mongolia's wildlife and natural beauty, and boosts the income of the nomadic herders.

Business continues to expand in Mongolia's exports of exceptional cashmere, camel and yak wools and fabrics. With limited competition in terms of its softness and warmth, Mongolia's cashmere is uniquely warm, thanks to the goats' ability to survive such harsh winters. Mongolia produces 40 per cent of the world's raw cashmere, which comes from goats raised through pastoral nomadism, an ethical and natural way of farming.

Notably, there is something for the rest of the world to learn from Mongolia's commitment to sustainable production practices. Deeply embedded in Mongolia's nomadic culture is the wish to protect and conserve nature. The country has also embarked on a nationwide campaign to plant one billion trees between now and 2030.

Closer to home, the pinnacle of events to mark the 60th anniversary of UK-Mongolia relations is the theatrical production of *The Mongol Khan* opening at the London Coliseum on 17 November. The first Mongolian play to appear in London – it promises to be a highlight of cultural relations between the two nations.

60 years of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK is a landmark achievement. The milestones in this ever-progressing relationship should be celebrated. Now we look forward to the next 60 years.

**Venetia de Blocq van Kuffeler**  
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# МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИИ UK - MONGOLIA 1963-2023

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BETWEEN MONGOLIA AND THE UK





Mongolian 'Naadam' Festival, held from 11 July to 13 July each year  
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# WELCOME TO MONGOLIA

**A Message by Mongolia's Minister of Environment & Tourism,  
His Excellency Bat-Erdene Bat-Ulzii**

As temperatures start to drop and crisp ultramarine skies settle above Mongolia's frozen steppe, I welcome readers to our vast and beautiful country. Just 1,430 intrepid travellers from the United Kingdom visited us last year and we want more of you to come in the future. That's why our 'Visit Mongolia' campaign has eased visa restrictions for Britons and tourists from nearly three dozen other nations. In fabulous Mongolia, more than six times the size of the UK but with just one twentieth of the population, you can enjoy what's so hard to find in an overcrowded world today – space and freedom. With a lower crime rate than Switzerland, you will be safe. We may be far away from home, but with our expanding air connections and better network of paved roads, you can get around comfortably while embarking on many adventures away from the crowds and off the beaten track. Enjoy a comfortable hotel in Ulaanbaatar, or camp beneath the canopy of stars far from light pollution in the Gobi Desert or enjoy the legendary hospitality of our livestock herding communities in their ger felt tents.

**In fabulous Mongolia, more than six times the size of the UK but with just one twentieth of the population, you can enjoy what's so hard to find in an overcrowded world today – space and freedom.**

My few words here can hardly do justice to the array of things you can do in Mongolia, among the last undiscovered destinations on earth. Come to trek, hike, cycle, or ride a horse – in Mongolia we have more horses than people! Learn about our ancient history, a story of dinosaurs, petroglyphs and standing stones or the fabled stories of our greatest Mongolian, Chinggis Khaan, who created

the largest empire the world has ever seen, linking the Far East to Europe with centuries of trade and peace. Visit the Buddhist monasteries of Amarbayasgalant or Erdene Zuu. See herds of wildlife in the Dornod Steppe, spot 534 species of birds, traverse the Gobi on a caravan of Bactrian camels or travel to the Altai peaks of Tavan Bogd or the dark blue frozen lake of Khövsgöl. Most of all, enjoy our culture, whether at one of our festivals of horse racing and wrestling, hunting with golden eagles, camping with the nomads or browsing the cashmere shops, restaurants or nightlife of Ulaanbaatar. As a government driving economic growth for the benefit our young population, many of whom are now improving their English, we invite not only tourists here but also British investors looking for enterprises in all sectors of business.

Our aim is to attract a million tourists next year, which will be about double the number of visitors this year. Given our 1.5 million square kilometres of territory, this will do nothing to spoil your exciting journey here, nor will it hurt our country's beauty. As the Minister responsible for our cherished environment, protection of our biodiversity and natural resources is a critical part of our sustainable economic development. Mongolia's economy produces a fraction of the carbon emissions of most other countries, yet global climate change can be observed in its effects on our beautiful landscape of grasslands, mountains and water resources. Mongolia is committed to a low carbon future and a pragmatic shift towards renewable energy, the conservation of its biodiversity and a healthy environment for our people and all living things in this most beautiful country, beneath the eternal blue sky. So welcome, please visit Mongolia.



The Chinggis Khaan  
Statue Complex





# MONGOLIA'S COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL PEACE

**A Message by Mongolia's Foreign Minister, Her Excellency Battsetseg Batmunkh**

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Mongolia, located in the heart of Asia, is the world's second largest landlocked country. However, our diplomatic ties extend far beyond our two immediate neighbours. We enjoy wide-ranging and extensive relations with countries from all continents through our 'Third Neighbour' policy, which has been greatly appraised by the international community.

World leaders, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres and Pope Francis have described our nomadic country as symbols of 'peace' and 'religious freedom' during their recent visits to Mongolia. Despite being the world's least densely populated country, with 3.4 million people, Mongolia is currently the 24th largest contributor to UN peacekeeping.

Mongolia is strongly committed to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to achieving nuclear disarmament. To this end, we declared our territory as a single-State nuclear weapon free zone in 1992 and acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2021 becoming the 57th state party to the treaty. The 'Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security' has become Mongolia's most notable forum focused on building confidence and maintaining open dialogue channels among key players in the Korean Peninsula.

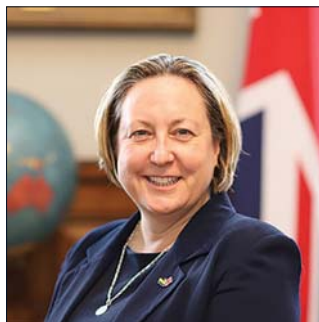
We do not allow our unique characteristics to limit us. Mongolia is a prime example of how any country, regardless of its economic and military capacity, has the potential to contribute to global peace and security. We take pride in our millennia-old history of statehood, unique culture and tradition, as well as our modern story of democratic transformation.

As a female foreign minister and woman diplomat, I have been actively promoting feminist and gender transformative approaches to multilateralism and foreign policy, and have recently hosted the Female Foreign Ministers' Meeting in our country. We are proud that this meeting was the very first to be organised in Asia. In our efforts to enhance the role of women in international relations, peace and security, to promote gender equality and women empowerment, and to encourage women and girls around the world, we have proposed to convene the 'World Women's Forum' next year in Ulaanbaatar.



**Falconry in the Mongolian  
Altai Mountains**





# A HIGHLY VALUED RELATIONSHIP

**A message by the Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, Minister of State for Indo-Pacific  
in the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office**

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I am delighted to contribute remarks for this special edition of Diplomat magazine to mark 60 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Mongolia. We highly value our relationship with Mongolia and remain proud of being the first Western nation to establish relations, all the way back in 1963, though our historic relationship dates back even further.

Since then, links between our two countries have strengthened immeasurably. Today we have a broad ranging relationship in trade and investment, education, collaboration on protecting the environment and Mongolia's incredible biodiversity, close links between our people and in many other areas. The upcoming staging of the spectacular theatrical production, The Mongol Khan, at the London Coliseum will be a significant milestone in projecting Mongolia's international profile as well as deepening the cultural relations between the UK and Mongolia. I am very much looking forward to seeing the show.

**The forthcoming signature of the first bilateral partnership and cooperation framework will deepen our relations and mark the beginning of even stronger ties to support our shared interests and values**

The UK admires Mongolia's commitment to democratic values and developing relations with its 'Third Neighbours' including the UK. The UK will continue to support these goals. The forthcoming signature of the first bilateral partnership and cooperation framework will deepen our relations and mark the beginning of even stronger ties to support our shared interests and values. I look forward to working together with you on this and to another 60 years of even more fruitful and meaningful relations between our two great nations.



**Khongoryn Els in the Gobi  
Gurvansaikhan National Park**





# TRANS-CONTINENTAL NEIGHBOURS

**A Message by Ambassador of Mongolia, His Excellency Mr Enkhsukh Battumur**

As the Ambassador of Mongolia to the United Kingdom, it is a profound honour and privilege to address the esteemed readers of *Diplomat* magazine on this historic occasion, marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK.

Six decades have passed since the formal establishment of diplomatic ties between our two nations. Yet, the roots of our connection run far deeper, tracing their origins to a time long before that. As we reflect upon our shared history, we find evidence of this enduring connection in the works of renowned authors and explorers. Works such as Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Kublai Khan*, and C. W. Campbell's *Travels in Mongolia, 1902* serve as testaments to the curiosity and eagerness of our ancestors to learn about one another.

Over the decades, our diplomatic engagement has flourished across a broad spectrum of areas, spanning from political cooperation and trade to cultural exchanges and educational initiatives. Today, the UK stands as one of our 'Third Neighbours,' a term we Mongolians employ to describe nations with whom we are nurturing mutually beneficial cooperation rooted in shared values of democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law. We deeply appreciate the unwavering support extended by the UK in advancing Mongolia's democratic aspirations and sustainable development efforts.

Economic and trade collaboration stands as a central pillar of our partnership. It is noteworthy that the UK is the largest foreign direct investor in Mongolia, largely due to Rio Tinto's substantial investment in Oyu Tolgoi, one of the world's premier copper mines. Embracing our government's strategic commitment to diversify our economic portfolio, we are working in tandem to expand the scope of our bilateral economic relations, transcending beyond mining into domains such as renewable energy, climate change mitigation, green technology, financial services and more.

Education remains an enduring cornerstone of our bilateral cooperation. Mongolia has participated in the Chevening Scholarship Programme since 1993, enabling over 200 Mongolian students to pursue their studies in the UK. The Government of Mongolia is also actively cultivating robust collaborations with British educational institutions, with a primary focus on enhancing the quality of education and teaching standards within Mongolia, including advancing English language proficiency.

Cultural exchanges have played a pivotal role in enhancing mutual understanding between our two countries. Notably, Mongolian opera singers have risen to prominence on the global stage, participating in the BBC's prestigious Cardiff Singer of the

World competition. Both Amartuvshin Enkhbat, who received the Audience Prize in 2015, and Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar, who was honoured with the Song Prize in 2017, stand as shining examples of the exceptional talent of Mongolian opera singers. In celebration of our 60th diplomatic anniversary, the sensational Mongolian theatrical production, *The Mongol Khan*, will grace the London Coliseum theatre later this year. This cultural extravaganza promises to captivate audiences and further enhance our cultural exchange. We eagerly anticipate the continued growth of such collaborations, driven by the talent and creativity of Mongolian artists who have been nurtured and inspired by their education in the UK.

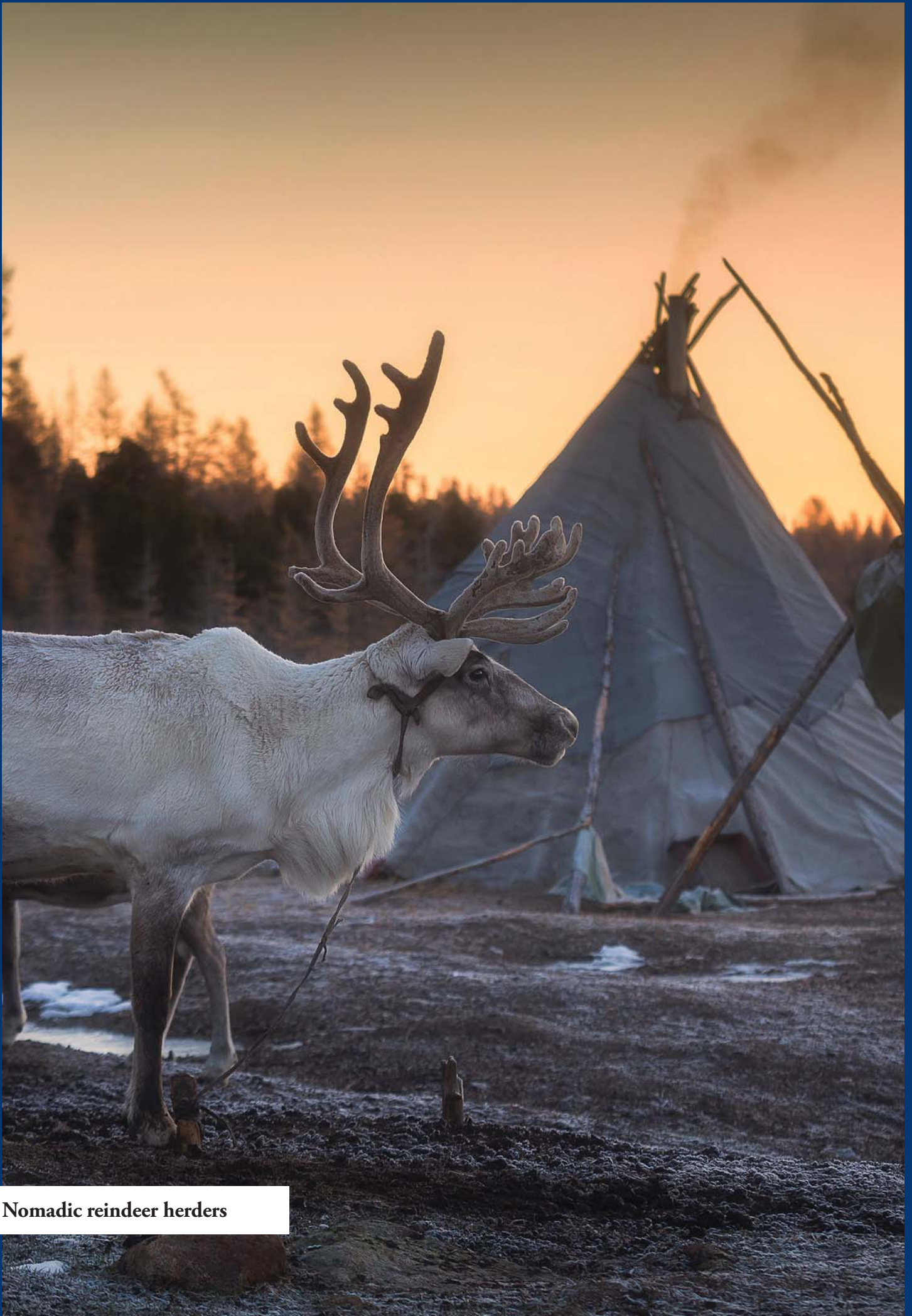
Our bilateral relations have been significantly enriched through the operation of various dialogues. The Mongolia-UK Roundtable Meeting, a tradition dating back to 1987, has served as a vital platform for engagement, with the most recent roundtable convened in 2022 in Ulaanbaatar. Furthermore, the establishment of the Mongolia-UK Parliamentary Group within the Parliament of Mongolia and the formation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Mongolia within UK Parliament have played instrumental roles in fostering inter-parliamentary cooperation. In 2022, we held the first consultative meeting between our two foreign ministries in Ulaanbaatar. Established in 2009, the British-Mongolian Chamber of Commerce has made substantial contributions to B2B cooperation between our two countries.

As we look to the future, Mongolia and the UK stand poised to explore new horizons of collaboration in a rapidly changing world. Our shared commitment to addressing global challenges, such as climate change, sustainable development and regional security, paves the way for an even stronger partnership in the years to come.

**It is my hope that this publication will not only inform but also inspire further collaboration and understanding between Mongolia and the UK.**

It is my hope that this publication will not only inform but also inspire further collaboration and understanding between Mongolia and the UK.

May our enduring friendship continue to thrive, bringing prosperity and harmony to our nations, and contributing to a more peaceful and interconnected world.



Nomadic reindeer herders





## A BRIGHT FUTURE

A Message by His Majesty's Ambassador to Mongolia, Her Excellency Fiona Blyth MBE

It is a great honour and a pleasure to introduce this edition of *Diplomat* magazine with my counterpart and friend Ambassador H.E. Mr. Enkhsukh Battumur, in this 60th Anniversary Year of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Mongolia.

There is so much that unites Mongolia and the UK today; our shared values, democracy, love of the great outdoors, beautiful landscapes and independent spirit.

But 60 years ago, it might have taken more diplomatic vision to see the similarities between us. When the UK established diplomatic relations with Mongolia in 1963 the world was a very different place. But despite the challenges of geography and ideology, diplomats from both countries took the first step of bridging the divide and forging a partnership that has withstood global changes.

Mongolia and the UK's ties have gone from strength-to-strength in the last 60 years. Today, our modern partnership spans a wide range of shared interests: trade and investment, education, democracy, equality, protection of the natural world, and international peace and security.

The links between our people are strong and growing. The UK is fortunate to receive a number of students from Mongolia each year who thrive in their studies and then return to Mongolia to maintain the links between us. Mongolia's spectacular landscapes and beautiful scenery have long been a favourite destination for British travellers, and we share a love of the outdoors and a passion for nature and conservation.

We are also fortunate to have strong cultural links between us. This year's production of *The Mongol Khan* at the London Coliseum is a

wonderful demonstration of the strength of those ties. The production, which captivated audiences in Mongolia, is a glimpse into Mongolian heritage and traditions in one of London's greatest theatres.

**Together the UK and Mongolia are also finding joint ways to tackle some of the biggest challenges facing the world today including climate change, energy and inequality.**

The next 60 years are a chance to do even more together. Today, British businesses are investing in new opportunities in Mongolia. Rio Tinto's landmark investment in Mongolia is a visible symbol of responsible businesses working with Mongolians, for the benefit of Mongolia and exploring new and innovative ways of realising Mongolia's mineral wealth. Together the UK and Mongolia are also finding joint ways to tackle some of the biggest challenges facing the world today including climate change, energy and inequality.

I am delighted to introduce this edition of *Diplomat* magazine, which demonstrates the wide spectrum of our relationship. It is a vivid illustration of the strength of our diplomatic relationship today, and its potential for the future.

Just as diplomats 60 years ago saw the enormous benefits to a strong UK – Mongolia diplomatic relationship, today we have the opportunity to build on their vision and take our important bilateral relationship to ever stronger levels. I look forward to doing that and to continue to build on the past and build a bright future for Mongolia and the UK as partners and friends.



# BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN MONGOLIA

By His Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Kenan Poleo

If I asked you to think about Mongolia, what picture would come into your mind? It is likely that most of you are now conjuring images of vast sprawling windswept plains and grasslands, covering the seemingly endless central Asian steppes.

Perhaps some of you are seeing an image of traditional, nomadic people living in tents, and tending to their impressively sturdy horses. A land of wide-open spaces, natural beauty and peaceful symbiotic existence with the world.

However, these images are only partially true. The preconceptions that exist for this remarkable country hide a growing reality: Mongolia is emerging as a country of huge potential for UK businesses.

Mongolia is the least densely populated sovereign country on the planet, with a population of 3.3 million spread over an area more than six times the size of the UK. It has a population density of just six people per square mile; by comparison the UK averages out at 625 people.

In 2011, Citibank economists were some of the first to see beyond the surface of the country, identifying it as a largely untapped, emerging economic force and a future 'global growth generator.'

Seeing beyond the surface is not just a saying: in this case, it is a statement on the very foundation of the modern Mongolian economy, mining. With an estimated 6,000 individual mineral deposits, it is no surprise that mining already constitutes around 25 per cent of GDP and makes up most of Mongolia's exports. However, the potential for growth is staggering.

The World Bank Group report on 'Minerals for Climate Action' found that the production of key minerals will need to increase by nearly 500 per cent by 2050, in order to meet the growing demand for clean energy technologies.

It is estimated that, at most, only a quarter of the country has been properly surveyed for mining, and that anywhere from US\$1-\$3 trillion of raw material wealth awaits to be discovered.

This presents obvious opportunities for UK businesses with expertise in geological surveying and research, as well as suppliers of equipment and machinery. There is particularly strong demand for those that can innovate and provide greener mining techniques; the more energy-efficient and modern the mining industry can become, the better for all involved.

This is an industry that has the potential to be the driving force for the Mongolian economy for years to come, offering a wealth of secondary and tertiary trade and investment opportunities, and providing the critical minerals the world needs to support the global transition to cleaner and greener new technologies.

Any expansion of the mining sector is going to place higher demands on the national power grid, and as a result, the country is actively looking at renewable energy sources, and exploring diversifying its energy mix.

Geological features and sprawling plains make Mongolia an excellent location for clean energy sources, with the country being rated as having the highest per capita potential for solar and wind electricity generation.

With an ambitious target to generate 30 per cent of electricity from renewables by 2030, the sector is seeing rapid growth. In the past three years alone, eight new renewable energy power plants with an installed capacity of 181.4MW were commissioned, and today approximately 9 per cent of installed power-generation capacity comes from renewables.

The UK is in an ideal position to support Mongolia in applying new renewable energy technologies, and now is a great time for UK businesses to get involved in the market. Those that have already started operating here have seen some great early success stories, such as London-based investment group United Green, which is the majority shareholder in the biggest solar power project in Mongolia, Desert Solar Power One, which has an installed capacity of 30 MW.

The growth of these two sectors is having further positive knock-on effects for the country – several companies are actively considering IPOs and there is a plan afoot to establish a leading financial centre. The expertise of the UK's financial service providers could be invaluable in developing the country's financial sector.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK, and in that time we have seen our trading and business relationship go from strength-to-strength.

Mongolia's potential is vast, and there is a growing demand for innovative and reliable international partners, something the UK is in an ideal position to provide.

So, if you are a UK business, why not take advantage of this anniversary year by exploring – and being a part of – the next economic success story.

## SELL TO THE WORLD

Now is an exciting time for your business to sell to Mongolia. The Department for Business and Trade (DBT) provides a wide range of free support, wherever you are on your exporting journey.

Find out more about Mongolia and how DBT can support you at [great.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/great.gov.uk)





# THE MONGOLIAN BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

By Chairman John Grogan

The first British diplomat who visited Ulaanbaatar in the 1960's remarked that the people of Mongolia had a love of freedom and a capacity to make friendships. It was a remarkable statement to make about a nation that had been under Communist influence for decades but perhaps provides a clue as to why, in the 1990's, democracy was established quite quickly unlike many other countries in Central Asia. The fact that the UK was the first western country to recognise Mongolia in 1963 is still often remarked upon. British soft power is important for starting conversations and making connections in Mongolia, whether that be through football, the BBC or music. A statue of The Beatles stands proudly outside the main department store and there are thousands of members of supporters clubs of football teams like Liverpool and Chelsea.

Ever since the conquests of Chinngis Khan, Mongolia has always had one eye on Europe and many young people are fluent in English. At a diplomatic level, Mongolian foreign policy is characterised by the long standing 'Third Neighbour' policy. Landlocked between two politically, militarily and economically powerful nations, Mongolia is keen to make friends in Europe and elsewhere. The European Bank of Reconstruction and Development has played a key role in the development of the economy.

Britain is a long-standing trading partner of Mongolia, with cashmere being exported to companies in the North of England and Scotland for many decades. Over the last 20 years, British investment in the mining sector and exports of mining equipment to this sector have become important. Rio Tinto's flagship mine Oyu Tolgoi produces copper for the renewable sector and provides opportunities for young Mongolians to prosper. Rare earths abound, and one day Mongolian wind and solar power may be exported across an Asian grid. Cambridge University and the London Stock Exchange have also developed partnerships in Mongolia since the turn of the millennium.

A whole range of British entrepreneurs have been active in legal and professional services, education, architecture and logistics. The Mongolian Government intends to build a brand-new city and there is scope for the City of London to advise on the possibility of setting up an International Financial Centre in this new urban centre. The UK's Department of Trade have local staff in the British Embassy in Ulaanbaatar whose knowledge of the market is unrivalled. Frequent incoming trade missions to the UK made up of Mongolian companies seeking suppliers are organised. The Mongolian British Chamber of Commerce, founded in 2010, stages several seminars a year on the theme of 'Doing Business in Mongolia.' To mark the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations the Seventh Mongolian London Business Forum will take place in November. Recently an independent sister chamber (Britcham) has been established in Ulaanbaatar. Undoubtedly the most positive boost to the development of mutual business relations since the lockdown has been the Government of Mongolia's far-sighted decision to offer visa travel to UK citizens for up to 30 days.

Mongolia has a long-term commitment to both the market economy and democracy. With growth this year expected to be around six per cent, now might be the time to look at what the land of the blue sky has to offer the world.

**The most positive boost to the development of mutual business relations since the lockdown has been the Government of Mongolia's far-sighted decision to offer visa travel to UK citizens for up to 30 days.**



The Tuul River running  
through Ulaanbaatar







# MONGOLIA'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND REFORMS: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW

By Aidan Hartley

The world is currently facing a multitude of challenges, including the economic repercussions of the post-pandemic recession, an energy crisis, rising living costs, and the looming spectre of climate change. Mongolia, like many other nations, is not immune to these difficulties. The Government of Mongolia is actively working to overcome the challenges with the aim of minimising their impact, while contributing to the efforts of international community.

"In this endeavour, both the people and the government of Mongolia remain unwavering in their commitment to parliamentary democracy and the rule of law principles chosen three decades ago," says Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan. This commitment is evident through wide-ranging constitutional and economic reforms aimed at enhancing the country's democratic governance and effective wealth management.

"Sometimes these reforms are like poking yourself in the eyes, but they need to be done," says Bulgantuya Khurelbaatar, Minister of Labour and Social Protection.

The mining sector continues to play a dominant role in Mongolia's economy, accounting for nearly three-quarters of economic activity. The Government is actively working to shift its focus towards economic diversification, with a primary aim of bolstering other key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, green energy, and tourism.

Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai was the one to lead the working group to develop Mongolia's 'Vision-2050' long-term development policy when he was serving as Minister of Mongolia, Head of the Cabinet Secretariat. 'Vision-2050' is Mongolia's home-grown development model that brings together the history of the Mongol Empire, nomadic culture and unique national characteristics with international, modern development ideology. The main objective is to make big changes in the economic structure by reducing the overdependence on mining and transition from a consumer economy into a manufacturing and export economy. It also set an ambitious goal to transform Mongolia into a nation known for its fully functional and people-centric public e-services, upholding human rights, ensuring fair justice, and maintaining zero tolerance for corruption.

To support 'Vision-2050,' Mongolia is implementing a strategy called the 'New Recovery Policy' (NRP), which identifies six bottlenecks hindering economic growth. "The NRP is tailored towards improving transport and logistics, ports, energy, the manufacturing industry, green development, addressing the urban rural divide and good governance," says Dulguun Baasandavaa, a Harvard-educated economist and CEO of a team advising the government on the NRP.

"We firmly believe that safeguarding our democracy requires meeting the needs of our people and enhancing their well-being through sustainable economic growth and development. As our President aptly put it, having secured our political independence, the time has come to secure our economic independence," says the Deputy Prime Minister. This is precisely why the Government of Mongolia has adopted the 'New Recovery Policy'.

## The 'New Recovery Policy' (NRP) sub-strategies



**Firstly**, the 'Port Revival' strategy seeks to boost the capacity of Mongolia's dry ports, border ports, and airports, while also enhancing the state's transport infrastructure by expanding railway and highway networks.



**Secondly**, the 'Energy Revival' strategy aims to reduce dependency on coal by developing renewable energy sources, such as hydropower, wind, and solar plants. There are also plans to build thermal power stations, pipelines, and heat transmission facilities in rural areas.



**Thirdly**, the 'Industrial Revival' strategy is geared towards establishing more value-added mining and agricultural facilities, alongside the development of science-based industries in digital innovation, artificial intelligence, and blockchain.



**Fourthly**, the 'Urban and Rural Revival' strategy aims to alleviate urbanisation pressures in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, while fostering the development of provinces as independent cities.



**Fifthly**, the 'Green Growth Revival' strategy targets improvements in fresh water supply, combatting desertification and the expansion of national forests. Mongolia is committed to increasing forest cover by nine per cent by 2030, as part of the 'One Billion Tree' initiative.



**Sixthly**, the 'Public Sector Efficiency' strategy strives to enhance government efficiency through digitalising services, promoting innovation, and outsourcing certain public services to private companies.

The full implementation of these policies is projected to double Mongolia's GDP and energy capacity, while tripling the capacity of dry ports, border ports and airports by 2025. To achieve this, projects with considerable investment are planned to be implemented in all areas. Some of the mega projects have already been under implementation, such as the oil refinery project with a soft loan from India and the 'Erdeneburen' 90MW hydropower plant project with a soft loan from China. To attract more foreign direct investment, the Government is working to establish favourable conditions by improving taxation and the legal framework.

"These policies and projects present compelling opportunities for further development of Mongolia-UK trade and investment relations, building upon the UK's recent launch of the Developing Countries Trading Scheme," says Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan. "Specifically, the policy's plan to expand Mongolia's Free Economic Zones provides the UK with opportunities to invest in our emerging cities."

The government is raising capital for the Khushig Valley Free Economic Zone – billed as a green satellite city located around the new international airport outside the capital city Ulaanbaatar.

The Government of Mongolia also has ambitious plans to establish its own international financial centre. The UK's expertise in establishing financial sectors and judicial practices for settling international disputes will be of paramount importance in this endeavour.

Mongolians commonly acknowledge that the key to the successful implementation of these strategies lies in strengthening democratic institutions, improving legal environment, and combating corruption.

The Government has designated 2023-24 as the years to combat corruption. Mongolia is actively working to address the root causes of corruption through comprehensive reforms and has publicly introduced a new anti-corruption strategy.

According to Deputy Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Solongoo Bayarsaikhan, Mongolia is implementing a five-pillar operational plan to tackle corruption. These include asset recovery from foreign territories, protection of whistle-blowers, the extradition of fugitive suspects from overseas, open governance through digitalisation and public service accountability in the civil service.

## '5Sh' strategies to fight against corruption

➤ 'Whistle' (*Shugel*) includes measures to protect those who report corruption and malfeasance, organising a movement to support disclosures, and fostering a zero-tolerance attitude towards corruption in society.

➤ 'Broom' (*Shuur*) is designed to combat situations where the consumption of politicians exceeds their legal income and to halt the appointment of individuals to high positions based on personal connections.

➤ 'Bird' (*Shuvuu*) involves the extradition of corrupt officials who have fled abroad, cooperation with law enforcement agencies in foreign countries, and the protection of foreign investors.

➤ 'Return' (*Shiljuulen avah*) aims to identify and repatriate stolen funds hidden in offshore zones and foreign countries, creating a fund of returned funds with transparent public oversight.

➤ 'Glass' (*Shil*) will ensure transparency in the activities of state organisations, eliminate bureaucracy, enable public oversight of state-owned companies, foster the formation of qualified management teams, and create an ethical and fair competitive environment.

Mongolia's crackdown on corruption has included the arrest of officials linked to massive theft of coal revenues, which sparked protests in Ulaanbaatar last year. A dozen suspects are awaiting trial. Another scandal was exposed this year in which officials in a higher education bursary fund were found to have favoured politically connected families for many years.

"I would say this is a political process and our people deserve more transparency. Fighting grand corruption is an uphill battle to disrupt long-established networks so that we can deliver on our potential. But if we can make our system more accountable then I'm cautiously optimistic that, under this current Prime Minister, we can do the right thing," says Deputy Justice Minister Solongoo.

To enhance democratic governance, Mongolia Parliament recently passed a significant constitutional reform set to take effect in 2024. This reform increases the number of MPs from 76 to 126 and transitions the electoral system to a hybrid of majority and proportional representation. Furthermore, amendments to the Law on Political Parties have been made, with an emphasis on gender equity and transparent financing of political parties.

An impressive focus of reforms has been through digitalisation and the expansion of the e-Mongolia platform which offers over 1,000 government services online. The initiative is the main focus of Uchral Nyam-Osor, Minister of Digital Development and Communications.

Since Uchral was elected as an MP in 2016, and then appointed to head his new ministry last year, he has pursued digital reforms with astonishing energy. In all, 120 items of legislation have, or are being, reformed. Together with the current Prime Minister, he engaged the support of Estonia in advancing the country's e-policy.

"Digitalisation is a good way to fight against corruption. This will be positive especially for private business and investors who want to enter Mongolia," says Uchral. Red tape is also being tackled, with the number and access to licences being streamlined.

Fibre-optic cables are extending out through the country's 21 provinces, or aimags, and Starlink is already up and running, while in June Prime Minister L Oyun-Erdene held an online meeting with SpaceX and Tesla's Elon Musk to discuss establishing an electric vehicle industry in copper-rich Mongolia. Thousands of Google-certified public servants are being trained. Mongolia is working with the World Bank on improving ICT. Mongolia and France are co-operating on a plan to launch a 'Chinggis' national satellite. Ulaanbaatar is working with Huawei to qualify 1,000 engineers over the next decade.





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"Digital literacy is our big vision," says Uchral. "We want to expand this to all people in Mongolia, wherever they are, including the elderly and disabled." ICT is now taught from primary school upwards – alongside English, which Uchral views as being as important as digital skills – while university students are being encouraged to study IT with promises of jobs at home and abroad.

Mongolia's greenhouse emissions account for only 0.05 per cent of world totals, yet the country's high-altitude aridity has made climate change bite hard. The government has responded by starting a nationwide campaign to plant one billion trees by 2030.

"We are also working towards expanding our renewable energy capacity, phasing out coal usage gradually, recycling waste, as well as developing green technology," says Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan.

He adds: "Increasing our renewable

energy sources will help us to reduce our energy dependency and diversify our economy. Our untapped resources of rare earth elements that are crucial to renewable energy and green technologies could also benefit other countries, including the UK, to diversify their supply chains and avoid future tensions over critical minerals."

Improving education for Mongolia's young people and growth of the tourism sector are two themes that are constantly emphasised by government leaders.

Over 1,000km of railways have been built in the last three years, there are now 20 air destinations and two new cities are being constructed to reduce the pressure on the capital Ulaanbaatar.

"The government is making progress as fast as the population can take it," says Dulguun. He argues that the skills and capacity of state services are the most critically important factors in Mongolia's economic progress. "Why design policies if we're not able to implement them?

That's why we are trying our best to increase capability."

According to Uchral, "In the next few years things will move very fast."

Bulgantuya says "We recognise we don't have enough experience and we need foreign expertise to build capacity in this – but the country is a democracy. We make mistakes but we are on the right path."

"We have a lot of problems to fix, but we never had so much material wealth as we do now," says Jargalsaikhan Dambadarjaa, journalist at the *De Facto Gazette*. "In a market economy you have winners and losers and some recall the times when we were poor but shared everything. This society has all the elements of a middle-income country and for a transitional economy this is quite normal stuff. The good thing is we can discuss all this openly."

All these aspirations and endeavours exemplify Mongolia's steadfast commitment to fostering economic development, reinforcing democratic values, and embracing the role of a responsible global citizen. Within the Asia-Pacific region, Mongolia enjoys a prime strategic geographical location.

The centre of Mongolia's capital city, Ulaanbaatar © Gan-Ulzii Gonchig





# MONGOLIA'S RESILIENT FOREIGN POLICY IN A SHIFTING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

By Aidan Hartley

The global pandemic and ensuing geopolitical issues have strengthened the significance of Mongolia's peaceful, open, independent, and multi-pillared foreign policy. The essence of Mongolia's foreign policy strategy resides in pursuing soft power in a delicate balancing act that carries profound implications.

Given the country's location, it is only natural for Mongolia to attach its highest priorities to fostering all-round relationships with its only two giant neighbours – Russia and China. Given that Mongolia's economic development is closely intertwined with the two countries, balancing these relationships along with its engagements with other countries is crucial for securing its national interests.

As Mongolia disengaged from the Soviet Union in 1990, a visiting US Secretary of State, James Baker, expressed his support for the country's 'Third Neighbour Policy' (TNP), as it moved towards democracy and market reforms while exploring opportunities beyond its geographical confines.

For Mongolia's policy makers, the concept has been deployed ever since in its drive for a balanced foreign policy.

"The term 'Third Neighbour' does not refer to any single country – It is any country that strongly advocates Mongolia's development and democracy," says Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh.

