



Indian Council
of World Affairs

IRRATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

TSOGTBAATAR DAMDIN

Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, New Delhi

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INTRODUCTION

Up to now humanity has perceived international relations and its integral part, foreign policy, as the most rational, the most thoroughly planned and calculated and, thus, predictable form of interactions. However, everyone would now probably notice that, in recent years, the international relations of the XXI century have become incomprehensible, unpredictable and irrational.

Irrationalism as a school of thought stemmed from certain social views and approaches that were objectively formed in the course of the development of the philosophy of humankind. Though we, humans, on the surface are all creatures equipped with intelligence and reason, in reality we are the ones, driven by emotions, feelings, beliefs, imaginations or first impressions, under the influence of which we undertake many incomprehensible steps and actions that cannot be logically explained by ourselves. That is precisely described in Blaise Pascal's "the heart has its reasons, which reason knows not" notion.

There prevails a general expectation, perception and understanding that a country's foreign policy is usually of the

most rational nature, formulated by highly accomplished professionals and based on well-honed calculations. Actually, it is true, and it should be done this way. The reason for this is that the key subject of this field is not confined to investments, knowledge-, technology-transfer, people-to-people exchanges and international trade, but it also includes defense cooperation, maintenance of nuclear arms balance and preservation of peace and stability. In this sense, it deals with existential, to-be-or-not-to-be issues. Therefore, international relations and their development and diplomatic interactions are of utmost significance to the very existence of nation-states and the humankind. However, it is impossible to ignore that in today's world the international relations and diplomacy appear to be no longer rational, having gone irrational. So, there a need arises as to comprehending and recognizing the apparently irrational approaches. As a result of such comprehension, understanding and recognition, an opportunity will open for formulating adequate response policies and undertaking relevant measures. Otherwise, in the world where irrational behaviour has become common and universal, if any issue that emerges is approached from rational angles and attempted to be solved under such an approach, the response measures

Up to now humanity has perceived international relations and its integral part, foreign policy, as the most rational, the most thoroughly planned and calculated and, thus, predictable form of interactions. However, everyone would now probably notice that, in recent years, the international relations of the XXI century have become incomprehensible, unpredictable and irrational.

may well be missing the target and lacking inefficiency or, worse, such unfocused solutions may lead to the loss of time and exacerbation of the problem.

In particular, there are cases when politicians and policymakers in the heat of their struggle for political power shift the internal political contradictions and fighting to the international arena, and this trend brings about a real threat of transforming the international relations, fraught with its own multiple complexities, from the arena of healthy diplomatic competition and cooperation into the theatre of confrontation and enmity. When the negative attitudes triggered by internal national complications are augmented by politization and poured into the realm of the international politics without any filter and, when such negativities are further multiplied with the increase of the number of countries (with their own internal problems) involved, a real cause of any international contradiction (that is deeply intra-national in fact) gets hidden so far underneath that it becomes unidentifiable and, thus, the contradiction further aggravates in an inexplicable and, therefore, as if in a predestined way, making any peaceful settlement impossible. If this is not described as irrational, then what else is to be so described?

It is a fact that people readily believe in obviously “made-up” fake news.

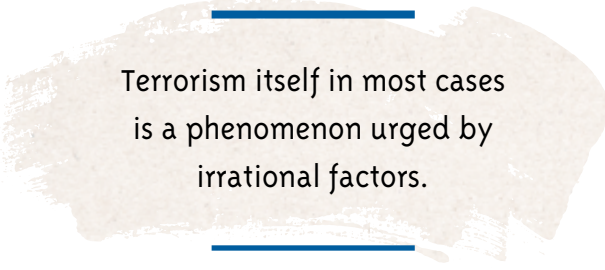
MODERN TIMES AND IRRATIONALISM

As mentioned above, irrational behaviour, views and actions could be traced so extensively in the present social life and, consequently, in the international relations that they began to appear as if they were a natural rule. Emotion-stirred actions, for which causes are unclear, and which are not accidental, occurring with multiple frequency are the testament thereto.

Modern times witness the unprecedented development of information and communications technologies. And this ocean of information spreads super freely. In this realm of digital and traditional information flow, where both truthful and fake information freely intertwine, people expectedly should have by now already grown more experienced and wiser in assessing the information. If a person launches a search, then along with every fake news the accurate information, exposing the fakes, floats around if not in exceeding, then at least in sufficient numbers. However, it is a fact that people readily believe in obviously “made-up” fake news. Fake news can be of both positive and negative content. And the negative fakes spread at a faster speed and covers wider range. The main point is that a false, unsubstantiated nature of such news is usually quite obvious, and, hence, it is understandable that not believing it outright or at least receiving such news with some doubt would be a very healthy approach. However, regretfully, it has almost become a routine that people,

irrespective of believing the fake news or not, spread it anyway as if they believe it. It is impossible to explain from the rational perspective the fact that our contemporaries, by encouraging fake news as the culture of a whole generation and of a whole era, are putting at risk everyone, including themselves and they, irrespective of understanding the risks, keep repeating the behavior that is potentially harmful for themselves.

Another new specific feature of information technology development is that a society or a given country almost in its entirety, irrespective of whether it is an industrialized one or not, has to live under a 24-hour camera surveillance. This surveillance is carried out not only by the state and relevant organizations through organized and authorized placement of surveillance cameras in streets, entrances, apartments, and offices but also on a larger scale through voice and video recording devices of smart phones and iPads that are so commonly used by citizens now. In addition, this public surveillance capacity is amplified by the social media power. On the other hand, despite existence of such limitless surveillance opportunities, terrorist activities, which usually require absolute secrecy, tend to gain a stable ground. It is also difficult to give a rational explanation to this trend. Terrorism itself in most cases is a phenomenon urged by irrational factors. Human beings are vested with a natural self-preservation instinct. But it is frequent that some people with extreme views have a superstitious blind belief that one can have a shortcut in reaching the paradise



Terrorism itself in most cases is a phenomenon urged by irrational factors.

to enjoy the eternal happiness through extreme fight that takes the sacrifice of others' and their own lives, which is, in their view, to establish justice and free the world from evil. The idea of such personal sacrifice is utterly inconsistent with natural instinct. And this again cannot be explained by reason.

In present world an increase of suicides is another irrational phenomenon. This phenomenon is registered mostly in developed countries with high living standard. At present every 40 seconds someone is leaving the world at her/his own choice, and the developed countries take the lead by this indicator. This means that every day by the time a person leaves his or her office after the completion of the working hours, almost one thousand people would have left the world. There is also no reasonable explanation to this. If it is explained by a difficult life and poverty, then, why this indicator is much lower in countries with much lower (than in developed world) living standards, and why people there (in countries with difficult life) do not give up on life and continue to struggle up to the last minute for their well-being. Thus, it is impossible to explain the issue by a simple argumentation as the life difficulties.

