

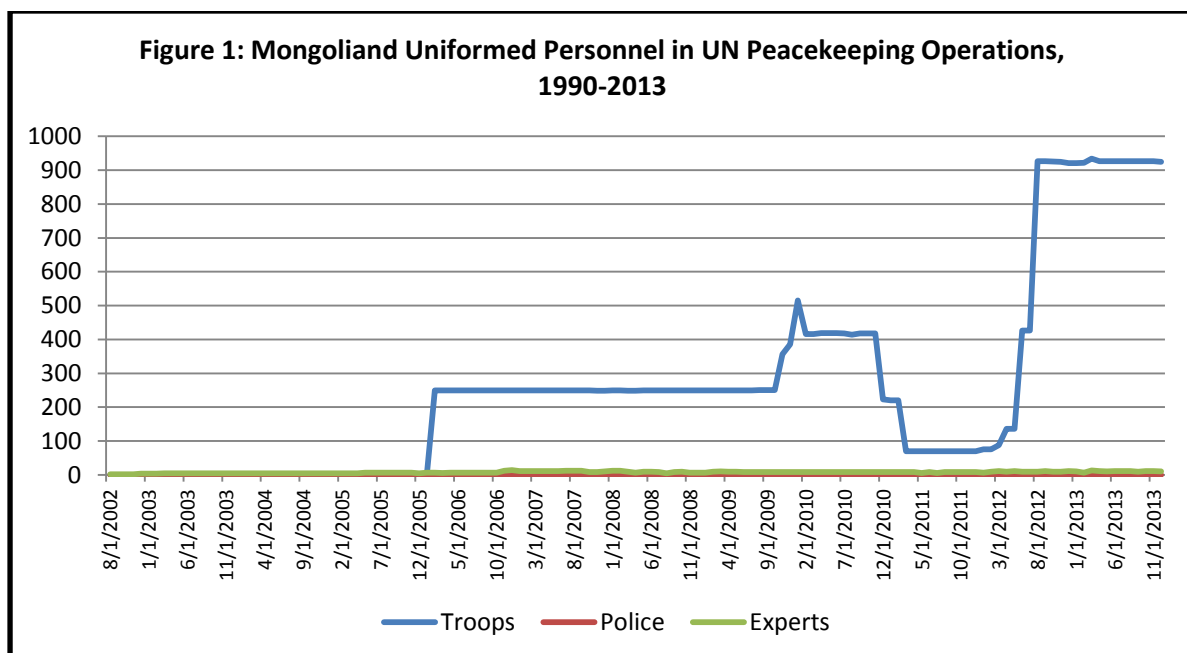
Contributor Profile: Mongolia

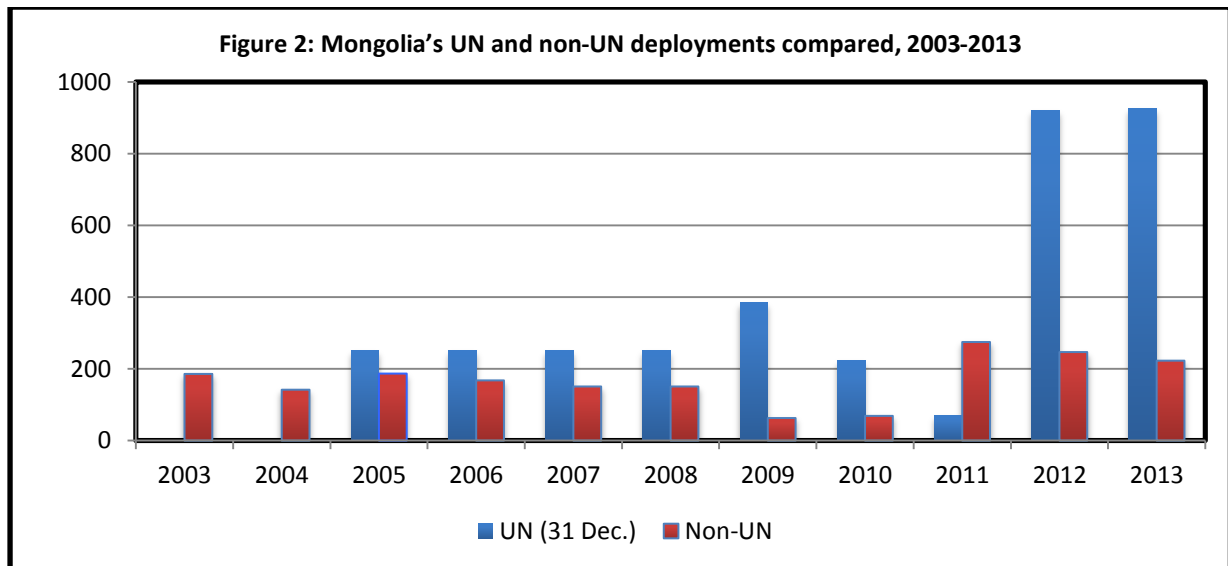
Mendee Jargalsaikhan
University of British Columbia