Long before the end of the Cold War, the United Kingdom was the first great power to establish diplomatic relations with Ulaanbaatar in 1963, some 18 years after Mongolia's sovereignty was guaranteed at the Yalta Conference.

"We share historic relations with Britain as the first Western country to recognise the restoration of our independence" says Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan.

"The windows of Russia are so few and generally so tightly sealed that we should make full use of any which gives the smallest glimpse of the interior," wrote one British intelligence officer in support of establishing the British



A view looking at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar (the brown building in the centre) © Gan-Ulzii Gonchig





Embassy in Mongolia after World War Two. When the first Ambassador Terence Garvey arrived, he expected the Mongolians might wish to inhibit his movements, but instead he found his hosts anxious to welcome him to the most sparsely inhabited nation on earth. "The limitations on movement in Mongolia are not man-made, but physical. Travel means driving across grasslands of steppe and plateau, where there are few roads, signposts or maps," he recorded in a cable, adding ominously, "wolves are common, and no camper goes unarmed."

According to Byambasuren Guntevsuren, Director of Policy and Planning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mongolia's TNP "is not just about politics. It allows us to diversify our economy, foreign trade and investment and promote Mongolia's development with other countries with which we share common values, as well as international organisations such as the United Nations. We also tell our neighbours that the TNP is not aimed against them. As it is outlined in the bilateral documents with Russia and China, we have agreed with both neighbours to mutually accept our respective development paths."

The Third Neighbour Policy is not a one-way street. Recent high-level visits demonstrate the mutual appreciation and value that Mongolia's Third Neighbours place on their relations with Mongolia.

Visits by leaders from Pope Francis to French President Emmanuel Macron this year pay tribute to Mongolia's status as a free and democratic country, where there is freedom of speech and assembly and worship.

Mongolia's President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh visited Paris in October. The two countries are cooperating on space technology, uranium mining and in Nantes, a historical exhibition on Chinggis Khaan is open until May 5, 2024. In August, Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai visited Washington. The two countries expressed their commitment to expand their strategic partnership with a focus on building economic resilience, promoting democratic principles and institutions, and strengthening security cooperation.

The President of Mongolia attended the coronation of King Charles III in London, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK.

A centrepiece of events to mark the 60th anniversary of UK-Mongolia relations is

*The Mongol Khan* opening at the London Coliseum on 17 November. This theatrical production not only celebrates the close relations between two nations but also embraces the wealth of rich cultural heritage shared by both countries. "It's the first Mongolian play ever to be staged in London," says the Director Hero Baatar. "It shows the importance of the cultural aspect of our engagement with countries."

On the economic front, FTSE 100-listed Rio Tinto represents half of all foreign investment in Mongolia and other UK companies in mining, energy and other sectors are establishing themselves there.

Though trade between the two countries was only £203 million in the last year, businesses can benefit from UK export finance and more transparent investment rules.

Other themes of the Third Neighbour strategy place Mongolia at the heart of very important current geopolitics.

"Mongolia is strongly committed to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to achieving nuclear disarmament," says the foreign minister. "To this end, we declared our territory as a single-state nuclear weapon free zone in 1992 and acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2021."

North Korea (the DPRK) is another key issue for the region. According to the Foreign Minister: "Mongolia and DPRK share a long-standing history of diplomatic ties and regular exchanges. That is why Mongolia, which has cordial relations with all countries in the region, is one of the most suitable venues for hosting talks that involve North Korea. This is even more important as countries in the region don't always see eye-to-eye. The 'Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security' has become Mongolia's most notable forum focused on building confidence among regional players."

A central plank of Mongolia's multilateral relations is the United Nations. It is not a member of any security pact, though it contributed troops to the NATO operation in Afghanistan – and since 2002, it has deployed 20,000 of its forces, including female officers, to UN peacekeeping operations in countries such as South Sudan and Western Sahara. Marking the 20th anniversary of the first deployment of Mongolian peacekeepers to UN Peacekeeping operations, Mongolia hosted an international conference of Female Peacekeepers in Ulaanbaatar in 2022.

In terms of its partnerships, Mongolia sees itself not aligned with the West but, aside from sharing its democratic values, it positions itself as a Northeast Asian state that wants partnerships with Japan, Korea, Europe, the US and India. "It's really about investment," Byambasuren says. In this regard, Ulaanbaatar takes its relations with Britain very seriously.

"We appreciate the UK's efforts to work with the private sector and particularly to increase the most important thing, which is ties between our people," says Deputy PM Amarsaikhan.

In Mongolia, however, some frustration is expressed at the slowness of western investment.

A surge of interest in critical minerals and rare earth elements has focused western economies on more strategic thinking. In June, Mongolia and the US agreed to cooperate on the development of rare earths and critical metals, including copper.

Currently 86 per cent of trade is with China – where all its coal and copper exports go. "The largest market in the world is next to us, but we can still benefit from other investors bringing the latest technologies who then sell to China," says Byambasuren.

Until last January, the 4,700km border with China had been closed to human traffic for three years. Sanctions against Russia led to the suspension of transit trade across Russia's land routes, the reduction of flights out of Ulaanbaatar, as well as the cancellation of revenue-earning overflights. At one point, Mongolia faced a crisis in paying for fuels and other trade goods when Russia's access to SWIFT was blocked. However, a system was eventually established, albeit one that continues to operate using US dollars.

As the duration of the ongoing international crisis and conflicts remains uncertain, Mongolia remains committed to upholding the core principles of its foreign policy. In the years ahead, the Government of Mongolia is dedicated to prioritising these fundamental principles, with a focus on nurturing expanded trade and economic cooperation, extending Mongolia's diplomatic footprint globally, and giving special attention to bolstering balanced cooperation with its neighbouring countries as well as the Third Neighbours, including the UK.



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# EXPLORING MONGOLIA: UNLOCKING THE PATH TO FREEDOM

By Aidan Hartley

In Mongolia's Gobi Desert, there's a rock topped with Buddhist prayer flags that is known to local nomads as 'Crying Hill' because they remember how a group of Swedish equestrian tourists broke down and wept when they saw the view.

"They were so struck by the beauty of the place," says Ishbaljir Battulga, who arranged their trek in Mongolia.

He says, "I tell people, when you come to Mongolia you will be a long way from home, but you will sleep comfortably and eat well. Once we've delivered those two things then everything else that you will see will be unique and different."

"Europe has its cathedrals and art galleries, but we have nature, more wildlife than people, ancient stones, Chinggis Khan, our history of empires and our unique living culture as our monuments," says Minister of Environment and Tourism Bat-Erdene Bat-Ulzii.

For the British, who have historically seen themselves as intrepid travellers and keen to get off the beaten track, surprisingly few visit Mongolia – just 1,430 last year.

Ulaanbaatar is a long way from London, but there are many flight connections. Mongolia and the UK have also agreed to renew their bilateral air services agreement that will pave the way to operate direct flights between the two countries. Mongolia also signed an 'Open Skies' agreement with the US during Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene's visit to Washington in August. Direct flights between Mongolia and the US are expected to commence in 2024.

Citizens from the UK and 60 other countries can visit visa-free until 2025. Mongolia has 47 diplomatic missions worldwide and visas have been streamlined either through its embassies or via the [www.evisa.mn](http://www.evisa.mn) electronic application system. There are scores of tour companies, a range of hotels for all tastes and budgets, and a multitude of things to do.



**Europe has its cathedrals and art galleries, but we have nature, more wildlife than people, ancient stones, Chinggis Khaan, our history of empires and our unique living culture as our monuments**

Under the current 'Welcome to Mongolia' campaign, the country wants to attract a million tourists annually and ultimately have tourists outstrip the local population of 3.4 million.

Still, Tourism Minister Bat-Erdene says, Mongolia is so vast and sparsely populated visitors will barely notice. "You can go out in the middle of nowhere for a month and not see anybody."

In 2023, tourism numbers are approaching their historic peak seen in the year before Covid, when tourism earned US\$600 million and ranked third after mining and agriculture as the most important industry.

There's a visible change in the numbers of travellers coming to Mongolia, liberated at last from the travel restrictions that lingered

from the pandemic, together with the international disruptions that followed the onset of the Ukraine conflict.

Tourism is a vital aspect of conserving Mongolia's wildlife and natural beauty – and it also boosts the income of the nomadic herders.

"Visitors want to see Mongolian culture, meet people and share their lives," says Culture Minister Nomin Chinbat.

With only 10,000km of paved roads and a limited but growing domestic flight network in a country more than six times the size of the UK, you cannot help but go off road.

But that is exactly what many tourists, particularly at the higher end of the market, are looking for as they head out to the taiga, steppe, lakes or desert to ride horses, camp, hike, bird watch or view wildlife, visit monasteries or deer stones and dinosaur excavations.

"Our protected areas are 21 per cent of the country – equal to Poland in size – and we're going to increase that to 30 per cent and this is helped by tourism," says Bat-Erdene. "Our nomadic culture is about keeping livestock, but these days it's also a way of life that attracts people from around the world."

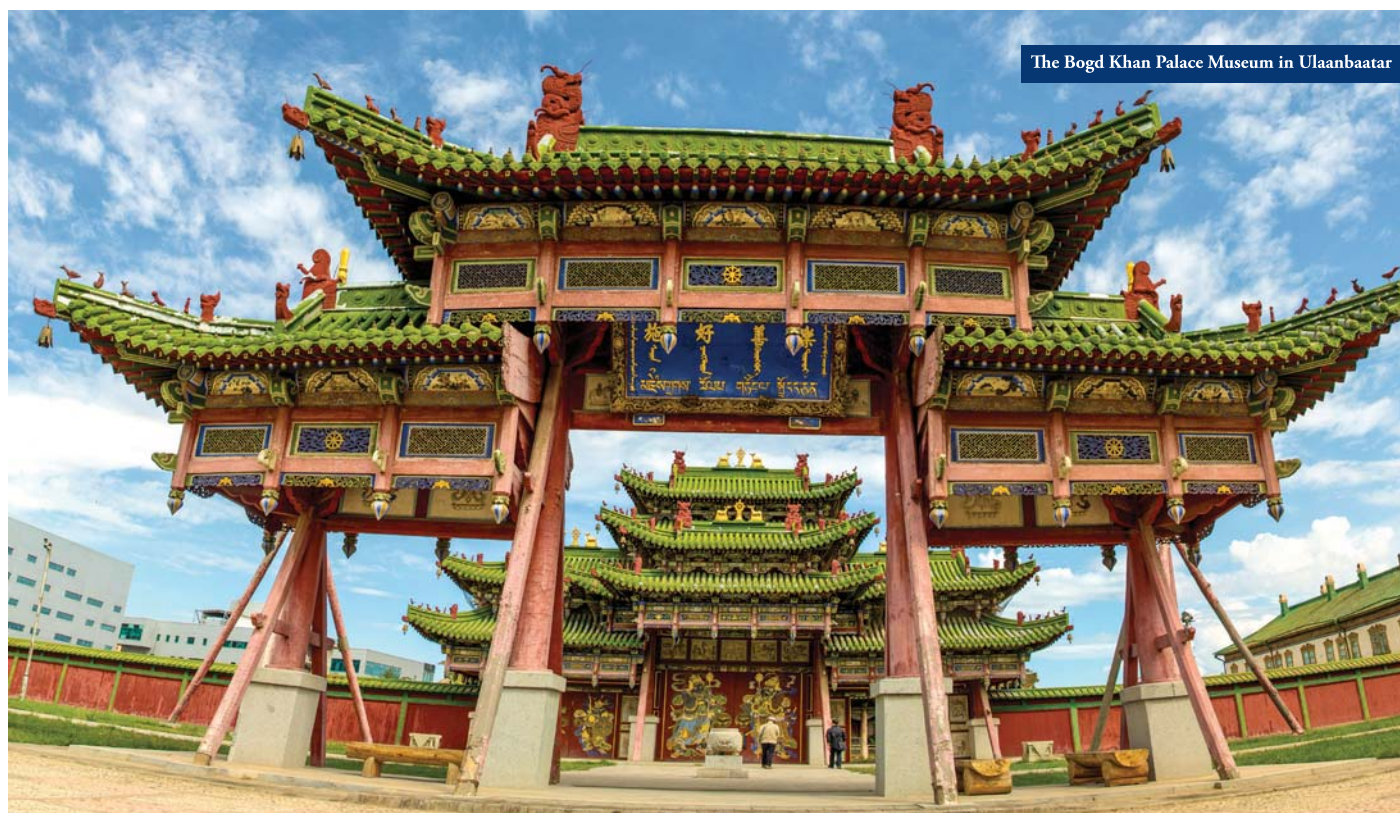
Tourism is Mongolia's third most important foreign exchange earner. The country wants to get it right because a healthy tourism sector will help sustain both culture and biodiversity.

Other incentives to develop the business include legislation to spare tourists of VAT and a five-year income tax holiday for British and other tourism companies investing in the country.

Outside the summer months the temperature can become Arctic, but there are other advantages – any visitor will tell you how safe they feel in a country with such a low crime rate.

Safety combines with a sense of adventure in the wide-open spaces, which attracts TV broadcasters producing celebrity reality shows, polo (the sport that once trained the Mongol cavalry), mountaineering and off-road safaris.

Mongolians, who tend to be self-critical, say they are working to deliver tourism services more efficiently. But people in the industry are polite, hospitable and professional. People are remarkably friendly, the cuisine is good and so is the shopping – especially for cashmere – and there are many sites to see, such as Ulaanbaatar's new Chinggis Khaan Museum, which is world class.



The Bogd Khan Palace Museum in Ulaanbaatar

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# CULTIVATING MONGOLIA'S CREATIVE INDUSTRY: A PATH TO INNOVATION AND GROWTH

By Aidan Hartley

Mongolia takes immense pride in its rich cultural heritage, deeply rooted in nomadic traditions in which people and their beloved livestock live in harmony with nature. This cultural legacy includes physical treasures, such as historical artefacts, as well as arts and music, dance and rituals. The Arts of the Mongols have always drawn inspiration from the breathtaking landscapes and the wish to live in harmony with the natural world. Mongolia's culture is unique in this busy modern world of ours.

"At heart we are nomads," says Nomin Chinbat, Minister of the newly-created Ministry of Culture. "Our history – which is remarkable, in a vast and beautiful land we must preserve – makes us versatile, adaptable and resilient."

A glimpse of this heritage is on display at the world-class Chinggis Khaan National Museum in Ulaanbaatar, recently opened. However, a significant portion of it is intangible, passed down from generation to generation, actively contributing to the formation of its national identity.

Some of Mongolia's intangible heritage is being inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list. These include *Urtiin Duu* (traditional folk long songs), *Morin Khuur* (a traditional horsehead-shaped musical instrument), *Khoomei* (throat singing), *Mongol Biyelgee* (folk dance), *Naadam* (a Mongolian traditional festival), falconry, the 'coaxing ritual' in which a mother camel is encouraged to accept a new-born calf and some other traditions.

Protecting this intangible heritage, considered a resource to attract tourists and stimulate the creative industries, is one of the priorities for the Ministry of Culture.

This endeavour aligns with the Government's policy to establish the creative industry as a distinct and independent economic sector, as outlined in its 'Vision-2050' long-term development policy. It emphasises the cultivation, production, and dissemination of cultural and artistic products and services, driven by creativity, innovation, and the protection of intellectual property.

Mongolia's cultural industry employs about 30,000 people and currently contributes around 1.4 per cent of GDP, with expectations of reaching 4 per cent over the next three years if the Government's policies are successfully implemented.

A spectacular theatre production, *The Mongol Khan*, opens at the London Coliseum on 17 November, and can be seen as one example of the creative industry development. This first ever Anglo-Mongolian production promises an epic spectacle of "greed, deceit, betrayal – an empire on the brink of collapse," involving a "haunting original score, dance and puppetry inspired by the nomadic traditions of the steppe..."

Mongolian theatrical production *The Mongol Khan* to be staged on London Coliseum from 17 November to 2 December 2023.



Mongolian metal rock band, The HU, touring in the UK and Europe in 2023







МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИ  
UK - MONGOLIA  
1963-2023



Mongolian operatic baritone Amartuvshin Enkhbat, portraying the role of *Rigoletto* at the Royal Opera House in London, 2023.

“It is a political drama about love – love of mothers, couples, affairs, a political leader’s love of the people. It’s a Mongolian rhapsody,” says the production’s director Hero Baatar. He describes it as a drama set in the ancient Hunnu realm 2,000 years ago, which serves as a parable about modern politics. He hopes that it will be “interesting for British audiences to explore Mongolia’s beautiful heritage, through music, dance, acrobatics, costumes, puppetry – as well as the plot...”

There are also many other cultural events being showcased around the world. In September, the Mongolian Morin Khuur Ensemble performed at the Sydney Opera House – a unique mix of *Urtiin Duu*, also known as ‘long song,’ with its rising and falling melody, *Morin Khuur*, or horsehead fiddle, *Khoomei* throat singing and even some Western classical opera. The ensemble also performed at Château de Versailles on 12 October during the state visit of Mongolia’s President Ukhnaa Khurelsukh to France. On 14 October, *Chinggis Khaan: How Mongols Changed the World* opened at the History Museum in the French town of Nantes, and remains open until 5 May 2024. At this major exhibition, items from Mongolia’s national collection tell the story of the vast Mongol Empire, which from the thirteenth century transformed the world through conquest and then hundreds of years of trade, science and the arts under the ‘Pax Mongolica.’

In the world of rock n’ roll, ‘The HU’ is a Mongolia folk metal band that has won

widespread international recognition and a fan base for its unique music played on traditional instruments blended with contemporary pop. Their incorporation of traditional throat singing, the horsehead fiddle, other native instruments, and distinctive outfits sets them apart on the world stage.

Various cultural festivals held across Mongolia play an important role in the development of the creative industry as well. Each July, as the weather reaches its prime, Mongolians come together to celebrate the Naadam Festival, also known as ‘The Three Games of Men,’ featuring national championships in Mongolian traditional sports, including wrestling, archery, and horseracing.