The world has been hit hard by Covid-19 for two years. It is a big success that the humanity, thanks to the special attention paid by developed countries, could develop the vaccines, i.e. a few varieties based on several differing technologies, before the end of the pandemic. Though the vaccines may not completely end the infection spread, it is a fact that the death toll has been reduced. Taking this into consideration, one cannot deny a special significance of the vaccines. However, a whole movement opposing the vaccines has emerged at the global level, thus slowing down the vaccination process. In some cases, the reason for such protests was based on unimaginably absurd rumors and gossips that governments were pursuing “chipization” of the citizens. The most surprising thing is that everyone cannot but know that “liquid chip” has not as yet been invented by the humanity. It is difficult to understand that there are quite many people who, though being aware of the fact, do believe or want to believe in such obviously fake news. Cautiousness towards the unknown long-time consequences of the vaccines can be seen as reasonably grounded and logical. But when the vaccine opponents continue to find pretexts to reject the vaccines even after doctors and scientists on the basis of advanced and very thorough tests,

conducted with the use of modern scientific achievements, assure the safety of the vaccines, except for certain cases, and allow the public administration of the vaccines, such rejection can probably be explained by their non-belief and unwillingness to believe against any argumentation anyway. It is incomprehensible that some of them demand test guaranties that ought to be developed on the basis of a period of time that exceeds the two years of the pandemic and the one year of the vaccine development at the time when the humanity cannot afford to wait for such a long time as it faces real risks to lose lives now within few days or even few hours.

Actually, though in the present world, where the humanity has achieved a high level of technological and scientific progress, there are sufficient objective-reality-based rational explanations to all of the above-mentioned phenomena, it seems that the atmosphere of misperception of the objective factors and the atmosphere of anger emerging as if naturally and inevitably are starting to fill and dominate the air, because large portion of humanity charge and fill their mind and brain with concepts and ideas driven by intuition, rumors, emotions, superficial senses and abstract images. It is not by accident that a Nobel

Nobel prize-winner Amartya Sen highlighted the fact that in terms of prosperity and progress, the current generation is living in a much more affluent, opulent and prosperous socio-economic environment, than all other previous generations.

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An average citizen in the present world enjoys in some respect better living conditions than the royalties and aristocracies of the previous centuries. For example, lung tuberculosis was an incurable disease in the previous century. Therefore, though the royalties, aristocracies and nobilities had the power and money, they were helpless against the disease. But today average citizens can be cured from this disease. From the point of view of information availability, the situation is even more contrasting. The contemporary “New York Times” weekly issues contain the amount of information, that would require a whole life of a XIX century person to obtain. The information consumption of a child from an average family at present is incomparable with that of royals and aristocrats of the previous century.

Humankind’s fast leaping development and its benefits will be specifically tackled further with the reference to specific data and indicators. Although the true state of affairs at the global level has been experiencing significant progress, the global

psyche has been experiencing extensive dissatisfaction, anger and discontent. Numerous demonstrations, such as the rallies of yellow vests in 2018 in France, the “Black Lives Matter” movement of the Afro-Americans etc. that took place before or during the pandemic, serve as a vivid illustration of this. Certainly, in history there has, probably, never been and there will never be societies without problems. Thus, the fact the world has been visibly progressing, as mentioned above, does not imply that there were no problems. However, when every problem is aggravated and exploited for provoking social division as well as urging populist, easy, one-swing solutions, the problems do not only get solved, but rather run into the risk of going worse and further exacerbated. Anyway, one should take into consideration the risks associated with the fact that anger-driven protests may lead to a catastrophe, not to the intended results. However, our generation witnesses such burst-prone anger and frustration all over the world. The above-mentioned irrational anger and frustration with no fully understood causes shift the social atmosphere to general frustration and strongly enhance the mindset that everything allegedly is going wrong. Today the people, who do not offer solutions, but exaggerate problems that everyone can see and provoke discontent,

When the intra- national frustration, caused by internal social anger and dissatisfaction, crosses the national borders, it starts affecting the international relations and that, in its turn, leads to the increase of global risks.

become famous and their fame, in turn, encourages further the rage provokers. In light of all of this the world seems to have entered into some kind of a vicious circle. When the intra- national frustration, caused by internal social anger and dissatisfaction, crosses the national borders, it starts affecting the international relations and that, in its turn, leads to the increase of global risks. The deepening of the internal contradictions per se is in reality relatively distant from nuclear risks (for competing national level political forces are less likely to opt for a military collision over national level discussions), whereas an acute international contradiction is fraught with a threat of nuclear risks. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to identify the source, where the contradiction is stemming from for preventing a war catastrophe, because often this or that contradiction will turn out to have no international connotation, requiring international means of problem- solution, at all.

Actually, the antagonism or irreconcilable confrontation that had prevailed since the invention of the nuclear weapons by

the humanity has vanished with the end of the Cold War and, thus, the modern international relations have become free from nuclear stand-off. The post-Cold War world was relieved from the traditional concept of an enemy whose objective was to annihilate or see the elimination of the rival. In other words, the irreconcilable “zero-sum” antagonism and rivalry between “communism” and “capitalism”, aimed at declaring one’s victory over the other’s defeat-triggered elimination, came to an end in the 90s. As a result, a new architecture that nurtured no reason for animosity and that held endless potential in case of cooperation came into being after the end of Cold War. However, the world again has slid back into division and malicious enmity. How can one describe this as having rational substantiation?

UNDENIABLE PROGRESS

What does the real global situation look like in the world, which is burning with the fire of irrational rage for everything seemingly