Active armed forces ¹	Helicopters	Defense Budget	Uniformed Peacekeepers	UN Contribution Breakdown	Other Significant Deployments
10,000 World Ranking (size): 120 Army: 8,900 Air Force: 800 Construction troops: 300 <u>Reserves:</u> Army: 137,000 Navy: 339 Air Force: 186 Paramilitary: 7,200	Transport / Attack: 13 (11 Mi-8, 2 Mi-171)	2011: \$81m (0.93% of GDP) 2012: \$114m (1.15% of GDP) 2013: \$133m (1.1% of GDP)	935 (64 female) (31 Dec 2013) Ranking: 27th	MINURSO: 4 experts MONUSCO: 2 experts UNAMA: 1 expert UNAMID: 68 troops UNISFA: 1 expert UNMISS: 857 troops; 2 experts	ISAF (Afghanistan): 88
Defense spending/troop: \$13,300 (compared to global average of approx. US\$70,000) ²					

Part 1: Recent Trends:

Since its dispatch of two military observers in 2002, Mongolia has become a significant contributor to UN peacekeeping missions as well as contributing to non-UN operations. From 2005, it contributed a little over 200 troops to peacekeeping and after a short period of fluctuation, significantly increased its contributions in 2012 as a result of its contribution to the UNMISS mission in South Sudan. Mongolia has deployed 4,800 personnel for UN peacekeeping missions, as well as more than 3,500 personnel to non-UN missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo (see Figure 2), and 145 officers (including 102 UN military observers) for various staff assignments.





Mongolia has also become a regional training venue for peace support operations. It sees UN peacekeeping, and training, as a useful way of promoting cooperation and trust in a region historically plagued by suspicion. It has therefore, since 1998 when discussions began with US Pacific Command about establishing a peacekeeping training centre, tried to promote itself as a neutral training base. Mongolia today hosts an annual peacekeeping exercise, *Khaan Quest*, which brings together the militaries of the region and beyond. For instance, the US, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Nepal, South Korea, Tajikistan, the UK, and Vietnam participated in the 2013 exercise, while Russia and China sent observers. Mongolia also organizes bilateral peacekeeping exercises with China, Russia, India, the US, Germany, and Qatar, and hosts various UN peacekeeping courses for multinational officers and trainers.

Part 2: Decision-Making Process

The National Security Council (NSC), the Prime Minister's cabinet and the Parliament are the most important decision-makers. The NSC consists of three veto-holding members: the President, who is the head of the NSC and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the Chairman of the Parliament, and the Prime Minister. When a request is received from the UN, it is initially reviewed by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, which includes consultation with the General Staff. If these two entities support the deployment, they will forward a recommendation to the NSC which, if the three members concur, makes a recommendation to the government (i.e., Prime Minister and his/her cabinet). Based on the NSC's recommendation, the government issues a resolution, which approves funding and mandates concerned ministries (mostly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense as well as other ministries that provide personnel or support for the deployment) to act.