In addition, The Nomadic Mongolia Festival in August, a recent biennial tradition, offers a splendid showcase for over 250 different types of cultural heritages, including ethnic sports, art, music, performances, gastronomy, arts and crafts. These festivals serve as an instrument for preserving cultural heritage across generations and simultaneously contribute to the economy by drawing foreign investors to experience the events.

Another focus of the government is the film industry. In recent years, international content producers have created compelling works that delve into Mongolia’s history, traditions, heritage, and way of life. Notable examples include Netflix’s *Marco Polo* series, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and *Burn Your Maps*.

The Government has taken steps to establish a conducive legal environment for both international and local content creators. Notably, a new Film Development Law has been adopted, offering incentives for international filmmakers to shoot in Mongolia, such as a 30 per cent rebate on post-production costs.

Mongolia invites UK production companies to the country. “Our two countries have a similar background with strong historical and cultural foundations. We have recently opened a recording studio in Mongolia, which is a collaboration with a UK company and investor in Mongolia. So British investors are coming to Mongolia, and the Mongolian private sector is coming to the UK to get input from their expertise, which will increase our capacity faster,” says Nomin, Minister for Culture. Prominent British production companies are also collaborating with a Mongolian production company ‘Hero Entertainment’ on the project to bring *The Mongol Khan* play to the West End.

Mongolian artists have made a notable entrance onto the international stage through collaborations with British institutions. As an example, the world-renowned Mongolian baritone, Amartuvshin Enkhbat, is currently portraying the role of Rigoletto in the production of *Rigoletto* at the Royal Opera House in London.

**The Nomadic Mongolia Festival in August, a recent biennial tradition, offers a splendid showcase for over 250 different types of cultural heritage, including ethnic sports, art, music, performances, gastronomy, arts and crafts.**

Additionally, young Mongolian actresses like Gana Bayarsaikhan and Bayartsetseg Altangerel, educated in the UK, are pioneering the way for numerous young Mongolian women and girls to participate in Hollywood films.

Traditions hold strong in Mongolia, where half the tiny population of 3.4 million lives scattered across the steppe and desert of this very beautiful country, tending great herds of livestock. Yet what’s most striking about modern Mongolia is that, while cherishing heritage, the pace of modernisation is accelerating.



# MONGOLIA'S EMERGENCE AS A KEY PLAYER IN CRITICAL MINERAL SUPPLY CHAINS

By Aidan Hartley

As the global competition to secure critical mineral supply chains intensifies, Mongolia is swiftly emerging as a highly promising and profitable destination for mining opportunities. Mongolia boasts abundant mining resources, encompassing over 1,000 mineral deposits comprising around 80 types. Notably, it is rich in critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, graphite, magnesium, tungsten and rare earth elements, which are essential components in various green technologies from electric vehicles to wind turbines. Moreover, Mongolia possesses substantial reserves of other strategic mineral resources, including copper, gold, coal, iron ore, uranium, fluor spar, molybdenum, zinc, crude oil and more. With its unique position as one of the few functioning democracies with a free market economy in the region, Mongolia stands out prominently among its regional competitors.

**It is rich in critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, graphite, magnesium, tungsten and rare earth elements, which are essential components in various green technologies from electric vehicles to wind turbines.**

The recent launch of underground production at Oyu Tolgoi (Turquoise Hill), one of the world's largest known copper and gold deposits, marks a watershed moment for Mongolia's mining sector. Located in Mongolia's southern Gobi Desert, this mine is a joint venture, with the Government of Mongolia holding a 34 per cent ownership

stake, and Anglo-Australian company Rio Tinto possessing the remaining 66 per cent. With a total investment of US\$7 billion, its annual production is expected to peak at 500,000 tonnes of copper by 2028, solidifying its position as the world's fourth largest copper mine.

The Oyu Tolgoi project is seen as the first substantial investment from Mongolia's 'Third Neighbours,' which include the UK. Consequently, the Government of Mongolia has made every effort to resolve its legitimate disputes with Rio Tinto, demonstrating that its 'Third Neighbours Policy' can indeed contribute to the country's economic prosperity. This effort not only reinforces Mongolia's appeal to potential investors but also underscores its reliability as an investment destination, a fact closely monitored by other interested parties.

The next major mining deal involving its Third Neighbours is to be the world-class Zuuvch Ovoo uranium mine deposit, situated in the south-eastern part of Mongolia. This project is being developed by Badrakh Energy LLC, a joint venture between Mongolian state-owned company MonAtom and French state-owned conglomerate Orano Mining. The Zuuvch-Ovoo uranium deposit, initially discovered in 2010 alongside the nearby Dulaan Uul uranium deposit, represents over 50 per cent of Mongolia's official uranium resources, ranking it twelfth in the world. The production is projected to begin in 2029/30, with an annual output of 2,500 tonnes of uranium oxide concentrate. It will be a US\$1.6 billion investment project, with an expected cash flow to the Government of at least US\$3.4 billion at the current spot price of uranium oxide.



During Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa's state visit to France in October, a pivotal Protocol outlining the development and operation of the Zuuvch-Ovoo uranium mine deposit was signed in Paris. This visit closely followed French President Emmanuel Macron's state visit to Mongolia in May. The Protocol serves as the foundation for an investment agreement that is expected to be finalised by the end of the year. In light of the anticipated surge in global demand for uranium in the coming decades, this Franco-Mongolian joint project positions Mongolia as a strategic player and a substantial contributor to the worldwide transition towards clean energy.

According to Batjargal Gunaajav, Deputy General Manager of the Badrakh Energy LLC, there is still a degree of fear about uranium and the nuclear industry, especially among the general population in Mongolia, but the pilot studies completed in 2022 demonstrated that the company's ISR (in-situ recovery) extraction technique can be implemented without harm to the environment or surrounding communities.

At present, coal continues to be Mongolia's primary export, with an annual value of US\$6.5 billion, a significant portion of which is coking coal sold to China. This underscores the mining sector's crucial role, representing over 80 per cent of all the economy's exports.

Mongolia's largest known coal deposit 'Tavan Tolgoi' (Five Hill) is under the administration of the Mongolian state-owned company Erdenes Tavan Tolgoi JSC. This deposit ranks among the world's largest untapped sources of coking and thermal coal, boasting a total estimated resource of 6.4 billion tonnes, with one quarter of it being high-quality coking coal. As of the third quarter of 2023, Erdenes Tavan Tolgoi JSC exported 29.5 million tonnes of coal, valued at US\$2.9 billion.

In its quest to shift towards cleaner energy sources while capitalising on its rich resources, Mongolia has been exploring the potential of Coal Seam Gas (CSG) extraction. TMK Energy Limited, a company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, has invested in a project known as 'The Gurvantes XXXV', aimed at exploring CSG in the southern Gobi of Mongolia, covering approximately 8,400 square km. It represents a pilot project to convert coal-seam gas into liquefied natural gas (LNG). This innovative approach provides energy equivalent to coal but with nearly half the carbon dioxide emissions.

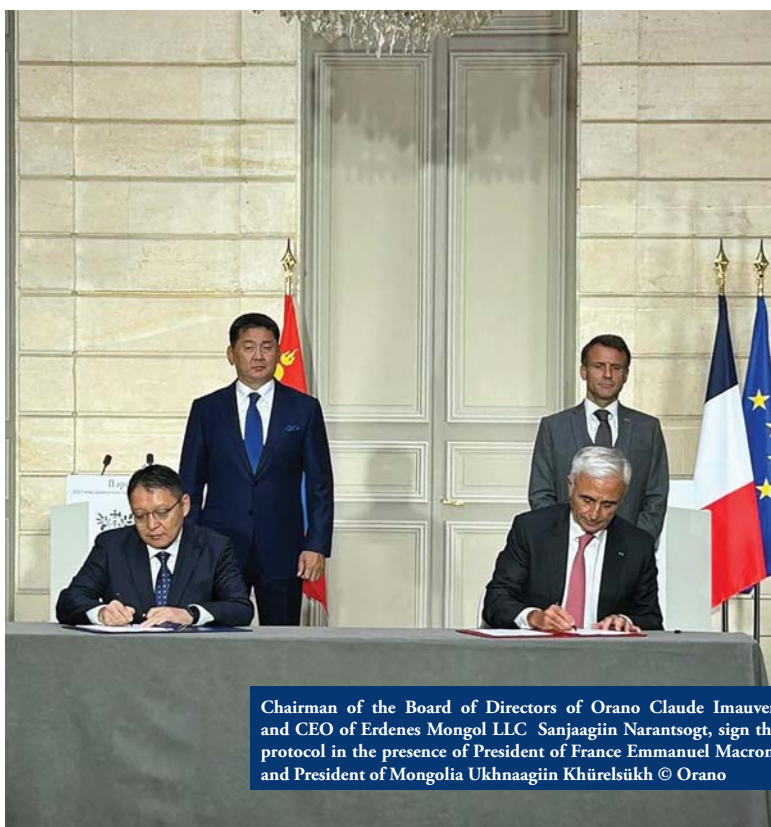
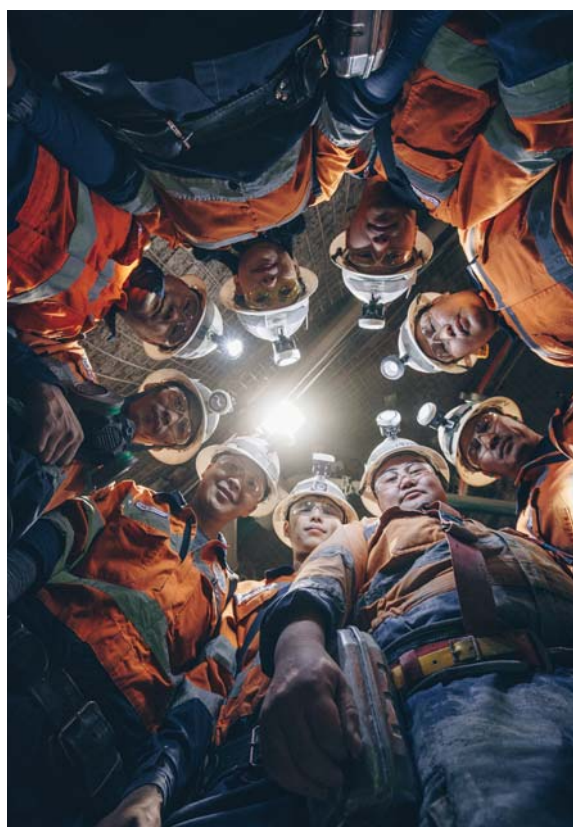
Mega projects like Oyu Tolgoi, Tavan Tolgoi, and Zuuvch-Ovoo showcase Mongolia's commitment to ESG (environmental, social, and corporate governance), with high safety standards, good labour conditions, the promotion of women, community and environmental projects.

The substantial investments by London Stock Exchange-listed companies demonstrate how Mongolia is seen as a reliable partner to world-class foreign investors.

"Mongolia has the mineral resources for several more Oyu Tolgois, and we have the largest market in the world right next door in China," says Byambasuren Guntevsuren, Director of Policy and Planning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

To achieve a global net-zero target by 2050, the International Energy Agency (IEA) projects that the demand for critical minerals in 2040 will be six times higher than it is at present.

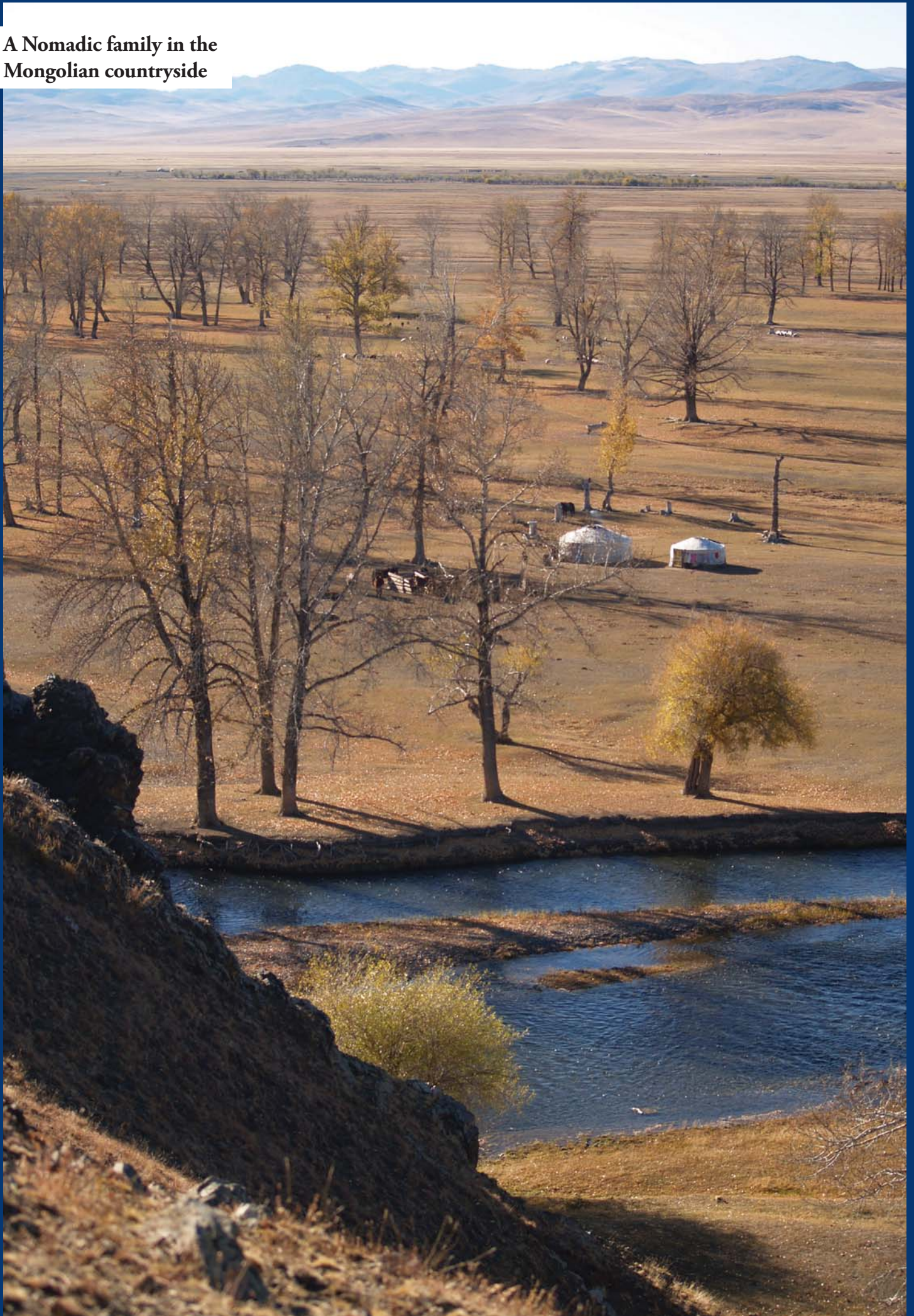
The intensifying global race to secure critical mineral supply chains places Mongolia in an influential position geo-politically, with the UK, United States and Asian states welcome to form partnership agreements with Ulaanbaatar on the development of its resources. "The United States and Mongolia recognise the importance of critical minerals to the global supply chain and are deepening cooperation in this sector," said a joint statement by the US and Mongolia during Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai's visit to the White House in August.



Chairman of the Board of Directors of Orano Claude Imauvien and CEO of Erdenes Mongol LLC Sanjaagiin Narantsogt, sign the protocol in the presence of President of France Emmanuel Macron, and President of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh © Orano



A Nomadic family in the  
Mongolian countryside







Mongolia's vast 1.5 million square-kilometre territory, which is six times larger than the UK, holds tremendous promise for mineral discoveries, yet only 5 per cent of this land is currently covered by 2,861 active licences.

"We want to issue exploration licences in an accessible manner, protect investors and in return we expect responsible mining," says Minister of Mining and Heavy Industry, Ganbaatar Jambal. Investors include companies from Canada, Australia, China – and a handful of UK companies, such as London-listed oil explorer Petro Matad. Mongolia is keen to attract more British investors into the survey projects.

Soviet era geological surveys provide basic data, though both Mongolia's government and international investors are keen to modernise this.

As a result, Mongolia's geological survey, recently revived after being disbanded in 1997, is tendering to launch airborne geophysical surveys, an exercise that will be delivered in stages over four years.

"Data will be a key part of attracting investors," says Dr Uyanga Bold, Director of Geological Department at the Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry and former chief geologist at Mongolia's geological survey.

In addition to agreements with companies from Spain and China already in place to do survey work, Mongolia is keen to offer opportunities for British companies in this field.

The huge size of Oyu Tolgoi, together with the 127,000-tonne-a-year copper-molybdenum mine at 'Erdenet,' shows Mongolia holds great promise for major future mineral discoveries. The undiscovered geology of Mongolia has immense potential for reserves worth hundreds of billions.

"If you catch one big fish, the chances are you can catch another big fish. It is not easy, but the rewards are worth it," says Sandjorj Samand, a vice president for Oyu Tolgoi and one of the legendary geologists who led the discovery of Oyu Tolgoi and many other deposits.

The Government of Mongolia is committed to creating favourable conditions for foreign investment in regard to taxation and legal reforms. In addition, it has taken resolute actions to fight against corruption, establish an efficient bureaucracy, simplify market access, ensure political stability, and strengthen an impartial judiciary.

## The intensifying global race to secure critical mineral supply chains places Mongolia in an influential position geo-politically, with the UK, United States and Asian states queuing up to form partnership agreements with Ulaanbaatar on the development of its resources

A new Mineral Resources Law is expected to be passed in Mongolia's Parliament, later this year. The mining legislation, first introduced in 1994, has been comprehensively redrafted with the aim of streamlining provisions to make exploration licencing more accessible, with clauses to protect and encourage investment, while also promoting responsible ESG.

Increasingly, information resources for potential investors are presented in English, though much of it is still in Mongolian. For example here is the link to Mongolia's constitutional reforms and legislation: <https://legalinfo.mn/en> the geodatabase link: [mrinfo.mn](https://mrinfo.mn) the cadastral link: <https://cmcs.mrpam.gov.mn/cmcs> – and for tenders see [tender.gov.mn](https://tender.gov.mn). The Government has also introduced <https://e-invest.mn/> an online 'One-stop Service' portal, that provides public services to investors including but not limited to the licenses, certificates, immigration and citizenship, and complaint handling from the investors.