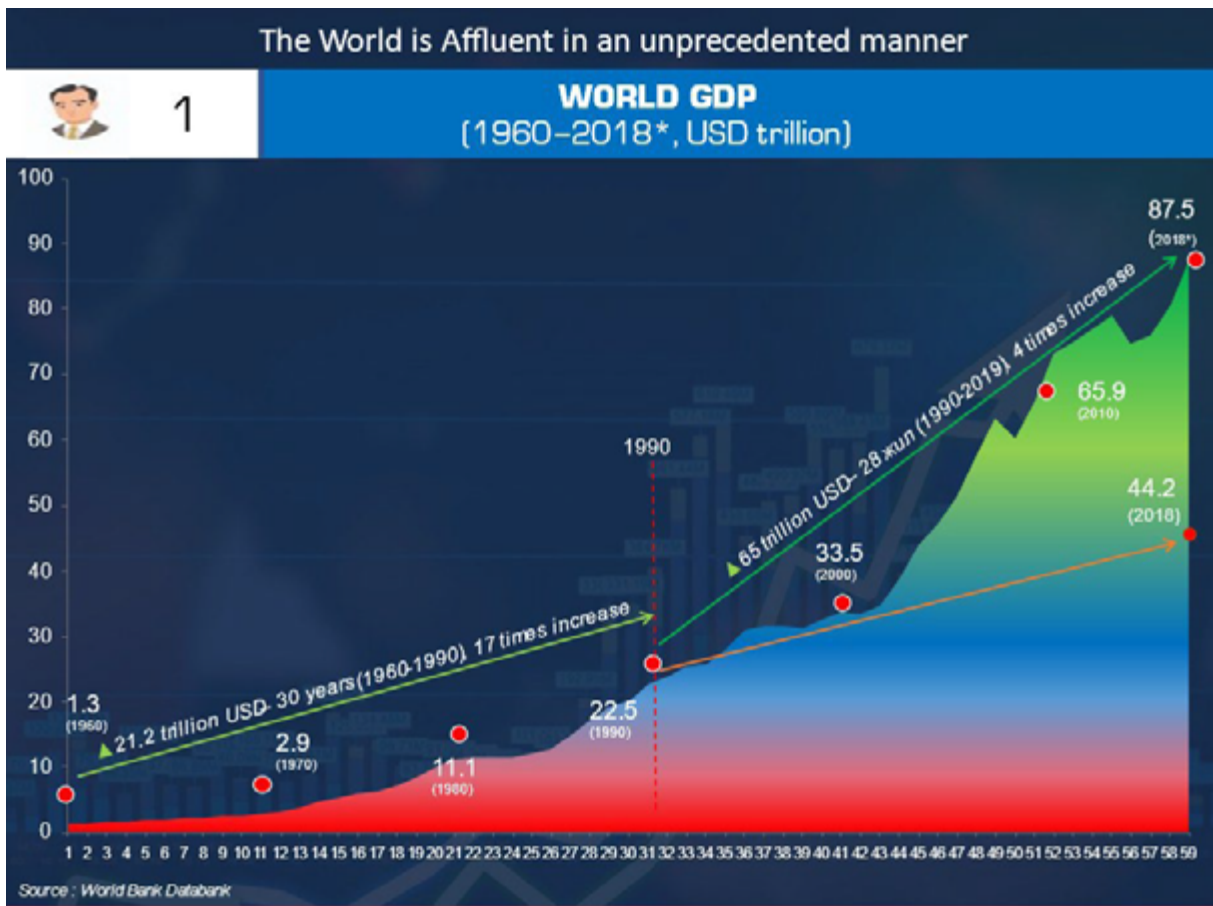
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going wrong, from the perspective of the economic growth statistics?

The global economy and wealth growth are assessed through the dynamics of the GDP, foreign trade and direct investments indicators. These indicators, though being criticized for overlooking the issues of equitable distribution and fairness, undoubtedly constitute important indicators displaying the humanity's growth and development through the use of measurable figures and data. Thus, once the dynamics of the global GDP growth are assessed in the period between 1960 to 2018 one can see that it had grown from USD1.3 trillion to USD87.5 trillion (Picture 1). But if one divides the period into two parts as approximately 30 years before the Cold

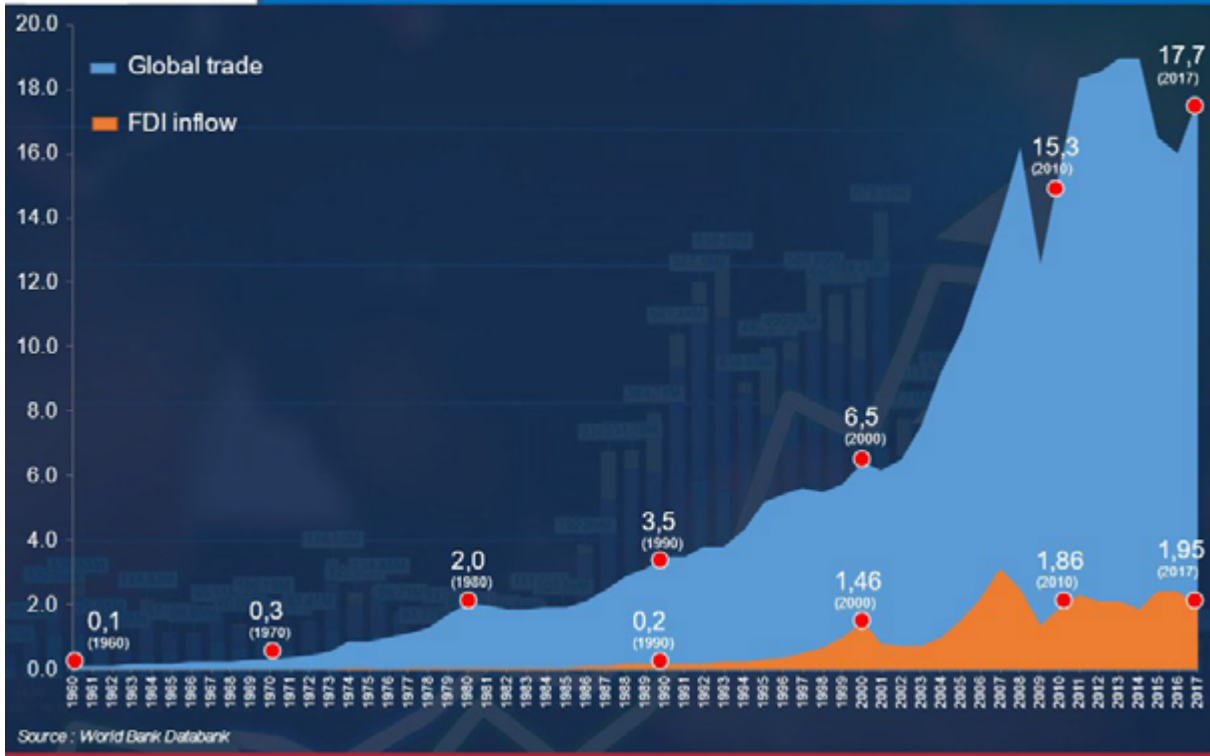
War and 30 years after it, taking the year of 1990 as the turning point, then the situation would look as follows:

- The global economy has grown 17 times from USD1.3 trillion within 30 years from 1960 to 1990 to USD 22.5 trillion.
- In the 30 years after the 1990s if the Cold War was not terminated one can presume that the global economy would have continued its growth rate of the last 30 years of the Cold War. Then one can assume that in 60 years since 1960 the global economy would have grown 34 times. In this case, the world GDP would have reached USD 44.2 trillion. But in real life as of 2018 this indicator equaled USD 87.5 trillion that exceeds nearly 100





GLOBAL TRADE AND FDI INFLOW (1960–2017, USD trillion)



per cent the level expected in case of the continuation of the Cold War. This may be considered as the benefit and dividend of the Cold-War-free globalization and cooperation.

The sudden upward leap can be clearly seen in the graph shown in Picture 1.

The global trade and investment growth rates have the same pattern (Picture 2):

A. GLOBAL TRADE:

- In 1960-1990 global trade increased 20 times from USD 0.1 trillion to USD 2 trillion.
- If the Cold War continued in the 30 years after the 1990s, the global trade, presumably, would have increased by its pre-Cold War period rate. Then one

can assume that in 60 years since 1960 the global trade would have enlarged 40 times. In this case, the trade turnover in 2020 would have reached USD 4 trillion at the global level. But in real life as of 2017 this indicator reached USD 17.7 trillion and that has exceeded the level expected in case of the continuation of the Cold War by 4 times or by over 300 per cent. This may be attributed to the end of the Cold War and this was the dividend of the free globalization.