The Parliament, its Standing Committees (especially the Standing Committee on Foreign Policy and Security), and its members maintain legislative and budgetary oversight of this complex process. These procedures are stipulated in the "Law on Participation in Peace Support Operations." The first law on peacekeeping deployment, "Law on Deployment of Military and Police Personnel for UN Peacekeeping and Other Operations," was approved by the Parliament in 2002. Based on eight years of experience of UN and non-UN deployments, the [law was revised in 2010](#). The new law clarified decision-making procedures, responsibilities of the Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Defense, and

legalized participation of personnel from other security organizations such as intelligence, disaster relief, border troops, internal troops, and marshal services.

Part 3: Rationales for Contributing

Political Rationales: Mongolia's participation in peacekeeping is related to three primary political rationales, which are generated by its geographic location between two populous major powers, China and Russia, and its decision to pursue a path of non-alignment. First, Mongolia wants to be a responsible member of the UN and contribute to global peace and security. UN peacekeeping deployments increase Mongolia's profile and visibility as well as broadening Mongolia's communication with key UN offices. Second, Mongolian deployments to non-UN coalition operations have aimed to strengthen bilateral ties with the West; an objective that was largely achieved. Third, Mongolia's deployments to the NATO-led missions in Kosovo and especially Afghanistan contributed to its goal of gaining membership of the OSCE and access to a partnership program with NATO. Earlier efforts to join the OSCE and NATO's Partnership for Peace had been rebuffed owing to concerns about free-riding, Russian and Chinese reactions, and the country's generally low profile in Europe.

Economic Rationales: Economic rationales are limited in the Mongolian case. UN peacekeeping missions offer monetary incentives for military leaders, and military personnel. However, for non-UN coalition operations, the government is responsible for most costs. Deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq have been the most costly for Mongolia. The government does not use UN compensation payments to support the national budget. It permits the Ministry of Defense to use the UN compensation payments and a small proportion (less than 10%) of the individual compensation for improving equipment that is necessary for the peacekeeping deployments. Individuals, excluding UN military observers and staff officers, who are responsible for their own costs on mission, benefit economically from UN peacekeeping deployments as well as coalition operations.

Security Rationales: There are few direct security interests served by Mongolia's participation in UN peacekeeping, but as mentioned earlier the government feels its broader strategic position is strengthened by increased visibility within the UN system and partnership with Western states in non-UN coalitions, both of which can act as a counterweight to pressure from Mongolia's large neighbors.

Institutional Rationales: Despite early reluctance from senior military leaders, peacekeeping has been accepted as a means for the military to gain operational and tactical experience, pursue defense diplomacy, reform military strategy, doctrine, policy, and educational institutions, and to obtain political and public support. Senior military leaders, who mostly graduated in the former Soviet Union, largely accepted Soviet military strategy and tactics. According to these perspectives, peacekeeping deployments reduced military readiness and preparedness, weakened military morale (by sending soldiers as "mercenaries"). These attitudes gradually declined after the demise of the Soviet Union and were replaced by more positive views partly as a result with engagement and training with other countries.

Normative Rationales: Mongolia only deploys its military personnel to missions mandated by the UN Security Council. This reflects both its commitment to the international rule of law and the UN system, but also shows the interconnectedness of the normative and political rationales for contributing. Because of the scale of its international deployments as a proportion of its size, Mongolia has rapidly developed "habits of peacekeeping" such that it is

now seen as a core function of the military by all the major political parties and by large sections of the public.

Part 4: Barriers to Contributing

Alternative institutional preferences for crisis management: As a minor power, Mongolia prefers to participate in the UN or UN-mandated operations led by coalitions. This preference is related to its inability to project military force independently (even on a small scale) and its position on formal non-alignment. There are thus no significant alternative institutional preferences to the UN. Although Mongolia has contributed to ad hoc coalitions these do not constitute an alternative institutional preference.