Crucially, Mongolia's government is actively addressing issues related to bureaucracy and corruption that have impacted the mining sector. In response to widespread protests concerning the 'coal theft' scandal in Mongolia, the Government is taking decisive actions to put an end to years of dubious business dealings. The initial step involves discontinuing the practice of entering direct sales contracts with buyers in importing countries, with commodities like coal now being auctioned through stock exchanges. This approach extends to other mineral exports, including iron ore.

But aside from reforms to legislation and the crackdown against corruption, Mongolia is moving to tackle bottlenecks to mineral development including transport and logistics, such as railways, together with energy.

And while wanting multiple fresh projects on the same sort of scale as Oyu Tolgoi, the Government of Mongolia also hopes to diversify the economy so that agriculture, tourism and manufacturing will reduce dependence on minerals. This is among the few functioning democratic countries with a market economy in the region and legislative reforms in recent years have been aimed at making this a much more attractive home for investment.

ESG concerns are also a high priority in a biodiversity-rich nation where a third of people are herders closely linked to the natural environment.

"We grew up believing you ask for forgiveness from Mother Earth for digging a hole because it's like peeling the skin off Her, so you can imagine what herders think of blasting in a copper mine," says Khurelbaatar Bulgantuya, Minister of Labour and Social Protection and a Yale-educated economist who worked for the World Bank before she entered politics. "If we want mining to be supported, the revenues must accrue to local people."

These developments position Mongolia to unlock its vast potential as a vital source of critical minerals, aligning perfectly with the burgeoning demand for these resources in the rapidly expanding realm of clean energy technologies.



# MONGOLIA'S THRIVING NATURAL FIBRES INDUSTRY

By Aidan Hartley

A herd of bellowing livestock is a typical sight crossing Mongolia's autumnal taiga, but it also represents a remarkable new opportunity for the country's burgeoning fashion and natural fibres industry.

Mongolia produces 40 per cent of the world's raw cashmere, a fact often overlooked. Only 10 per cent of it is turned into finished garments mainly for export, while the rest is sold overseas as fibre. Despite the small scale of processing, Mongolia offers premium-quality cashmere products at more affordable prices, making it a top choice for tourists visiting the country.

Mongolian cashmere stands out due to its greater diversity of natural colours and quality, cultivated in more organic conditions. It comes from goats raised through pastoral nomadism, an ethical and natural way of farming. With limited competition in terms of its softness and warmth, Mongolia cashmere is considered uniquely warm, thanks to the goats' ability to survive one of the world's harshest and coldest winters, where temperatures in Mongolia can plummet to -30 degrees Celsius on average. To endure these conditions, goats naturally grow fine, warm down cashmere all over their bodies.

About a third of Mongolia's 3.4 million people still live on the land, mostly as herders. After the mining sector, agriculture is the second most crucial sector bolstering Mongolia's economy. The livestock industry is responsible for a staggering 87 per cent of the nation's agricultural output and is a source of employment for roughly one-third of the workforce. After the collapse of Communism, in which all livestock were owned by the state, the quantity of cashmere fibre produced by goats multiplied by an extraordinary ten times – to about 10,000 tonnes.

"Herder families play a pivotal role in safeguarding Mongolia's culture, deeply rooted in our nomadic traditions, while sustaining their livelihood from animal products such as cashmere. Notably, they also demonstrate a commitment to sustainable production practices in alignment with environmental concerns. Their emphasis has shifted towards prioritising quality over quantity," says Baatarsaikhan Tsagaach, owner of GOBI, Mongolia's largest cashmere fashion brand. Consequently, cashmere companies in Mongolia are actively pursuing innovation and technology to enhance their production efficiency. The Government of Mongolia is also committed to supporting these efforts and initiatives through policy measures, enhanced legal frameworks, and tax incentives aimed at attracting foreign direct investment.

Under the UK's Developing Countries Trade Scheme (DCTS) and the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), both raw cashmere and cashmere products from Mongolia enjoy customs duty-free access to the UK and EU markets. The schemes benefit both Mongolia's cashmere industry as well as the UK and EU by facilitating trade, promoting economic development and encouraging sustainable practices.

Traditionally, Mongolians used wool to make felt tents and clothes and cashmere was not much known. Japan built the first cashmere factory in Mongolia in the 1970s.

Since state enterprises like GOBI were privatised in 2008, the quality of finished products has improved remarkably, but Mongolia's 100 cashmere companies still use only one tenth of its cashmere to produce finished products, the majority of which are exported.

The rest of it has a supply chain with Mongolian nomads at one end of it and at the other end, fashion brands in Scotland, Italy or China, buying mostly semi-processed 'dehaired' cashmere.

"From Goat to Coat," is the GOBI brand's slogan, emphasising sustainability of the industry.

Mongolia also produces sheep wool, Bactrian camel wool and most exclusively, ultra-warm down from the country's 600,000 yaks.

"Yak down is rare and new," says Bodio Ulziibodijav, whose BODIOS company exports about US\$4 million worth of cashmere fibre a year – but also makes about US\$2 million revenue from clothes made of blended cashmere and yak down. "Nobody knows about yak down, but as a material it's warmer and the quality is better, it breathes better and is stronger."

Bodio Ulziibodijav, owner of the BODIOS brand, grew up as a herder in the Gobi Desert region. He works with 600 herders from his home, who inhabit an area half the size of England and produce all the cashmere and yak down required for the business. Each family has around 350 goats and from an adult goat you can comb about 0.5kg of raw cashmere each year, and a yak produces about the same amount of down.

"We sell to responsible brands in Europe, and we are making efforts to address pasture management, the livelihoods of herders and the quality of the cashmere," Bodio says.

To foster the growth and development of the cashmere industry in Mongolia, it is essential for the country to implement measures that safeguard its grasslands and mitigate the risk of overgrazing by cashmere goats.

The drive now is for quality and sustainability, which involves encouraging better range management, a better deal for herders and improved animal health – while relating a narrative that connects the herders out on the steppe with the ultimate Western buyers.

Mongolia hopes that the sustainability story will be key to the promotion of its industry over competition from less natural fibres.

"Socially responsible buyers want to see the supply chain," says Vandandorj Sumiya of the Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA).





МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИ  
UK - MONGOLIA  
1963-2023



“We have a huge, renewable resource but we do not have the spinning capacity,” says Lkhamsuren Munkhtuya, co-owner of the BODIOS brand.

Only former state-owned companies that were privatised in this century’s first decade inherited spinning lines and other producers must queue up to have their fibre spun by this handful of enterprises.

For Mongolian businesses relying on credit from local banks, it’s too expensive to buy the spinning technology that would be required to drive expansion of the local industry in finished products.

For now, BODIOS has a factory line that processes natural white cashmere fibre into 80kg bales for export to a European partner – while in a nearby workshop and atelier, a mostly female workforce knits and finishes garments made from yak, cashmere and camel. Aside from doing business with the 600 herder families in the Gobi Desert region, the business employs about 130 people in the capital Ulaanbaatar.

In a way they are expanding an industry that has been important to British customers for a long time, especially from Scotland.

GOBI company has opened its second outlet in Europe – both are in Germany – though Baatarsaikhan grandly hopes to open 23 outlets across the continent, including one in London next year.

In London, there is a Mongolian cashmere boutique owned by Oyuna Tserendorj, whose deep connection to her native Mongolia inspired her brand, Oyuna, founded in 2002. Influenced by the ‘Deel’ traditional attire worn by Mongolians, Oyuna innovates through meticulous experimentation, crafting a unique aesthetic that prioritises intricate details. She stands as a representative figure of numerous Mongolian women actively contributing to the cashmere industry in Mongolia, with some of them gaining recognition on the world stage.

History tells how the British merchants arrived in Outer Mongolia 130 years ago to buy skins, as well as camel and sheep wool. It’s surprising to learn that in 1925, ten British companies – mainly wool merchants – already set up in Mongolia conducted £120 million worth of business in today’s money, compared to the current annual total trade between the two countries in goods and services of £203 million.



© Bodios

The SFA is a non-profit membership organisation that represents a global alliance of supply chain actors, stakeholders, and industry experts. The organisation’s two founders grew up in the Mongolian countryside, where they saw first-hand how climate change and overgrazing was impacting the land. With offices based in both Mongolia and the UK, the SFA aims to minimise the environmental impact of cashmere, safeguard herder livelihoods and ensure high animal welfare through their work and standards.

By ruling out the export of raw fibre – and soon ‘scoured,’ or semi-processed fibre – Mongolia is trying to encourage more domestic manufacturing that will increase value, which in turn should ameliorate the impact on the environment.

“We want to see value added at every stage, but there is still limited capacity for businesses to make finished products locally,” says Vandandorj, explaining that certified cashmere fetches higher prices.

Buyers can invest in herders’ communities with, for example, veterinary services and fodder. Herders learn how to improve combing techniques, fibre quality, goat welfare and management of the

rangeland pastures. The SFA has over 60 members globally (around 20 in Mongolia), including companies such as the 226-year-old Johnstons of Elgin in Scotland. Around one tenth of Mongolia-produced cashmere is covered by the SFA certification. It also has 190 registered co-operatives or herder organisations across 17 provinces in Mongolia, out of which around 100 herder organisations are certified with the SFA cashmere standard and code of practices. In 2022, the SFA teamed up with Mongolia’s Khan Bank to launch short-term, soft green micro-loans for co-operatives, secured by contracts.

“By expanding the cashmere business, we’re giving back to the communities,” echoes Baatarsaikhan, who dreams of increasing the percentage of cashmere locally manufactured into finished products to half of Mongolia’s output within a decade.

Growth depends partly on expansion of Mongolia’s tourism, since visitors are the biggest buyers, and on direct international sales.

At the BODIOS factory they scour, dehair and pack white cashmere into 80kg bales for export to a European partner.

# EDUCATION REFORM IN MONGOLIA

By Aidan Hartley

The English language will now be taught in all Mongolian schools, from primary onwards, as a result of recent legislation that followed years of debate.

Introduction of English as the priority foreign language in schools has been proposed for many years. “It divided the country and in parliament when it was debated some said that we would lose our national identity,” says Minister for Labour and Social Protection, Bulgantuya Khurelbaatar.

The move reflects Mongolia’s wish to modernise and strengthen ties with the international community and its vision for economic development. Mongolians commonly acknowledge that English is the language of education, business and science.

To ensure the successful implementation of this legislation, the Government of Mongolia is actively exploring opportunities to collaborate with native English-speaking countries, such as the UK, to enhance the capacity of English language teachers. Many of these educators have been trained in Mongolia with limited exposure to native speakers, especially in rural areas. While attending the Education World Forum 2023 in London, Minister of Education Enkh-Amgalan Luvsantseren discussed the possibilities of bringing British volunteers to Mongolia to teach English through organisations such as the Voluntary Service Overseas.

Mongolia has adopted sweeping reforms over more than a decade to improve its education system, which has involved cooperation with the British companies such as the Cambridge Partnership for Education (CPE), which is a division of the Cambridge University Press and Assessment.

“Mongolia wants to bring its national curriculum up to international standards so that it is recognised in line with Singapore, Europe and so on,” says Stephen King, head of CPE for Europe and Asia, which has worked with the Mongolian Ministry of Education and Science since 2011. “They want to lead that process themselves.”

According to King: “Mongolia set itself the ambitious goal of undertaking wholesale education of the primary and secondary education system so that it met international standards. The government recognised weaknesses in an education system that had not been reformed for a long time. The curriculum needed to be modernised, and the government wanted to introduce a new, more modern and interactive pedagogical approach. The aim was to develop a system in which high-quality education was available across the entire country, where every child could flourish and realise their individual talents.”

**Mongolia has adopted sweeping reforms over more than a decade to improve its education system, which has involved cooperation with the British companies such as the Cambridge Partnership for Education**



Visiting a rural school in Dundgovi





Alongside the Ministry, the CPE created a four-year Road Map and Work Plan to improve the curriculum, assessment, pre-service and in-service teacher education, textbooks and specialised schools. Cambridge University's Faculty of Education has been working with the Mongolian National University of Education on teacher training and deployment to schools. CPE is also working to build the capacity of Mongolia's textbook development teams and the implementation of all the improvements in national assessments.

The UK's Pearson is also expanding its English Learning Programme across dozens of public schools throughout the country, under an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science.

About a million children attend school in Mongolia and, reflecting where the population lives, the numbers are evenly balanced between the capital Ulaanbaatar and the rest of the country.

Legislation passed in 2002 gives children free basic education at both primary and secondary levels and children have 12 years of schooling. Attendance rates at Mongolia's 2,300 educational institutions – and also literacy rates – are very high.

Like many other countries, Mongolia faces challenges such as uneven distribution of schools, overcrowded classrooms, limited opportunities for talent development, and a lower school enrolment rate for boys in rural areas. Most significantly, Mongolians acknowledge that the value placed on education has exacerbated inequality between the wealthy and poorer.

"We need a better system because due to private education we have an increasing divide," says Jargalsaikhan Dambadarjaa, editor of Mongolia's leading current affairs media group *The Defacto Gazette*.

As part of its Vision 2020 goals, Mongolia has committed to providing connectivity and IT teaching in all schools and higher education. That means linking even the remotest parts of the vast country by fibre optic or Starlink.

"Technology is our priority digital language to go along with the English language," says Uchral Nyam-Osor, Minister of Digital Development and Communications. "We want to expand the digital literacy of all people in Mongolia."

**"Technology is our priority digital language to go along with the English language," says Uchral Nyam-Osor, Minister of Digital Development and Communications. "We want to expand the digital literacy of all people in Mongolia."**

Education Minister Enkh-Amgalan says "The implementation of Google Workplace and capacity building for IT teachers are important to improve education in Mongolia. Also configuring a Google Cache server in Mongolia and utilising Google Vertex AI and Big Query are expected to reduce workloads." In addition, the Ministry of Education is seeking donors to support Chrome Education Upgrade Licences and provide Chromebooks to the teachers.

A dream for talented young Mongolian school graduates is to go overseas. The UK is one of the top destinations. The UK's Chevening Programme supports the fees and costs for around 10 to 15 students annually to read Master degrees in British universities – mostly focused on studies that serve to strengthen democracy, human rights, the environment or business.

While around 200 students attend British universities each year, tuition fees are a barrier and many more students go overseas elsewhere – to Australia for example, for university. Many of these students eventually return to Mongolia, where they actively contribute to the country's development across various sectors.

The 'Ilgeelt-2100' scholarship programme was successfully initiated by the President of Mongolia in 2021. It provides opportunities for children from rural areas to pursue undergraduate studies at some of the world's best universities, including those in the UK. Notably, over 60 per cent of scholarship recipients are specialising in engineering technology fields, such as computer science, software, biotechnology, civil engineering and architecture, and renewable energy. It aligns with Mongolia's long-term development vision.

There has also been '2+2' collaboration between universities in Mongolia and the UK, which refers to a collaborative educational programme where students complete two years of their undergraduate studies at a university in Mongolia and then transfer to a university in the UK to complete the remaining two years of their degree. One example is the University of Finance and Economics, which has been implementing the '2+2' programme with BPP University in the UK in Finance and Accounting.

Such initiatives are expected to enhance Mongolia's collaboration with the UK in the field of education while establishing a strong foundation for future academic and economic relations between the two countries. English language teaching and student exchanges can serve as significant trading assets between Mongolia and the UK, with value that cannot be measured solely in monetary terms.



# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN MONGOLIA: ONE BILLION TREES

By Aidan Hartley and WCPF Managing Trustee, Dr Kathryn Rae

To combat climate change, the Government of Mongolia has launched a nationwide 'One Billion Trees Planted by 2030' movement.

Mongolia, the nineteenth largest country in the world by area, is among the world's last, great, wide-open spaces in a crowded world. Located between the Siberian Taiga and the Central Asian desert, it showcases unique geographical features. Beneath its famous blue skies, it has major mountain ranges, the forested taiga, mighty rivers and lakes, the endless grassy steppe that becomes carpeted with wildflowers in summertime and the famous Gobi Desert – a byword for the remote and extraordinary.

Mongolia also experiences four distinct seasons including scorching summers, vibrant autumns, bone-chilling winters, and refreshing springs that foster diversity and adaptability in both its nature and inhabitants.

In this unique ecosystem, Mongolia has an incredible biodiversity, including 141 mammal species, 534 bird species, and 79 fish species. These include the wild Przewalski's Horse, Snow Leopard, Gobi Bear, Siberian Ibex, the critically endangered Wild Camel, Reindeer, Mountain-hawk Eagle, and Mongolian Taimen. Mongolia is home to over 10,000 species in its flora, with 14 per cent of them being unique to the country and many of these play a vital role in Mongolian traditional medicine.

Incredibly, Mongolia has already set aside an area equal to the size of Poland for nature conservation – and plans are to increase this to just under one third of the country's vast 1.5 million square kilometre area. Strictly protected areas

include the Great Gobi and Bogd Khan mountain, while national parks such as Gobi Gurvansaikhan, Khan Khentii, Humrug and Khuvsgal are rich in biodiversity. In addition, the Uvs Nuur Basin, the Landscapes of Dauria, the Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain, Altai Mountain and Orkhon Valley are designated as world heritage sites by UNESCO.

Deeply embedded in Mongolia's ancient nomadic culture is the wish to protect and conserve nature. "At heart, every Mongolian is a nomad, and our philosophy is to respect our Mother Earth," says Bat-Erdene Bat-Ulzii, Minister of Environment and Tourism. "Sustainability is a central priority of ours."

Traditionally, the wisdom and beliefs of herders, passed down through generations, have served as a powerful tool for nature conservation. For instance, the practice of seasonal movements four times a year helps prevent overgrazing and land degradation, allowing time for the pastureland to recover. Furthermore, herders adhere to eco-friendly practices, such as leaving zero waste at their camping sites. Their 'Ger' houses, made from all-natural fibres, can be assembled and disassembled without emitting pollutants. Since ancient times, nomads in Mongolia have also worshipped river and lakes, preserving them without pollution. "Our strong belief in the eternal blue sky is rooted in our livestock," says a herder out on the steppe. "We are totally dependent on grass and precipitation."