- By comparing Picture 1 and Picture 2 one can clearly see that the end of the Cold War had a more favorable effect on the international trade expansion than on the world GDP growth. In other words, this fact clearly shows how seriously the global trade depends

From these facts one can see the favorable effect of the end of the Cold War, as well as the constructive impacts of the globalized world growth, democracy, market economy and cooperation without animosity even on a land-locked country like Mongolia.

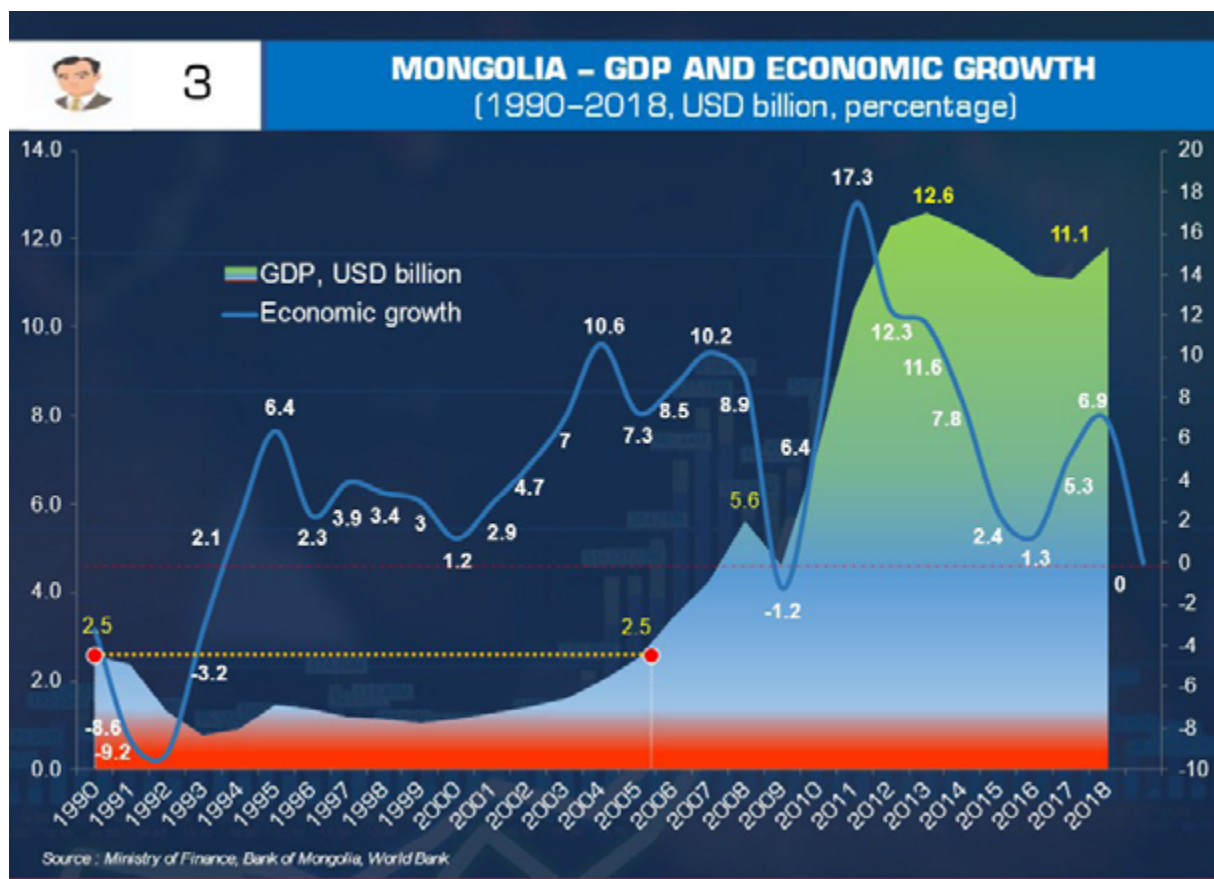
on the architecture, the system of international relations and on the international political atmosphere. And it also demonstrates how fragile the international trade is being susceptible to the earlier factors of the international relations.

measured in the scale of trillions stood at a negligibly small (nearly zero) level during the Cold War period and reached USD 0.2 trillion by the end of it.

- Judging from the previous two graphs in the earlier Pictures, if the Cold War has not ended, then in the 30 years after the 1990s the FDI inflow would have doubled. And in that case, it would have reached USD 0.4 trillion in 2020. But in real life by 2017 this indicator had reached USD 1.95 trillion

B. GLOBAL FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT:

- One can see that the foreign direct investment at the global arena once

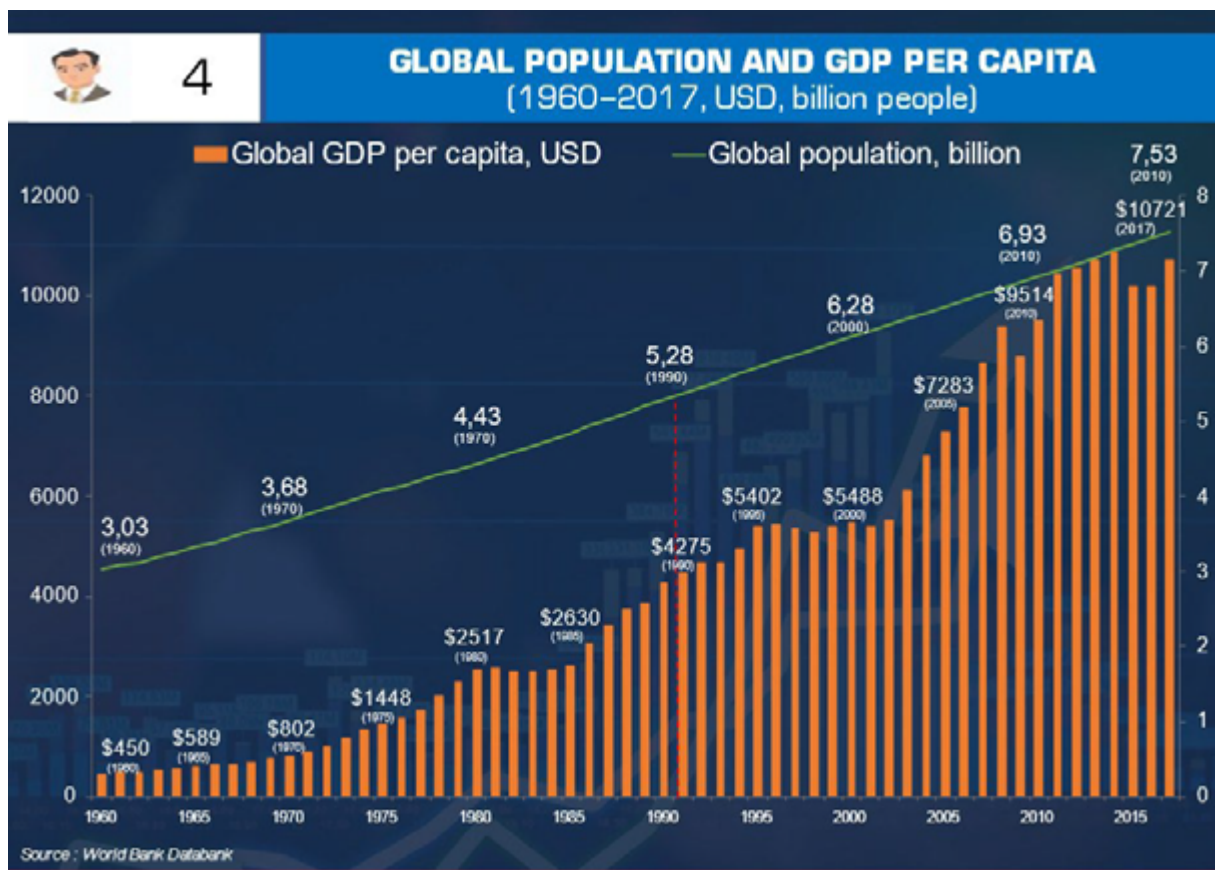


which exceeded the would be level by nearly 5 times or by 400 per cent. This is again another dividend and benefit of the end of the Cold War.

If we compare the global trade and economic growth rate indicators with that of Mongolia, as a member country of the world community, then, one can see a similarly correlated pattern (Picture 3). However, Mongolia's economic growth did not start outright from 1990, when the Cold War ended, as is the case with the global economy as shown in Pictures 1 and 2. On the contrary, in the 1990s Mongolia's economy experienced a sharp fall and started to grow gradually from the beginning of the new century. From 2003-2004, however, it began to experience an exponential growth. If we consider that

in 2005-2006 Mongolia's economy regained its 1990s level (USD 2.5 billion), then during 6-7 years the growth increased 5 times against the level that was achieved in previous 70-80 years (since the restoration of independence in 1921). From these facts one can see the favorable effect of the end of the Cold War, as well as the constructive impacts of the globalized world growth, democracy, market economy and the cooperation without animosity even on a land-locked country like Mongolia.

In terms of the GDP per capita, the rapid growth, that is triggered by the end of the Cold War, has impacted the indicator in more modest way (Picture 3). The world population grew between 1960-1990 by 1.7 times whereas its growth since 1990 has been 1.5 times. As to the GDP per capita it



In such a world of irrational frustration, it has become evidently clear that the rational approach of increasing the “common pie” of the global economy through the promotion of cooperation and partnership is stalled and stuck.

has been growing steadily without upward hikes and booms following the pattern of the previous 30 years development. Compared to the other economic indicators the modest growth of the GDP per capita could be a reason for the current world-wide frustration and dissatisfaction based on the difference of what an individual has gotten or could have gotten (which is short of the expected benefits) vis-à-vis the visibly increased wealth and accumulated capital. However, the rapid growth of the economy, trade and investment has clearly had a positive impact on the livelihood of people through considerably advancing the social development, and improving their access to social welfare/support, health care and education services as well as to the advantages offered by the ICT innovations.

A conclusion could be drawn from the above that the world economic progress and development, despite its imperfection, has advanced at an unprecedented pace. With the Cold War competition gone and the emergence of the international community with no irreconcilable enemies and enmity, with the formation of the global pattern of collaboration envisaging partnership if not friendship, one would expect from the rational viewpoint that the intensified world development would even further encourage and promote partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation. This

should have facilitated the formation of the vibes of international relations that support pragmatic and conducive approaches for the economic progress. Yet, the populists have dismissed and downplayed this achievement, saying that there is room for more, and claiming that the more wealth produced could be distributed in a fairer, more equitable manner and further acting in a misleading manner as if they knew the “secret mantra’ for such distribution, thus, successfully triggering dissatisfaction, frustration on both national and global levels. In such a world of irrational frustration, it has become evidently clear that the rational approach of increasing the “common pie” of the global economy through the promotion of cooperation and partnership is stalled and stuck.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: FROM THE COLD WAR THROUGH GLOBALIZATION TO THE COLD WAR II

The thirty years of globalization, having augmented the advantages of such institutions as the NAFTA (NAFFAI USMCA), AFTA, EU, APEC or customs unions, which embodied the actual realization of the “win/win” approach of the game theory, were doing away with the mindset of wars and conflicts. These decades encouraged

cooperation and brought global partnership to a new level.

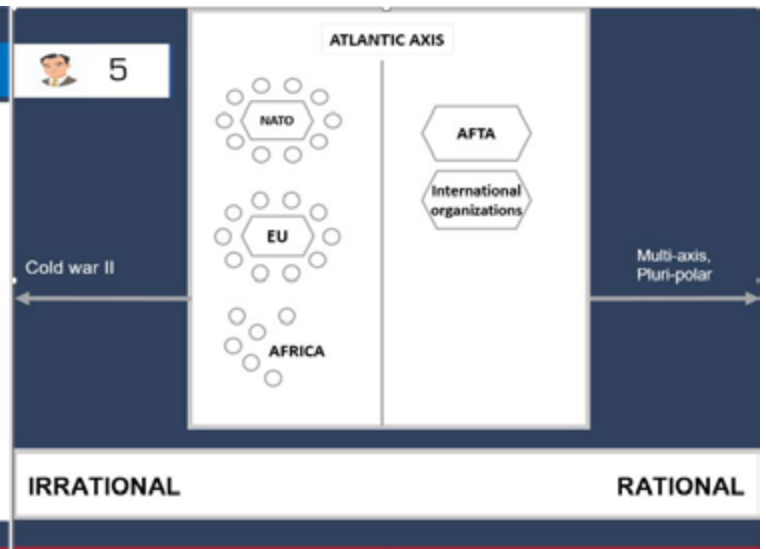
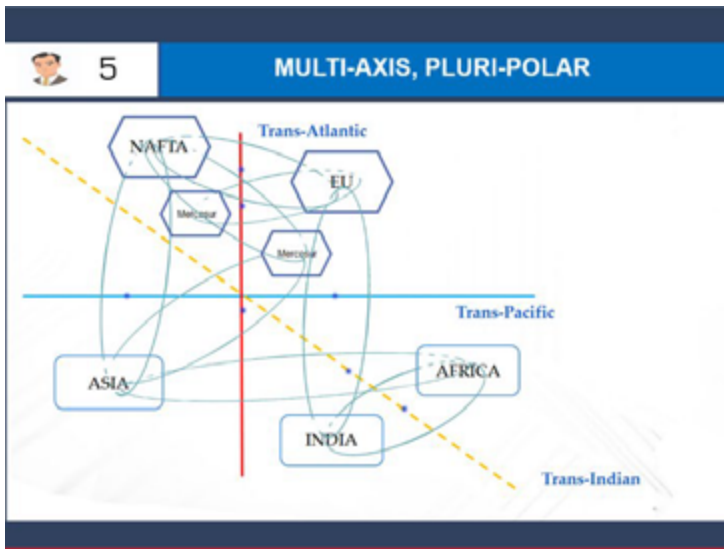
Who would have imagined that against the wide-spread amity and cooperation resulting in quite visible and tangible progress in the living standards and the livelihood of people, brought about due to the end of the Cold War, the international community would fall again into a new Cold War. It is obvious that since the world is not perfect, there have been neglected issues and shortcomings over the past 30 years of globalization. For instance, I mentioned above about the global growth and progress that advanced in a manner that deserved criticism of unfair distribution of wealth. However, in such a case there are usually plenty of simple policy measures, including sound tax policy, small and medium enterprises support incentives, improved accessibility of the social welfare system, to rectify the situation. However, turning a general dissatisfaction arising from internal issues of a country into an ambiguous frustration and shifting it beyond the country's level onto international relations arena does not only solve the original problem per se, on the contrary, it threatens to exacerbate, worsen and lead to other conflicts.