Despite the challenges posed by modernisation and climate change, these traditions rooted in nomadic culture hold profound significance for Mongolians, and their relevance is increasing in today's ever-changing world,





where people are becoming more distant from nature. The Government of Mongolia is also committed to keeping this tradition while implementing policies to mitigate the impact of climate change, which include breed improvement of animals, animal health registration, rotational pasture use, enhancing pasture water supply by collecting snow and rainwater, boosting hay production and harvest, and diversifying the livelihoods of nomadic herders.

“Without protecting the environment, none of our economic development goals can be sustainably achieved,” says Bat-Erdene. The Environmental Protection Law 1995 provides a strong legal framework for protecting and managing flora, fauna, ecosystems and natural heritages, all defined as matters of national environmental significance. Additionally, the National Action Programme on Climate Change aims to bolster its climate change mitigation efforts by setting an unconditional emission reduction target of 22.7 per cent by 2030.

Mongolia's greenhouse gas emissions account for only 0.05 per cent of world's total, yet the country's high-altitude aridity has made it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

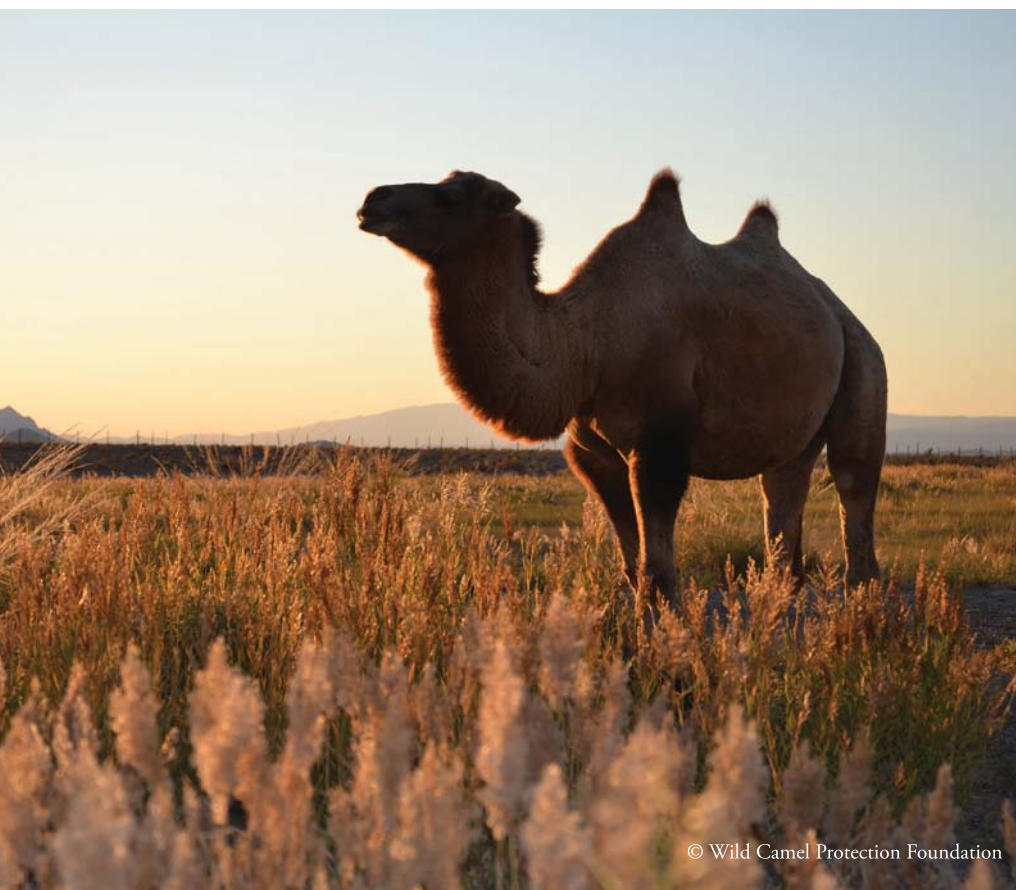
Desertification is the most serious ecological and environmental problem facing Mongolia. Addressing this challenge, the country has embarked on a nationwide campaign to plant one billion trees between now and 2030. The 'One Billion Trees' initiative, launched by the President of Mongolia, aims to improve biodiversity, tackle global warming, mitigate climate change and desertification. This initiative is part of Mongolia's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to restore and promote the sustainable use of land ecosystems and stop land degradation.

Far from the oceans and sitting at an average altitude of about 1,600 metres, Mongolia has biting cold winters with temperatures as low as -37C and is arid in many parts of the country now affected by desertification and yellow sandstorms. In 2026, Mongolia has been invited to host the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which will focus on desertification and its critical relationship with sustainable development and the urgent need for collaborative action.

Climate change and economic activities, like mining, have made water scarcity a serious concern in Mongolia. Although the country has a good amount of water per person overall, some areas face shortages due to differences in rainfall and population. Ulaanbaatar, where half the population lives, and the water-reliant Gobi region with major mining sites are particularly affected. The Mongolian Government is collaborating with development partners to enhance water management. For instance, there is a US\$350 million project with the US Millennium Challenge Corporation to boost Ulaanbaatar's water supply production. This is very important as annual precipitation has decreased by 7 per cent (1987-2010) while annual air temperatures have increased by 2.24 per cent (1940-2015).

Environmental cooperation has been extensive during 60 years of bilateral cooperation between Mongolia and the UK. The UK Government has provided substantial funding to bilateral and multilateral projects through the Green Climate Fund. There are also many grassroots projects. Thanks to the legacy of British explorer John Hare OBE FRGS, the UK-based Wild Camel Protection Foundation (WCPF) – with the approval of the Mongolia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism – works in the buffer zone of the Great Gobi Area of Special Protection 'A' where it has established two captive wild camel breeding centres to protect the endangered *Camelus ferus* species from extinction. Protected under Mongolian law, the wild camel is on the IUCN red list of threatened species, with fewer than 1,000 surviving in the wild. WCPF has already started a tree planting initiative in Toli Bulag, the site of the second captive wild camel breeding project.

The Zoological Society of London has worked for 15 years in Mongolia to conserve habitats and species of global importance. It is also working to fight against illegal wildlife trade in Mongolia through awareness campaign in Mongolia's largest telecom provider, Mobicom, which reached one third of the country's population. Mongolia's private companies, such as MIAT Mongolian Airlines is also considering joining the 'United for Wildlife' initiative, created by HRH Prince William and the Royal Foundation in 2014 to protect endangered species from the illegal wildlife trade. Both UK organisations have worked in support of the nomadic communities.



© Wild Camel Protection Foundation

Mongolia's Green Development Strategy involves the expansion of renewable energy projects, including wind, solar and hydro power, also helping to reduce the country's reliance on energy imports



# UNLOCKING MONGOLIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL

By Aidan Hartley

With its eternal blue skies and 250 days of sunshine per year, Mongolia holds a bright future in renewable energy projects. The country's wind and solar power potential stands at an incredible 2,600 gigawatts of installed capacity, or 5,457 terawatt-hours of clean electricity per year.

This capacity is not just sufficient for Mongolia's energy needs but also for fulfilling the regional energy demand in Northeast Asia, with the right transmission infrastructure in place.

A big incentive for international investors is to build green energy projects that take advantage of the proximity to the China market for export. Mongolia currently relies on imported electricity from neighbouring Russia and China to address its supply gap. However, the country possesses the capacity to export renewable energy to these neighbours as their energy demands continue to expand.

"We are working towards expanding our renewable energy capacity, phasing out coal usage gradually, recycling waste, as well as developing green technology," says Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan. "These are included in the Green Growth Strategy, one of the six pillars of the New Recovery Policy."

The Green Development Strategy involves the future expansion of renewable energy projects, including wind, solar, and hydro power. This strategic approach also seeks to reduce Mongolia's reliance on energy imports.

According to State Secretary at the Ministry of Energy, Tavinbekh Nansal, Mongolia's energy supply is currently dominated by coal-fired thermal power stations, accounting for 88 per cent of the country's installed capacity. The remaining capacity is attributed to renewable sources, including seven hydro-electric plants and 11 wind and solar projects. The government's goal, as outlined in the State Policy on Energy (2015-30), is to achieve a renewable energy share of 30 per cent in total installed capacity by 2030.

A dam and hydro power plant at Erdeneburen is planned to produce 90 megawatts of electricity, which together with three solar plants would reduce reliance on imports, mainly from Russia and help to regulate the power supply in western areas.

Plans exist to build combined heat and power (CHP) stations in the south to supply Gobi Desert mining operations. "It will be possible to reduce our imports when we commission our new CHPs. This is the government's policy. Our shorter-term policy is to cover domestic demand and reduce our reliance on imports – then further down the line to export energy in both renewables and fossil fuels, which will allow us to diversify our economy," explains Tavinbekh.





Renewable sources of energy, which total 274 megawatts in installed capacity, benefitted from selling to the government at high tariffs. But in the last three years, new projects have been put on hold while the government plans renewable energy auctions, which have not yet been launched.

**Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan: “Increasing our renewable energy sources will ensure our green development strategy. It will also help us to reduce our energy dependency and diversify our economy.”**

“We are aiming to attract foreign investors and there’s a big chance for UK companies to get involved in these projects, ultimately to build and export to China, where the demand is always growing,” says Tavinbekh.

Observers say the tariffs in power purchasing agreements for private investors must improve to incentivise them to launch projects to supply power domestically, and that also the government must pay suppliers more promptly. Tariff restrictions do not apply to power exported to China and economists describe this area as “an open field of opportunity” for investors,

though the costs of transmission to China will be high.

Critical to the expansion of energy will be the pricing system, according to Dulguun Baasandavaa, architect of the New Recovery Policy (NRP) that guides government decisions on reform.

“To expand projects in renewables, we need to reform the energy sector,” says Dulguun. “We are working with the regulators to do this, but reforms have to be carefully phased.”

In Tavinbekh’s view, delivering stability is the greatest challenge in Mongolia’s harsh environment and if projects in renewables are to be expanded, a critical element of this will be storage – meaning pumped storage hydro projects, together with battery storage.

“To stabilise power from renewables we will install 230 megawatt hours of storage in Ulaanbaatar in a project to be commissioned before the end of this year,” says Tavinbekh.

One project to regulate a stable supply of renewables power, financed by the Asian Development Bank, is the installation of a 125 MW/160 Mwh battery energy storage system. This effort aims to tackle key challenges hindering renewable energy development in Mongolia, notably the absence of

regulation reserve and grid management services.

“For UK investors in renewable energy, the potential is high and gaining momentum in Mongolia, with the realisation that coal-fired power plants can’t be financed,” says Zula Luvsandorj, CEO of Sun Steppe Power, a joint venture with London AIM-listed Petro Matad Ltd.

The projects started by Zula, who has a London background in project financing, have benefitted from the high tariffs previously offered for solar energy. Mongolia’s government has now decided to switch to an auction system for new renewables projects “which are not yet defined.” But she says that Mongolia offers “vast resources, land, solar, wind speeds that are really good, and we’re looking at green hydrogen.”

According to Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan: “Increasing our renewable energy sources will ensure our green development strategy. It will also help us to reduce our energy dependency and diversify our economy. Our untapped resources of rare earth elements that are crucial to renewable energy and green technologies could also benefit other countries, including the UK, to diversify their supply chains and avoid future tensions over critical minerals.”

A Mongolian Steppe



© B. Erdenebulgan



Scots hold the achievements of warrior leaders such as King Robert the Bruce (1274 -1329) in high honour, much like Chinggis Khaan (1162-1227), whose wisdom, resilience and strategic vision continues to inspire Mongolians to this day

# MONGOLIA - SCOTLAND RELATIONS

**By the founders of NAMSRAI HENDERSON, a UK-based consultancy committed to building better human communication between Britain and Mongolia, Enkhee Namsrai and Matthew Henderson**

As part of the United Kingdom, Scotland's formal relationship with Mongolia began with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the UK and Mongolia 60 years ago. During these auspicious five cycles of the Mongolian 12-year lunar calendar, the world has been transformed. Political changes and global digitalisation have enabled both nations to visit and learn more about their distinctive national cultures. This article focuses on the human face of the evolving relationship.

At first glance, Scotland and Mongolia could hardly seem more different: the former being a mere 77,900 square km in size with 9,910km of coastline and a population of around 5.43million, the latter a landlocked 1,564,116 square km with only around 3.4 million people. Scottish industry and commerce flourished following the Industrial Revolution, and the Scots have contributed greatly to the global footprint of Britain and the Commonwealth. Mongolia's history as a nation has taken a very different road, both at times shaping Asia and at others shaped by the emergence of great neighbouring powers. Industrialisation is still in progress as the country seeks to add diversity to a mainly resource-based economy.

Nevertheless, despite these contrasts, people-to-people exchanges between the two countries are characterised by a remarkable range of shared experiences, traditions and ways of seeing the world. Both now have a large, cosmopolitan urban population, but share national identities deeply proud of their pre-modern histories and unspoilt natural beauty. In particular, apart from unparalleled wonders

such as the Gobi Desert and the Altai mountains of the far west, the taiga ranges of northern Mongolia share with Scotland a great many of the same iconic wildlife and plant species. One of Mongolia's most prized medicinal herbs, there known as 'altan gagnuur', can be found on Scotland's west coast. It is called 'rose-root' here and has recently been used as a delicious flavouring in Scottish gin. Scotland's whisky culture is mirrored in Mongolia's ancient tradition of fermented and distilled milk-based alcohol, now being marketed at international standards of excellence. Mongolia's famous Naadam festival closely resembles the Scottish Highland Games.

**Both now have a large, cosmopolitan urban population, but share national identities deeply proud of their pre-modern histories and unspoilt natural beauty.**

Heroic leaders shape a sense of national identity in both countries. The famous Hunnu rulers of ancient Mongolia are matched by Scotland's Picts, Scots and Britons. There are striking parallels between Pictish carvings from around the sixth century AD and the earlier Hunnu deer stones, recently registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Hunnu and Picts both excelled in war, hunting and animal husbandry, and before the arrival of more human-centred religion, seem to have held comparable animistic beliefs.



© Panoramic Journeys



There are striking parallels between Scottish Pictish carvings (below) from the sixth century AD and the earlier Mongolian Hunnu deer stones (above), recently registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List



Many Scots hold in high honour the achievements of warrior leaders such as King Robert the Bruce (1274 - 1329). Having united warring factions, he ruled Scotland for 23 years from 1306. Only a century earlier, the great leader Temujin (c. 1162- 1227) had unified the peoples of the Mongolian and East Asian steppes and took the title of Chinggis Khaan in 1206. To this day, the wisdom, resilience and strategic vision of Chinggis continue to inspire Mongolians wherever they live.

Before the founding of modern Mongolia, Scottish travellers made records of traditional Mongolian life which are of great interest to this day. One of the best was Dr James Gilmour (1843-91) who as a determined (but largely unsuccessful) Scottish missionary, travelled for many years in Mongolia building up deep first-hand knowledge and appreciation of local language, customs and culture. To his Mongol friends he was known as 'our Gilmour.' His book *Among the Mongols* (1880) did a great deal to enrich Britain's knowledge of Mongolia and remains a highly readable classic to this day.

With the establishment of bilateral relations, many British officials who served in the UK Embassy in Ulaanbaatar have become lifelong friends of Mongolia. Among them was a formidably energetic and good-hearted Scot called Thomas Haining, Ambassador between 1979 and 1982. Despite the political constraints of the times, during his stay Haining made great strides in his scholarship of Mongolian history, culture and religion. He later translated a famous German work on Chinggis Khaan, adding valuable material of his own. Ambassador 'Tom' (which also means 'big') was still well-remembered in Mongolia with affection and admiration more than 30 years later.

Recently, trade missions and the work of the Mongolian Honorary Consul have helped deepen bilateral relations. Business continues to expand in the area of Mongolia's exports of world-class cashmere, camel and yak wools and fabrics. Many years ago, a British official noted the ethos of the Mongolian woollen industry as matching closely that of Scotland's famous Tweed production. Recently, a shared focus on sustainability has added value to associated Mongolian agricultural practices and reputation. New cooperation is developing in education, renewable energy, conservation and elsewhere.

At a cultural level, Mongolia's exceptional musical talents are becoming familiar here. Highlights include stunning performances by the Mongolian Army band at the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2013, and by 'The Hu' rock band in Glasgow this year. Mongolian folk music has remarkable affinities to traditional Scottish music from both the Highlands and Lowlands. This, combined with the international reputation of Mongolian opera singers, will certainly figure in future cultural exchanges.

This year, Mongolia has reached out to the world with its 'Vision-2050' and 'Years to Visit Mongolia' campaigns. The famous Scots actor Ewan McGregor describes Mongolia as his favourite place to travel. There are many other Scots who share this view and there will be even more in future. Building on the strong business, educational and cultural connections and friendship that already exist between our countries, the future of Scotland's relations with Mongolia looks bright indeed.



© Paul Robinson

# FINDING BALANCE: A 'PINK BEAR' JOURNEY THROUGH MONGOLIA'S LIGHT AND LANDSCAPE

By Paul Robinson, (known in the art world as LUAP)

As an artist deeply entrenched in the fusion of adventure and art, I, Paul Robinson, known in the art world as LUAP, have found a profound connection between my personal experiences and the artistic narratives I weave. Through the vibrant mediums of painting, photography, and sculpture, I aim to tackle contemporary challenges such as mental health, the environment, and societal isolation. Central to my artistic expression is the enigmatic figure of The Pink Bear, a playful yet profound symbol that journeys alongside me, blurring the lines between reality and imagination, innocence, and the complexities of adulthood.

The genesis of The Pink Bear dates back to a transformative moment during my therapy, when a childhood memory resurfaced, leading to its resurrection as a guiding light in my art. It serves as a metaphor for exploration, encapsulating the spirit of discovery that propels my creative odyssey. Notably, my recent expedition across the stunning Mongolian landscape is a testament to this ethos, as The Pink Bear traverses the rugged terrain, urging us to reconnect with the natural world and our inner resilience.

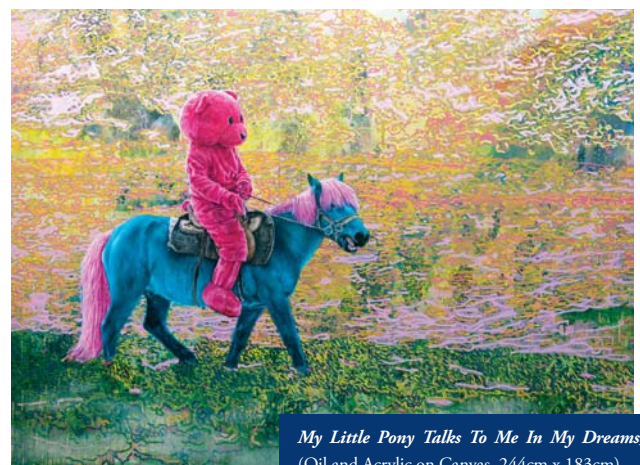
During my transformative journey through Mongolia with renowned survival expert Megan Hine, the physical and mental demands were relentless, pushing me to confront the extremities of nature and my own fears. From enduring drastic temperature fluctuations, navigating perilous landscapes, to embracing nomadic traditions on horseback, the expedition delved beyond the realms of artistic expression, urging me to unravel the fragile relationship between humanity and the environment.

Amidst the breathtaking vistas and the fading echoes of a traditional way of life, I recognised the urgency to capture Mongolia's essence before it succumbs to the relentless waves of modernisation and climate change. The decision to embrace the traditional mode of travel on horseback, eschewing the convenience of modern vehicles, mirrored my commitment to minimise the carbon footprint and shed light on the consequences of rampant consumption.

Beyond the artistic pursuit, my mission extends to liberating art from the confines of conventional gallery spaces, bringing it closer to diverse audiences. The Pink Bear's presence in these remote terrains not only accentuates the contrast between human intervention and untouched nature but also serves as a bridge between the complexities of the contemporary world and the simplicity of childhood wonder.

Looking ahead, our proposed expedition aims to unravel the intrinsic connection between circadian rhythms, mental well-being, and the transformative power of light. By immersing ourselves in Mongolia's awe-inspiring landscapes, we hope to kindle a deeper appreciation for the healing potential of nature and challenge the stigma surrounding mental health.

Through the lens of authentic storytelling and captivating visuals, our mission is to foster a compassionate environment that encourages open conversations and self-acceptance. As I embark on this transformative journey, I aspire to delve deeper into my resilience, unearth hidden strengths, and offer a guiding light to those grappling with their own emotional challenges.



© Paul Robinson

*My Little Pony Talks To Me In My Dreams*, 2023  
(Oil and Acrylic on Canvas, 244cm x 183cm)





МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИ  
UK - MONGOLIA  
1963-2023



Former Ambassador of Mongolia His Excellency Mr Bulгаа Altangerel (centre) meeting with the then First Minister of Northern Ireland Rt. Hon Peter Robinson MLA (right) and the then Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland the late Mr Martin McGuinness MP, MLA (left) at Stormont Castle, Belfast, on 27 May 2010

# MONGOLIA – NORTHERN IRELAND RELATIONS

By Honorary Consul of Mongolia in Northern Ireland, Richard Holmes

The Honorary Consulate of Mongolia in Northern Ireland was established in October 2009, and I was appointed as inaugural Honorary Consul.

In the first instance, the Honorary Consulate has succeeded in generating a greater awareness of Mongolia through high level visits, cultural events and ongoing promotional and press activity.

In this respect, the Honorary Consulate has hosted several visits by Mongolian ambassadors over the years. In May 2010, His Excellency Mr Bulгаа Altangerel visited the Northern Ireland Assembly where he met with the then First Minister Rt Hon Peter Robinson MLA and the Deputy First Minister, the late Mr Martin McGuinness MP, MLA prior to undertaking other engagements including meeting with the Lord Mayor of Belfast and visiting an experimental farm.

Similarly in September 2012, His Excellency Mr Tulga Narkhuu visited the Northern Ireland Assembly and met with the Speaker, Mr William Hay MLA, prior to attending a reception at Parliament Buildings, Stormont to commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the United Kingdom.

From a cultural perspective, the Honorary Consulate has organised events ranging from participation in events in Belfast's Botanic Gardens, as well as a touring exhibition entitled *Images of Mongolia*, which continues to visit a wide variety of venues across Northern Ireland.

*Images of Mongolia* aims to showcase the unique heritage and culture of Mongolia through the medium of Mongolian postage stamps, highlighting both the well-known as well as the less familiar aspects of Mongolian history and culture, ranging from traditional Mongolian music through to the story of the first Mongolian cosmonaut.

Having been launched at the National Museum of Northern Ireland (Ulster Museum), the exhibition has been on display at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, as well as numerous public libraries and venues across Northern Ireland.

In tandem with publicity in the local press relating to the above events, the Honorary Consulate has also generated press coverage around the potential for tourism as well as trade opportunities with Mongolia in a number of Northern Ireland based publications.

The Honorary Consulate has also helped develop collaborative links between Northern Ireland and Mongolia. These include the establishment of an ongoing research project between Queen's University Belfast and the National Cancer Centre in Mongolia in cancer epidemiology. A further project linking Northern Ireland with the Mongolian National Federation for the Blind is expected to commence next year.

Whilst the future will continue to focus on expanding the above activities, it is also noteworthy that in a post-Brexit environment, Northern Ireland is the only region of the UK that has a land border with another EU country.

Although the number of Mongolians resident in Northern Ireland is predicted to remain small, there is a significant Mongolian population resident in the Republic of Ireland. The Honorary Consulate will therefore continue to provide consular assistance to any such individuals visiting Northern Ireland as and when required, in addition to promoting a greater awareness of Mongolia across those different areas highlighted previously.

# MONGOLIA – WALES RELATIONS

By Mongolia's Cultural Envoy to the UK, Unurmaa Janchiv

The BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition is a prestigious international opera-singing competition held every two years in Wales. Hundreds of young opera singers compete for the 16-20 places to participate in the final in Cardiff. Having launched the careers of many successful international singers, including Bryn Terfel, Kiri Te Kanawa and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, it is an event that has a special place in the hearts of many opera fans around the world. Working on the competition was a wonderful experience, and the support of Artistic Director David Jackson and his team over the years has been incredible.

Mongolia has a long and distinguished history of classical music, and its singers have always performed well in the competition. In 2015, Mongolian baritone Amartuvshin Enkhbat became the first singer from Mongolia to participate in and win competition's Audience Prize. Since then, several other Mongolian opera singers have reached the finals, including baritone Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar (2017), Batjargal Bayarsaikhan (2017), Badral Chuluunbaatar (2019), and Ankhbayar Enkhbold (2021).

In 2017, Mongolian baritone Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar became the first Mongolian Song Prize Winner of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition. Amartuvshin and Ariunbaatar's success is a testament to the high quality of classical music education in Mongolia, and the country's commitment to developing its young talent.

Amartuvshin Enkhbat is a world-famous baritone now, with a successful international career. He has performed in major opera houses around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, the Royal Opera House in London, and the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar has had equally successful international career in the world of opera, as a soloist at the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg.

The success of Mongolian opera singers at this competition is a sign that they can not only compete at this world-class level, but are sure to continue to achieve great things in the years to come. They are all committed to promoting Mongolian culture through their music.

In addition to the competition itself, there have been several other cultural exchanges between Mongolia and Wales in recent years. In 2016, the Mongolian baritone Amartuvshin performed at the Voice Festival in Wales for the very first time, accompanied by Llyr Williams, the renowned Welsh pianist for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the Competition. In the same year, Amartuvshin Enkhbat's first recital in the UK was organised in my capacity as Cultural Envoy of Mongolia in collaboration with the Embassy of Mongolia in the UK.

Inspired by the talent of Mongolian opera singers, BBC music producer Steven Rajam, together with music journalist Kate Molleson, travelled to Mongolia in 2017. These award-winning Welsh and Scottish creatives produced an exclusive radio programme with two episodes on Mongolian opera, traditional and pop music, titled *From the Steppes to the Stage*, commissioned by BBC Radio 4, accessible to its 14 million listeners. In 2018, the programme was nominated for Prix Europa, the highest awards for the best European television, radio and online productions. Kate Molleson also published an article in *The Guardian*, titled, 'How Mongolia Went Wild for Opera,' still accessible online to its 35 million readership.

The radio programme was a fascinating and inspiring look at the life of a unique and talented singer Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar. It also provided a glimpse into the rich musical heritage of Mongolia.



Mongolian opera singer Amartuvshin Enkhbat and Welsh pianist Llyr Williams at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World in 2015 @ AzaaStudio





Mongolian opera singer Ariunbaatar Ganbaatar at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World in 2017 with other participants

Their story is a reminder that dreams can come true, no matter where you come from. It is also a reminder that the world is full of talented people, and that we should always be open to new experiences and new cultures.

In 2024, we will be hosting distinguished Welsh pianist Llŷr Williams in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for a concert, at which the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition participants from Mongolia will be performing together with him for the first time for Mongolian audiences.

The BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition is a shining example of how cultural cooperation can help to strengthen bilateral relations between countries. The competition has provided a platform for Mongolian singers to showcase their talents to the world, and has also help to promote Mongolian and Welsh culture and heritage to a global audience.

Mongolian and Welsh singing have a lot in common. Both cultures have a long and rich history of singing, a strong tradition of choral singing, and have produced a number of world-renowned singers. Both cultures also use traditional instruments in their singing and have a strong sense of national pride in their singing traditions. Therefore, these cultural exchanges have helped to promote understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures.

Our singers' victory at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition was a major breakthrough for Mongolian opera singers. It showed the world that Mongolians are just as talented as singers from other countries, and it paved the way for more Mongolians to pursue careers in opera. Therefore, we need encourage both governments to work on sending young people to study in the UK, particularly in Wales, as its rich tradition of opera and singing offers an opportunity to learn from world-renowned artists, and the chance to perform in some of the world's most prestigious opera houses.



An Exclusive Opera Performance of World-Class Baritone Amartuvshin Enkhbat at Savile Club, London in 2016 @ AzaaStudio

©AzaaStudio



Some of the team of the MacArthur Project 1991-95, Cambridge

# MONGOLIAN STUDIES IN THE UK: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENTS

**By Human Geography Lecturer, University of Oxford Dr Ariell Ahearn, Research Co-ordinator at the MIASU, University of Cambridge Libby Peachey, and Professor Dame Caroline Humphrey DBE FBA and Professor David Sneath of the University of Cambridge**

Owen Lattimore helped to establish East Asian Studies at the University of Leeds, with support from British government funding. In collaboration with the Inner Mongolian scholar Urgunge Onon, Lattimore established Mongolian Studies at Leeds in 1968 with an emphasis on language training. During the 1930s, Lattimore had acted as a field guide for a British import/export company trading across Inner Asia. According to the University of Leeds, "During his travels Lattimore became obsessed with the caravans and Mongolian way of life, and as soon as he had saved enough money he joined one of the caravans to Xinjiang on the western frontier of China."

Among other major scholars of Mongolian Studies in the UK, who can probably claim a similar obsession, were the historians John Boyle (Manchester) and Charles Bawden (SOAS, London). Both maintained a close relationship with Mongolian scholar Walther Heissig in Germany. It was through the 1957 International Congress of Orientalists at Munich that Bawden was able eventually to visit Mongolia for the first time in 1958 and again in 1959 when the First International Congress of Mongolists took place with scholars from the UK, Japan, Europe and the wider region.

Urgunge Onon, who played a significant role in establishing Mongolian Studies at Leeds, worked with Caroline Humphrey to establish the Mongolia and Inner Asian Studies Unit (MIASU) at the University of Cambridge in 1968.

Much of the scholarship produced within MIASU, which has a primarily anthropological orientation, has been foundational to Mongolian Studies worldwide. The McArthur Project run by Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath in the 1990s made important contributions to the understanding of pastoralism, environment, society and state policy in the region.

Since then MIASU has become a hub for Mongolian Studies in the UK, inviting visiting scholars from Mongolia through its scholarly exchange fund, seminar programme, conferences and post-graduate supervision for students of Mongolia, or from Mongolia, e.g. Bumochir Dulam, Chuluunbat Purvee, Baasanjav Terbish, Tuya Shagdar and Zoljargal Enkh-Amgalan. Many Cambridge students since graduation have been employed in universities across the UK and beyond, including: Rebecca Empson, Katherine Swancutt, Mette High, Richard Irvine, Lars Højer, Morten Pedersen, Rane Willerslev, Thomas White, Franck Billé, Paula Haas, Hurelbaatar Ujeed and Jonathan Mair. Several of these individuals been involved in major research projects at the Unit, including the AHRC funded Oral History of Twentieth Century Mongolia and have gone on to lead major research projects, such as Rebecca Empson's ERC-funded Emerging Subjects of the New Economy based at UCL.



1. Reception at the Cambridge Mongolia Forum 2022  
©Tsetegdulam Edwards
2. Oxford Desert Conference 2023 participants  
© Kelsey Monteith

MIASU collaboration with the National University of Mongolia's Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology led to institutional development initiatives funded by the Open Society Institute and Wenner-Gren Foundation. The biennial Cambridge Mongolia Forum is another joint project where academics, diplomats and government officials are invited to come together to share their expertise with the academic community. David Sneath is now Director of the MIASU where he and Uradyn Bulag both currently lead major research projects on Mongolian matters.

Since 2006, the UKRI has funded over 20 major research projects amounting to over £13 million focusing on the history, anthropology, geology, environment and epidemiology of the country. Additional funding has come from the Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy and the European Research Council. These projects represent long-term collaborations between research institutions in the UK and Mongolia, including scholarly exchange, original research, and expansion of research capacity for all involved.

Significant funding has gone to a collaboration between Professor Adrian Martineau at Queen Mary University of London and Dr Ganmaa Davaasambuu and her team at the Mongolia Health Initiative. They are conducting NIH-funded tuberculosis research in collaboration with colleagues at the Mongolian National Center for Communicable Disease and the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences. Results from their large clinical trials have highlighted the high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in Mongolia, which has triggered health policy interventions locally to ameliorate the situation. The programme of work has also resulted in a large team of dedicated scientists receiving training in laboratory techniques, clinical trials methods, research governance, data management and statistical analysis.

In addition, the University of Oxford has well-established scholarly collaborations emphasising research, student training and societal benefit in Mongolia in the fields of geology, history, human geography, environmental sciences, zoology and conservation. For example, the UKRI-funded Gobi Framework Project (2018-2021) resulted in the formalisation of social impact assessment guidelines in Mongolia.



Likewise, Professor Richard Walker (University of Oxford) and Amgalan Bayasgalan (Mongolian University of Science and Technology) have worked on collaborative projects since 2004. Much of their work has focussed on the study of earthquakes and evidence in the geological record, which provide more knowledge and understanding of the general processes involved in the rare but large earthquakes that occur in continental interiors and the hazard they pose in Mongolia. Training and career development of students and young scientists have been important aspects of all their work, particularly in providing opportunities for field training and research-focussed workshops.

As noted above, Mongolian Studies in the UK and wider research collaborations have emerged from a long history of institutional exchanges and research training. An interdisciplinary example of this exchange is the biannual Oxford International Desert Conference organised by Ariell Ahearn and Troy Sternberg at the School of Geography and the Environment, which prominently features the work of Mongolian scholars working across disciplines on the history, arts, society and environment of deserts.

Likewise, Munkh-Erdene Gantulga has facilitated dozens of public seminars of UK scholars and research training events at the National University of Mongolia since 2006.

His organisation of the Social Science Research Summer School in Ulaanbaatar in 2022 as part of the Post-Pandemic Societies in Inner Asia project, brought together Mongolian, UK, Canadian and Japanese academics reflects ongoing efforts to encourage Mongolian engagement and leadership in the social sciences.

Given the strong foundation of friendship and collaboration built over 60 years between Mongolian and UK scholars, the future of Mongolian Studies is an exciting one which is likely to foster increasingly international and interdisciplinary research. The diversification of disciplines, institutions and sources of support that constitute contemporary Mongolian Studies in the UK demonstrates a move toward expansion and more inclusivity. With greater prioritisation of publishing in the Mongolian language as well as shifts to open access publication, scholarship conducted will be increasingly accessible to the Mongolian public. Further, the future of Mongolian Studies in the UK will certainly feature strong engagement and intellectual leadership from Mongolia to set directions and priorities for research. Sustainable sources of funding will allow for these dynamic engagements to continue into the long-term and help inform the next 60 years of UK-Mongolia relations.

# A SHORT OVERVIEW OF BRITISH STUDIES IN MONGOLIA

By Director of the Institute of International Studies at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Dr Zolboo Dashnyam

English was first taught at the University of Mongolia as far back as 1956, and in the 1960s, teachers from Britain were invited to work in Mongolia by UNESCO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, forming the foundation of British Studies in Mongolia.

In 1968, the Department of Asia and Africa was established under the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, and in 1976, it was expanded into the Institute of Oriental Studies, which became the foundation of the current Institute of International Studies. Country Studies and International Studies in Mongolia have been evolving ever since.

In 1971, the President of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Shirendev B., was the first Mongolian scientist to be awarded an Honorary Degree from a Western university when he was made an Honorary Doctor of Literature at Leeds University. Dr Dangaasuren N. and Dr Ishjamts N. were the first Mongolians to study at Cambridge University, and their work addressed historic, economic and political relations between the two countries.