If the structure and the system of the globalized international relations negatively impact an internal issue of a country, it is quite possible to change the system of international relations into a new one through diplomatic dialogue and understanding. In fact, I have been sharing with the public my vision for the globalization process and the system that sustained it over the last 30 years to be transformed into a new, more progressive structure in response to the 2009 crisis. I believe that if the post-1990 system would evolve into a multi axis, pluripolar structure (Picture 5) the pace of the global progress can reach a new level.

In order to explain this new structure and the reasons behind such transitioning, there is a need to briefly touch upon the past structures and systems of the international relations.

The history of international relations reveals that since the establishment of early states, the relations among actors have been regulated by interaction customs and traditions that were formed by and attuned to a given time of the history. Overall, one could discern a picture where this structure has shifted in cycles and stages from a chaotic to an orderly pattern and vice versa

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interchanging as a result of historically dramatic changes and processes.

If we look at the main models of the systems of international relations prevailing in world history over the past 2000 years, one must analyze first the system existed during the Roman Empire. At that time, there was a system of relations, which had a strong state at the centre, surrounded by chaotic small tribes and tribal unions. The main feature of this system was that the periphery of the superpower, which was the center of the system, was constantly attacked by tribes, i.e. the “barbarians”, and, therefore, in order to maintain its development advantages the central country-power had to pursue a defensive policy from small tribes, considered weak and inhabiting the areas stretching beyond the outer boundaries of the centre-state. In other words, this was a system where a big actor had to protect itself from small ones. At that time, a similar relationship developed in Asia with China-centered system surrounded by nomadic tribes and their states. The history of the Great Wall clearly attests the times when

the powerful center also pursued a defensive policy from tribes, khanates and countries outside its borders. In short, there existed a structure of international relations with two main centers. (Picture 6).

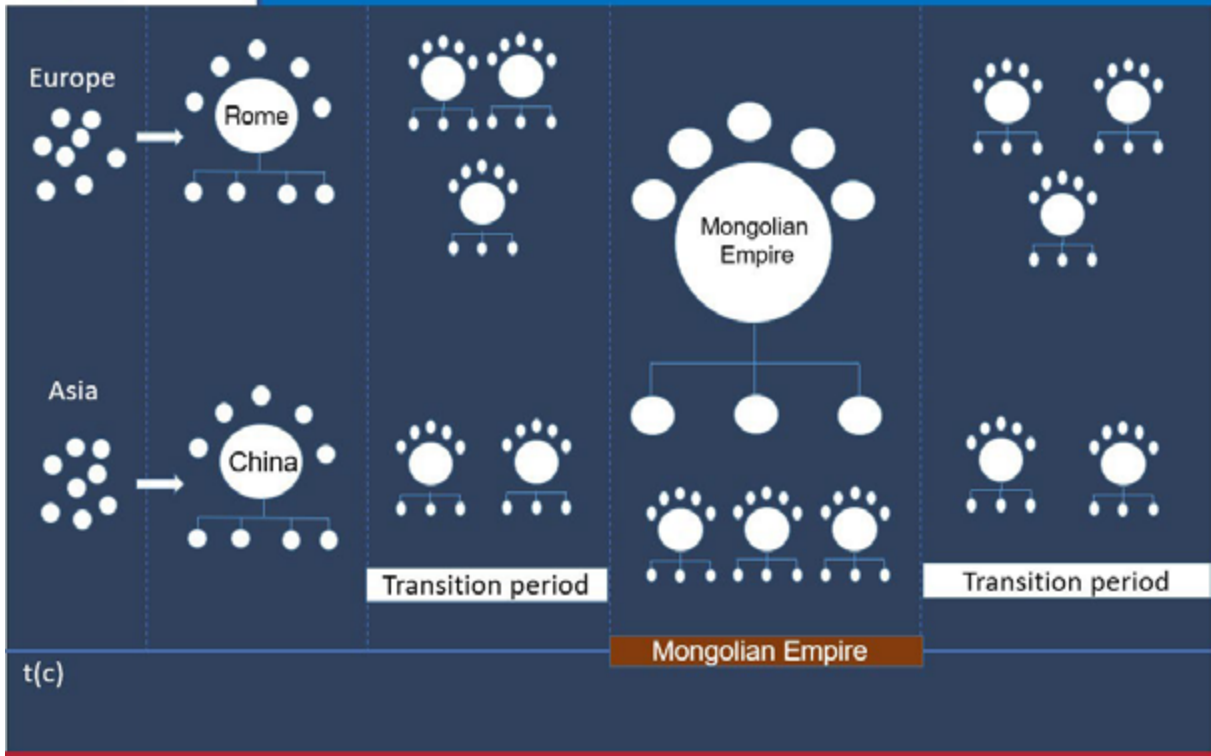
During the Mongolian Empire, there was a system of relations characterized by a series of small countries orderly arranged around a powerful state in Eurasia. Unlike the system under the Roman Empire, the players surrounding the dominant empire did not threaten the central state of the system, but, on the contrary, were dependent on it and existed under its patronage and protection. The main policy of states and khanates in conflict with the main power was not to threaten it, but rather to avoid its threat (Picture 6).

Prior to World War I, international relations had a system with Europe as its center and with legalized colonial rule. The core of international relations was based on competition between the colonial powers, with the dominant Machiavellian approach putting heavy emphasis on interests,