With the transition to democracy, a multi-pillar foreign policy was adopted in Mongolia, and communications with Western and Eastern countries went on to influence the education sector, not only in terms of linguistics, but also the study of history, culture, society and politics. When the School of International Relations at the National University

of Mongolia was established in 1990-91, the foundation of Foreign Language and Country Studies was laid. In 2000, the Department of British and American Studies was formed, and in line with the Intergovernmental Cultural Agreement between Mongolia and Britain, teachers who studied at Leeds and Cambridge universities began to teach in Mongolia, which was a major step forward.

Since 1992, the British government's Chevening Scholarship has played a key role in the relationship between the two countries, and has opened opportunities for Mongolian students, as well as becoming a great impetus for Mongolian students who have studied in Britain to develop British Studies back home.

Works covered in British Studies include the memoirs of former Ambassadors to the UK such as D. Baljinnyam's *My Time, My Words* (2002), S. Dambadarjaa's *The Mongolian Hearth was Lit on the British Island* (1999), I. Ochirbal's *Memoires of Diplomat Grandfather* (2012), and D. Davaasambuu's *Thoughts, Reflections, Lessons* (2015). As living witnesses of history, these memoirs of senior diplomats have provided valuable information about the UK. In addition to the history of relations between the two countries, these books include interesting information about British political, economic, cultural and social structures, as well as about the city of London at the time and the Londoners who lived in it.



Professor of Mongolian Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Charles Bawden's visit to the Bodg Khan Museum in Mongolia in 1958, photographed with Byambyn Rinchen, a prominent representative of Mongolian literature



Recent research on Mongolia's foreign relations in the twentieth century has focused on the history of bilateral relations, with works such as *Mongolia and the Great Powers in the First Half of the 20th Century* (2006) by Dr. Ts Batbayar and Bulletin No. 127 (2003), of regular journal *Foreign Relations*, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia. In addition, the Institute of International Studies of The Academy of Sciences has published the joint works: *Mongolia and Western Europe* (2004) and *Mongolia - British Relations* (2005), among others.



Written by doctoral candidate of the Department of Social Management of the National Academy of Governance S. Zulfikar Ph.D., *British Government System* (2003) is among the most important works on British Studies and Country Studies, and describes the development of the British state system, plus its functions, operational features, politics and court system.

As part of an academic conference celebrating the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Professor L. Khaisandai and I gave a speech on the 'Historical Path of Mongolia-Britain Relations and Review of British Studies in Mongolia.'

In 2010, veteran diplomats D. Jambaldorj and G. Jargalsaikhan published the book *Mongolia-Britain Relations: trade and economic cooperation*, which covered the chronology of the relationship between the two countries, as well as statistics on trade, economy and investment. My work, *Mongolia-Britain Relations* (2012), updated the previous 2005 edition with new research and information.

In 2011, Mongolia's foreign policy established the concept of 'Third Neighbour,' which also defined Mongolia's relationship with Britain. Since then, The

Institute of International Studies has developed the field and research of Third Neighbour Studies.

Several publications have recently compared the politics, legislations, civil services, and the history of developed countries, including the British experience. These include: *Review of Administrative Law of Western Countries /France, Germany, Great Britain, USA* by J. Sukhbaatar (2015), *Guide to Governments of States and World Political Systems* published by Monsudar Publishing House (2012) and *Government Building in Foreign Countries* by Ch. Enkhbaatar and S. Zulfikar (2014). Also, the translations of *The Offices of Parliaments of the World* (2012) by the Secretariat of the Great Khural of Mongolia and *The International Experience of Human Resources Management and Coordination of Civil Service* (2022) by the Secretariat of Mongolian Government, demonstrate that Mongolian Government is seeking to introduce the experiences of developed third neighbours to Mongolia.

As part of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the Institute of International Studies, the Institute of History, and the Centre for Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies at Cambridge University jointly published the two-volume work *Transcontinental Neighbours*, which describes the half century history of relations between the two countries. A special issue of *Mongolian Economy* magazine focusing on the 'Historical partnership between Mongolia and Great Britain' was published in both Mongolian and English, in honour of this milestone anniversary.

In 2016, the National University of Mongolia organised an academic conference on British and American Studies, where Professor J. Bayasakh's presentation on 'Reflection on Mongolia, GB and the US', and my presentation on 'Brexit: History and Future' were discussed and published.

Following Brexit in 2020, Dr D. Ulambayar's paper *Mongolia's Third Neighbour Policy: Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation* (2022), included a chapter called 'Problems of Mongolian-British Relations in the Post-Brexit Era.' Here, he details information on how the Brexit process ended, plus any developments that could potentially occur in relations with Mongolia, trade-economy issues, and the new terms of the British Global Tariff, which continued to be implemented after the European Union's GSP+ trade discount scheme.

Funded by the British Embassy in Mongolia, the Institute of International Studies initiated scientific and cognitive journal, *British Studies*, with the purpose to promote Britain to Mongolian people, as well as providing regular information about it and the bilateral relationship.

Since relations between the two countries are mainly focused on politics, trade, investment, culture and education, the field of British Studies has been mainly focused on those areas. In the future, there is a need for research on how Britain is adapting to the post-Brexit era, and how these reforms and changes affect relations with Mongolia.

# MAGNIFICENT MONGOLIA - A MOTORING ADVENTURE

By Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club, Ben Cussons

Every few years a group of friends gather to do something adventurous. They come from all walks of life and share a passion for exploring the unspoilt wildernesses of the world. Previous expeditions have taken them to Africa and South America. When it came to planning their latest adventure, one place topped the list: Mongolia. The inspiration came from the famous Peking to Paris car rally, won by the Italian Prince Scipione Borghese. In the account of his trip, he spoke excitedly of his travels through Mongolia. Thus a plan was hatched to travel from Ulaanbaatar in the north west of Mongolia, south through the Altai Mountains and then east through the legendary Gobi Desert before finishing in Beijing. An eclectic group of cars was chosen: the first production Land Rover, (JUE 477), a 1955 Land Rover, three 1929 Bentley 4.5 litre tourers and a Porsche 911 – all ably supported by four of the latest INEOS Grenadier 4x4's.

For this team it is not just about driving, it is about learning the culture of the nation and its people. Mongolia offers that in spades. It is a nation that spawned Genghis Khan, the man who created the greatest empire that the world has known and brought order to his society.

Before we left, we learnt of the warmth of the Mongolian welcome when the UK Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Enkhsukh Battumur, personally assisted to ensure our essential supplies arrived. In late May 2023, our team of intrepid explorers assembled in Ulaanbaatar and the journey began. Our first camp was by a lake that afforded a spectacular sunset, the sky seemed to be on fire as we enjoyed a gin and tonic around the campfire.

Mongolia has dramatic scenery: mountains, plains and glorious light. With only 3.5 million people in the nineteenth largest country in the world, it offers that rare commodity in today's world – space, but more importantly untouched space. It would have been easy to stay and revel in the views, but we had many thousands of kilometres (km) to cover, and so our journey began. Mainly dirt roads with some tar, we climbed up through the Altai mountains to the snow line, (in June!), before we began our descent to the Gobi. We saw trained golden eagles with their horseback handlers, and we had lessons in archery albeit with mixed results! It was the ability of Genghis Khan's soldiers to fire arrows backwards whilst riding that gave them such an advantage on the battlefield.

Every day brought new challenges as the constantly evolving terrain challenged our vehicles. As we entered the Gobi for the first time, the fine dust made its way everywhere; nothing nor nobody was sacred! It was particularly challenging for the old vehicles which had never been designed for these conditions, we were constantly cleaning fuel lines and air filters but the cars responded to the care and attention and soldiered on. The occasional unplanned stop merely afforded the opportunity to enjoy the spectacular scenery with a welcome coffee.



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Whilst Gobi is described as a desert, that is merely a function of its low rainfall. There are sandy bits like the truly amazing barchan dune which really is difficult to describe; the size, colour and impact of this natural wonder takes your breath away. The Gobi is a remarkable wilderness, one camp was at 2,000m and the vista that unfolded in front of us had the sand dunes that we had hauled the Bentleys through with the Grenadiers, but way in the distance were snowcapped peaks – it was surreal! Most of the journey was on tracks marked by the very occasional road sign and tyres half buried in the ground, but fortunately we had a guide who could find his way with the skill of African bushman – he knew every bump, rock and track. The terrain was tough, the Grenadiers soaked up the punishment, but the Bentleys and Land Rovers needed sympathetic driving, especially when we hit the brutal corrugations. 90-year-old technology struggled to deal with mother nature's speed bumps – and they went on for km after km at times, forcing the average speed down. But then the Gobi would reward patience with an endless run of smooth grassy desert. Driving ten cars abreast was epic!

The days were sometimes long but never tedious, every km was different and our charming guide, Buya, was a font of Mongolian history and a pretty handy wrestler – a Mongolian national sport. We enjoyed an impromptu bout around the campfire as one of us challenged him.

As we left Mongolia, there was a deep sense of sadness amongst all of us, it was over all too soon. The warmth of the welcome from our Mongolian hosts had been matched by the beauty of the country. And we had only scratched the surface of this remarkable country. Will we be back?

Definitely!



# MILESTONES IN 60 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS



**23 January 1963:**

Mongolia and the UK establish diplomatic relations.



**19 November 1963:**

The first Ambassador from the Republic of Mongolia to the UK, D. Baljinnyam, presents his Letters of Credence in London.

**1964:**

Eight Mongolians come to the UK to study English at the University of Leeds for six months under the auspices of UNESCO.



**1969:**

Ambassador of the Republic of Mongolia to the UK S. Dambadarjaa presents his Letters of Credence in London on 19 November.

**1970:**

A group of UK MPs led by Sir Geoffrey de Freitas visit Mongolia. This is the first visit of British MPs to Mongolia.

**1972:**

The first cultural cooperation agreement between Mongolia and the UK is signed in Ulaanbaatar.

**1972:**

The first Mongolia-UK interparliamentary group is established in the UK and some MPs from Mongolia visit the UK.



**1973:**

The First Trade Agreement between the UK and Mongolia is signed.

**1973:**

The Programme of Cultural Exchanges between Mongolia and the UK between 1973-75 is signed in Ulaanbaatar.

**1975:**

A protocol between the Mongolian Chamber of Commerce and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry is signed in Ulaanbaatar.

**1975:**

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Mongolia is formally established in British Parliament.



**1981:**

The Agreement on Culture, Education and Science Cooperation is signed between the UK and Mongolian governments.

**1987:**

The first Mongolia-UK Roundtable is held in Ulaanbaatar as initiated by the UK. 14 roundtables have taken place since, either in Ulaanbaatar or London.

**1989:**

Lord Glenarthur, UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs visits Mongolia.

**1990:**

Lord Brabazon of Tara & Lord Glenarthur visit Mongolia.

**1991:**

Mongolia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Gombosuren Tserenpil visits the UK.

**1991:**

The Agreement on the Development of Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Co-operation between Mongolia and the UK is signed in London.

**1991:**

The Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments between Mongolia and the UK is signed in Ulaanbaatar.



**1993:**

HRH Princess Anne visits Mongolia.

**1993:**

Mongolian students first participate in the Chevening Scholarship. Since then, over 200 Mongolian students have studied in the UK with Chevening.

**1996:**

Convention between the Governments of Mongolia and the UK for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital is signed.

**1996:**

UK Foreign Minister Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind visits Mongolia.



1996:

President of Mongolia Ochirbat Punsalmaa pays a state visit to the UK.

1996:

UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Rt Hon Sir Jeremy Hanley, visits Mongolia.

1996:

Inter-Governmental Agreement between Mongolia and the UK concerning the Cooperation in the field of Education, Science and Culture is signed.

1997:

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh visits Mongolia.

1997:

Agreement between Mongolia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UK Volunteer Service Overseas on volunteers working in Mongolia is signed.

1997:

Mongolian defence officers and defence university lecturers attend the English languages courses in the UK between 1997 and 1999.



1998:

An MOU on mutual administrative assistance between customs authorities between the Governments of Mongolia and the UK is signed on 20 January.



2000:

Mongolia's Prime Minister Amarjargal Rinchenyenyam visits the UK.

2000:

The First Agreement on Air Services between Mongolia and the UK is signed in London.

2002:

Prince Edward, the Duke of Kent visits Mongolia.



2003:

Prime Minister of Mongolia Enkhbayar Nambar visits the UK (photographed with UK Foreign Secretary Rt Hon Jack Straw MP).

2003:

Chairman of the State Great Khural (Parliament of Mongolia) Byambadorj Jamsran visits the UK.

2004:

Chairman of the State Great Khural (Parliament of Mongolia) Enkhbayar Nambar visits the UK.

2005:

Peacekeeping English Project, a UK-funded three-and-a-half year language project, is implemented in the Mongolian Army.



2006:

Prince Andrew, the Duke of York visits Mongolia.



2007:

President of Mongolia Enkhbayar Nambar visits the UK (photographed with Ambassador D. Davaasambu and then President of Wolfson College, Oxford University, Professor Jon Stallworthy).

2008:

Prince Andrew, the Duke of York visits Mongolia.

2008:

UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Lord Malloch-Brown visits Mongolia

2009:

Vice Chairman of the State Great Khural (Parliament of Mongolia) Enkhbold Nyamaa visits the UK.

2009:

The Agreement to issue Mongolian citizens a 10-year UK visa and allow British diplomatic holders to stay in Mongolia without an entry visa up to 30 days is reached.

2009:

The British-Mongolian Chamber of Commerce is established in London.





2010:

First Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia  
Altankhuyag Norov visits the UK.

2010:

Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia  
Enkhbold Miyegombo visits the UK.

2011:

UK Minister of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs, Jeremy Browne,  
visits Mongolia.

2011:

President of Mongolia Elbegdorj Tsakhia  
visits the UK.



2012:

Prince Michael of Kent visits Mongolia.



2012:

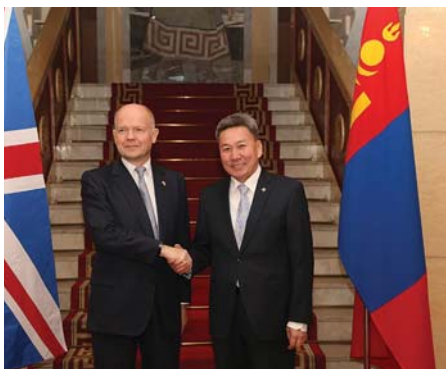
President of Mongolia Elbegdorj  
Tsakhia attends the opening ceremony  
of the London 2012 Olympics.

2012:

MOU concerning defence cooperation  
is signed between the Governments of  
Mongolia and the UK.

2012:

The P5, including the UK issues a joint  
communique, recognising Mongolia's  
nuclear weapon-free-zone status.



2013:

UK Foreign Minister Lord Hague of  
Richmond visits Mongolia.



2013:

50th anniversary of Diplomatic  
Relations between Mongolia & the  
UK. (Photograph: Mongolia's Minister  
of Foreign Affairs L. Bold with HM  
Ambassador to Mongolia Christopher  
Stuart at the 50th anniversary of  
diplomatic relations between Mongolia  
and the UK on 23 January).

2014:

UK Minister of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs Rt Hon Hugo  
Swire visits Mongolia



2015:

The British Army Polo Association  
starts a polo training programme with  
the Mongolian Army Team.



2015:

Prime Minister of Mongolia Saikhanbileg  
Chimed visits the UK (photographed with  
British Prime Minister David Cameron).

2016:

Mongolia's Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Purevsuren Lundeg visits the UK.



2017:

Members of the UK Parliament paid  
an official visit to Mongolia from 4-10  
November.



2018:

Mongolia and the UK celebrate 55 years  
of Diplomatic Relations. (photograph: as  
seen on this train in Ulaanbaatar).

2018:

UK Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific  
Rt Hon Mark Field visits Mongolia.





2018:

Mongolia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Tsogtbaatar Damdin visits the UK.



2021:

President of Mongolia Khurelsukh Ukhnaa attends the World Leaders Summit at COP26 in Glasgow.



2021:

Mongolia's Minister for Foreign Affairs B. Battsetseg meets UK Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan on 2 November in London.

2021:

UK Prime Minister appoints Mr Daniel Kawczynsky as its Trade Envoy to Mongolia.



2022:

UK Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Amanda Milling visits Mongolia, 11-13 May.



2022:

The 14 Mongolia-UK Roundtable is held in Ulaanbaatar on 12 May.

2022:

First consultation between Mongolia's Foreign Ministry and the UK FCDO takes place in Ulaanbaatar.



19 September 2022:

Mongolia's Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai attends the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II (photographed with former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and signing the book of condolences)



22-23 January 2023:

Embassy of Mongolia in London organised a reception and concert on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Mongolia and the UK

2023:

Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan visits the UK.

2023:

Mongolia is included in the UK Government's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), which replaces the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP).



6 May 2023:

President of Mongolia Ukhnaa Khurelsukh and the First Lady attend the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla.



24 October 2023:

The team from the Mongolian Embassy in London promoting *The Mongol Khan* play outside the Embassy premises.



# DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

A reception held on 23 January 2023 at The Dorchester hotel in London celebrated the 60th anniversary of Diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the UK.



1. Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan spoke to the guests
2. Artists from the Mongolian Grand Theatre of National Art
3. Ambassador Enkhsukh Battumur speaking to attendees
4. Mongolian folk dancers Mandukhai Jamsran and Khashkhuu Khatankhuyag
5. UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Daniel Kawczynski MP, delivering remarks

6. A full house at The Dorchester
7. Chief Executive of Copper at Rio Tinto, Bold Baatar, making his speech
8. Ambassador Enkhsukh Battumur (sitting) with Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan and Mongol Post CEO Ankhbaatar Badamrai launching a postage stamp dedicated to the 60th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations
9. Prominent artists came from Mongolia to entertain the guests
10. Mongolian dishes were served at The Dorchester

11. Mongolian chefs were on hand to cook various delicacies
12. Guests enjoying the cultural performances
13. Some British guests wore Mongolian national dress 'Deel'
14. Deputy Prime Minister Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan (centre) with Ambassador Enkhsukh Battumur and Mongol Post CEO Ankhbaatar Badamrai and various guests
15. Some VIP guests were interviewed for the MNB News Mongolia





МОНГОЛ - БРИТАНИ  
UK - MONGOLIA  
1963-2023