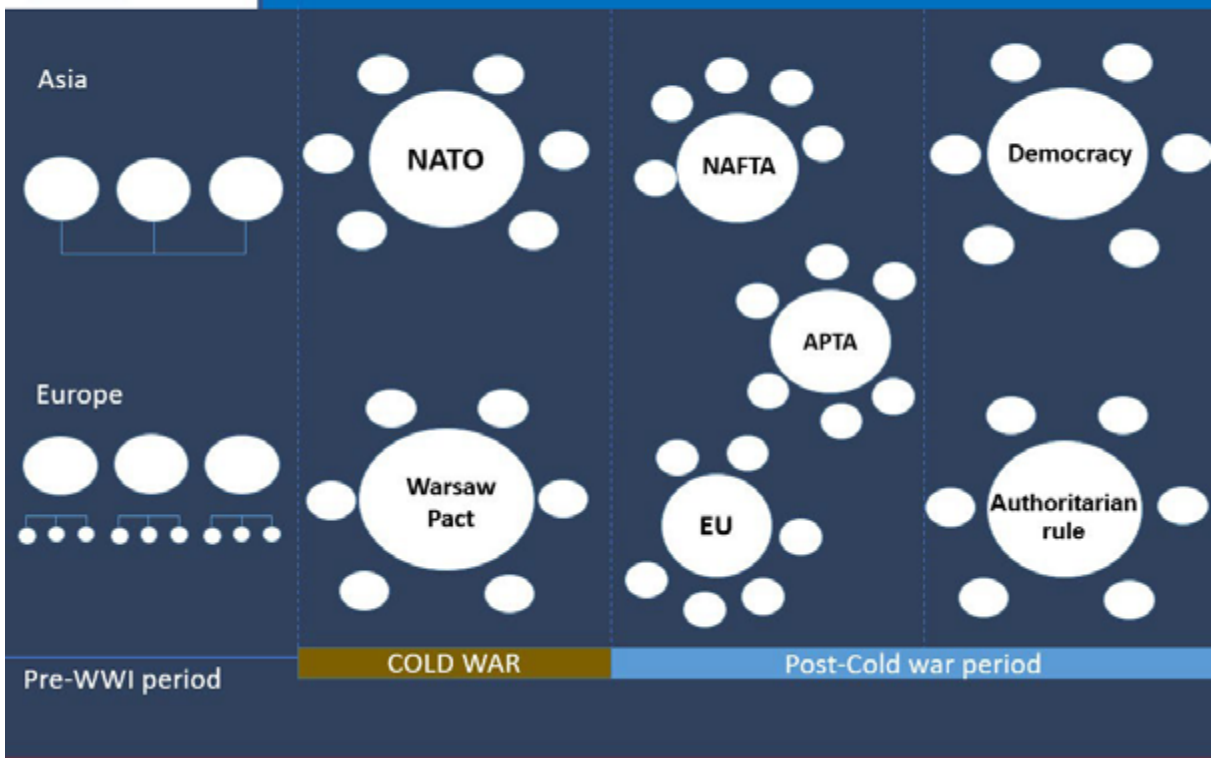
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BUT...



7

BUT...



Over the past 30 years, during which the globalization intensified without the Cold War, the economy has become a central issue in international relations with ideology and politics receding to the background.

power-play and respect for certain hierarchy (Picture 7).

Since the World War II, the international relations were clearly bipolar, with an irreconcilable ideological confrontation, or it could be said that it had a zero-sum game pattern. As the system was built as a result of the most devastating war in human history, which ended, in fact, with the use of nuclear weapons, the system, although was based on irreconcilable antagonism, it, however, was predisposed to avoiding direct armed conflicts between the super powers, and was overwhelmed by the ideological Cold War. The two polar powers had their own satellite states, and there was a separate group of countries that joined the Non-Aligned Movement to stay away from either side. Since the international community, its markets, and its scientific and technological capacity were divided into two or three parts, separated by an “iron curtain,” the world progress advanced at a slower pace even though the global community was free from the world war (Picture 7).

With the end of the Cold War, however, the world economy shifted away from the trans-Atlantic-centered development model with the Western countries as the main pillars, and moved to the parity system, which formed as a result of the expansion of the trans-Pacific trade and economic relations.

Gradually, the trans-Pacific investment and trade surpassed the trans-Atlantic commerce. Over the past 30 years, during which the globalization intensified without the Cold War, the economy has become a central issue in international relations with ideology and politics receding to the background.

For example, countries continued trade and economic relations uninterrupted even if they had difficult political disputes, and cooperated in line with the WTO rules. The world was then transformed into a system with two axes, the Atlantic and the Pacific, along with multiple poles, such as North America (NAFTA), Europe (EU), Asia (AFTA), Latin America (MERCOSUR), and the Middle East (OPEC).

The 2008-2009 crisis highlighted the weaknesses of the post-Cold War globalized system and reminded about the need for a shift to a new system of international relations as the crisis ends.

The 2008-2009 crisis highlighted the weaknesses of the post-Cold War globalized system and reminded about the need for a shift to a new system of international relations as the crisis ends. That is why many observers and researchers around the world have been focusing on what the post-crisis system should look like. As for me, the hypotheses that I postulated in light of this search was the aforementioned “multi-axis, pluri-polar structure”.

Along with the Atlantic and Pacific axes, the Indian Ocean axis is starting to stand out. Western policies and initiatives that emphasize the Indian Ocean axis are also being actively discussed. As part of our southern neighbor’s initiative, a continental transport and logistics network across Eurasia is also being developed. The construction of such a large land network, being placed at the center of transport policy for the first time in the last 500 years, could be considered as the opening of the door for Mongolia to regain its lost opportunities due to non-access to world maritime transport routes. This is the land axis that intends to restore constructive push of the ancient Silk Road. The recent impasse at the Suez Canal has also intensified the development of the Arctic Ocean route. This is another additional axis.

With the development of information technology, online commerce and services are expanding. Following this, the digital axes can develop along the cable channels. As the world’s air transport services become cheaper and more developed, air transport axes will rapidly expand. Furthermore, we do not know how many axes will emerge with the development of technology. Hence, the axes may be indefinite in number, which is why it is defined as ‘multi’. On the other hand, no matter how many poles or centers emerge based on geographical location, they are all limited by number (because of the finite nature of land mass), hence, they are referred to as ‘pluri’.

Just as the boundless universe is undergoing perpetual changes and movements with specific structure (breakdown and new formation are intertwined), so are international relations, in my view, break from certain structures and form new systems and structures. According to this pattern of transition of international relations to a new system and structure, this time it is expected to move to a “multi-axis, pluri-polar” structure. If this system is not formed objectively on its own, as conscious human beings (homo sapiens), we (the humankind) could deliberately work to introduce this system (if considered beneficial).

According to this pattern of transition of international relations to a new system and structure, this time it is expected to move to a “multi-axis, pluri-polar” structure.

Our generation has a great responsibility to put an end to the already-unfolding Cold War II and to direct the international relations to a healthy and creative new system.

In any case, it would be better for us to steer our frustration-driven world to a more creative system, rather than let it fall into a new Cold War that clearly demonstrated its knack for curbing development and progress.

If only we could agree on the notion that in case international relations move on its own into a right direction we should support the process, however, if it slides towards confrontation, then, we should consciously guide it to a system that promotes cooperation, in which case the humanity would have unlimited potential to advance, given the current level of scientific and technological progress. However, unfortunately, the world finds itself today in a situation of wide-spread irrational impulses and high levels of confrontation leading to armed conflicts. In addressing the General Assembly in 2021, the UN Secretary-General described the current world, targeted by 14,000 nuclear warheads, as facing an unprecedented threat of a nuclear conflict.

Even at the height of the Cold War between 1946 and 1990, we did not face such a threat, and today the world, divided by democratic v. authoritarian rule standoff, is on the brink of a catastrophe. Even though the irreconcilable antagonism of the Cold War has ended, thus, being left far behind us, we,

somehow, still found a knack to invent new conflict-provoking rifts and cracks, which demonstrate the enormity of the depth and the width of the irrational corners of our mind. Therefore, our generation has a great responsibility to put an end to the already-unfolding Cold War II and to direct the international relations to a healthy and creative new system.

The question then arises as to whether we can overcome the irrational impulses, anger and frustration through exploiting rationally calculative reasoning and move to a creative cooperation pattern of a new level. I have no doubt that our reason, intellect will eventually win and harmony will prevail, as a result of which we can invent multi-gear engine of new relations to bring the humankind development and progress to the next level.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born on January 14, 1970 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

EDUCATION

- 1988 Russian Secondary school No.14;
- 1994 M.A., Political Science (Honors), Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Moscow, Russia
- 1998 Master of Legal Studies (International Law) with Distinction, School of Law, Australian National University, ACT, Australia;

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 1994-1996 Attaché, Department of Asia and Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia;
- 1994-1995 Part-time lecturer, School of International Relations, National University of Mongolia;
- 1998-1999 of Mongolia;
- 1998-2000 Attaché, Department of Foreign Trade and Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia;
- 2000-2002 Deputy Director, Department of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia;
- 2002-2008 Foreign Policy Advisor to President N.Bagabandi and President N.Enkhbayar of Mongolia;
- 2008-2011 State Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia;
- 2011-2012 Advisor to the Prime Minister of Mongolia;
- 2012 Minister for the Nature, Environment and Tourism of Mongolia
- 2012-2013 Secretary, Mongolian People's Party, Member, Governing Council;
- 2012-2014 CEO, "Xillion" LLC and Advisor, "JusTs Consulting" LLP;
- 2014-2015 Minister for Construction and Urban Development of Mongolia;

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| 2015-2016 | Advisor, “JusTs Consulting” LLP and “Xillion” LLC; |
| Since 2016 (Re-elected in 2020) | Member, Parliament of Mongolia, Head of Parliamentary Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, OSCE; |
| 2016-2017 | Chairman, Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights |
| 2017-2020 | Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia |

LANGUAGES

Russian, English, Khmer, Thai, and basic German

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

- 1. “Individual Action Plan of Small and Medium Developing Countries on Making Their Territories Immune from Terrorism”, Compilation of Materials of the Conference - “Globalization and Mongolia: National and Human Security”, p.109-113, Office of the President of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar (2004); Optimum Magazine #1, Ulaanbaatar (2007) /p.50-53/
- 2. “Ensuring National Security through Political-Diplomatic Methods”, National Intelligence Academy, Ulaanbaatar (2010) /p.4-6/
- 3. “Irrationalism in International relations”, Sipra forum 2021 N°05 Ulaanbaatar (2021) /p.10-24/

INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

- 1. “Trading for the Future: Environmental Dimensions of Global Trade”, “International Trade and Business Law Annual” Volume V, Cavendish Publishing, London (April 2000) /p.277-307/
- 2. “Mongolia”, “The World Trade Organization: Legal, Economic and Political Analysis” Vol. III, edited by Arthur E. Appleton, Michael G. Plummer, Patrick F.J. Macrory, International Trade Law Center, Springer, Boston (2005) /p.250-265/
- 3. “Mongolia’s WTO Accession: Expectations and Realities of WTO membership”, “Managing the Challenges of WTO Participation”, edited by Peter Gallagher, Patrick Low, Andrew, Cambridge (2005) /p.409-419/
- 4. “Consensus for the Pluripolarity Reform: Rationale of Plurality” at the “China’s New Reforms” Conference held in China, China New Reforms: “The Role of the Party” (2014) /p.134-136/

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- 5. Why the World Should Help Mongolia Save Its Endangered Gobi Bear? (<http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/why-world-should-help-mongolia-save-its-endangered-gobi-bear>)
- 6. Век изменений правил игры /A Century That Changed the Rules/ (https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/a-century-that-changed-the-rules/?sphrase_id=1370561)

AWARDS

- Diplomatic title of “Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary”, Decree of the President of Mongolia, 2018
- The EU top human rights prize, 2021
- Order of “Polar Star”, 2005
- Winner of the International Business Law Essay Competition (among Australian and New Zealand Post-Graduate law students) organized by TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland, Australia

Mr. Tsogtbaatar Damdin is an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and currently a member of the Mongolian State Great Khural (Parliament). He earned Master’s degree in Political Science (with. Hon) from the Moscow State University of International Relations (MGIMO) and Master’s degree in International Law (with Dist.) from the School of Law, Australian National University.

Mr. Tsogtbaatar Damdin is a diplomat and a politician. Furthermore, he has served as Mongolia’s Minister for the Nature, Environment and Tourism (2012), Minister for Construction and Urban Development (2014-2015) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (2017-2020). He also served as a foreign policy advisor to two Presidents of Mongolia. He was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights between 2016-2017, and was elected twice to the National Parliament (2016 and 2020).

During his tenure as the Minister for the Nature, Environment and Tourism, he was instrumental in passing the new package of laws by the Parliament, which brought drastic changes to the legal framework on the environment. Also, during his tenure, the Ministry of the Nature, Environment and Tourism’s status moved up from a line ministry to a main stream policy ministry. As the Minister of Construction and Urban Development, he focused on making the philosophy of the sector “human centric” and successfully implemented initiatives, such as “Rental Housing Program” for the first time in Mongolia and decreasing the down payment on mortgages to 10 percent and extending the term to 30 years.

Mr. Tsogtbaatar Damdin started his diplomatic career as an attaché in the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1994, served as State Secretary of the Ministry (2008-2011)

and later on as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia (2017-2020). During his time at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he initiated a number of sweeping reforms both in the mindset and practice of the Mongolian diplomacy. His initiative to establish an International Think Tank for Land Locked Developing Countries, to be the first-ever international inter-governmental organization based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. He also initiated “Peacebook Forum” in collaboration with the Facebook Inc., to strengthen peace and mutual understanding among the youth around the world using social media. Also, his policy on introducing number-crunching culture into the foreign policy development practice, making it economic-growth oriented added pragmatism into the diplomacy of Mongolia.

As a Member of Parliament, he drafted the Law on Legal Status of Human Rights Defenders (passed on April 1, 2021), which made Mongolia the first country in Asia to legislate such a law and also, was a big step forward in the Mongolian legislative system, especially in the area of human rights promotion. In addition, he co-drafted bills and amendments to the laws such as, the Public and Civil Service Law, the Law on Sports, the Law on Establishing Millennium Challenge Corporation in Mongolia and the Law on Ratification of Amendments to the Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

He was a part-time lecturer of International Trade Law at the National University of Mongolia. His research papers and articles have been printed in London, Boston and Cambridge. He is a member of the International Council and a member of the Advisory Board of the Asia 21 (Young Leaders Program) of the Asia Society headquartered in New York, USA.

He started practicing Judo from a very young age and won Silver medal in National Junior Judo Tournament “Student” in 1986. He still actively practices and promotes Judo as an initiator and member of Judo Intellect Club.

Mr. Tsogtbaatar Damdin was born in 1970 in Mongolia. Married and has two children.

He speaks Mongolian, English, Russian, Khmer, Thai and basic German.





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