Alternative political and strategic priorities: Given the absence of pressing military threats (whether external or internal), contributing to UN peacekeeping is becoming more popular with political, bureaucratic, and military leaders and officials. At the moment, there are no alternative political and strategic priorities for the Mongolian military. However, Mongolia faces pressures from its two powerful neighbors, which can influence peacekeeping related decisions. China has been critical and suspicious about US-Mongolian military-to-military relations, even though the scale and intensity of these interactions is low. Any peacekeeping exercises and deployments of US military personnel and equipment in Mongolia are perceived by Beijing as part of a US military containment strategy. Unlike China, Russia is not concerned about US military interactions in Mongolia, but Moscow has exerted pressure on Mongolia to withdraw from missions that it does not approve of (e.g. Iraq). For example, Russia succeeded in persuading Mongolia to change its decision to deploy alongside French forces in Lebanon as part of UNIFIL II. This reversal came only 14 days prior to deployment. Russia has also blocked Mongolian training exercises, for example, by refusing to permit over-flights to the Turkish military when it was bringing a contingent for bilateral exercises in Mongolia. Although the mechanics of influence remain shrouded, both policy reversals came immediately after Prime Ministerial visits to Moscow, suggesting that influence was exerted directly and personally at the highest levels.

Financial costs: The UN's compensation payments exceed the costs to Mongolia of deploying personnel. As such, there are few immediate financial obstacles. Mongolia faces greater financial challenges when deploying to non-UN missions, however. The government has to allocate additional funds for pre-deployment training, the first 3-4 months of sustainment in the theatre, combat pay and life insurance (equivalent to the UN compensation scale), purchase of new vehicles (jeeps, trucks) and maintenance of equipment and machineries, administrative costs related to individuals (called for missions from remote military units), any travel costs related to medical evacuation, staff visits (review), or individual redeployment costs.

Discomfort with the expanding UN peacekeeping agenda: The government of Mongolia supports peacekeeping and humanitarian operations that are mandated by the UN Security Council. It complies with UN standard operating procedures on the use of force and has institutionalized its training on protection of civilians and especially the laws of armed conflicts (Geneva Conventions). Mongolia has not expressed reservations about concepts such as the "protection of civilians" or "robust peacekeeping."

Exceptionalism: This does not apply to Mongolia.

Difficult domestic politics: As the military has become involved in peacekeeping, public opinion towards peacekeeping has become much more positive, creating a benign domestic political context. In 1997, only 10.9% of responders to a public opinion survey thought that peacekeeping should be the primary peacetime mission of the armed forces. There was a 1.4% increase (to 12.3%) in the number of peacekeeping supporters in 2000.³ Public opinion in 2010 was different: 67.7% supported participation in peacekeeping operations, and only 3.4% objected. Today, the military's participation in peacekeeping is not a contentious issue though national debate surrounding participation in the US-led coalition charged with rebuilding Iraq suggests that this is contingent on an operation being authorized by the UN Security Council, among other factors. Thus far, Mongolia has sustained two fatalities from UN peacekeeping operations and this did not cause a negative response from either politicians or public.

Damage to national reputation: This is not a significant factor. So far, there have been relatively few cases of ill-discipline and these have been addressed by the immediate withdrawal of military personnel involved and their subjection to appropriate criminal and administrative charges. Each incident has served to help the military improve the procedural regulations and rules.

Resistance in the military: In the early 1990s, senior military officers were reluctant to take on peacekeeping missions because many of them considered peacekeeping to be outside their core role and were concerned that it could deteriorate military readiness. With gradual exposure and learning about peacekeeping, military leaders now consider it to be a useful way of getting operational experience, thus improving readiness. They also see it as a useful way of advancing defense diplomacy and joint training with advanced militaries and have seen it improve their standing amongst the domestic public.

Lack of fit with legislative, procurement and operational timelines: This is no longer relevant. Mongolia's experience in Afghanistan pushed it to develop its first legislation on peacekeeping ("Law on Deployment of Military and Police Personnel for UN Peacekeeping and Other Operation") in 2002. Subsequently, the Iraq mission was seen as a way of advancing bilateral ties with the US. After developing its engagement in UN missions, the Ministry of Defense and President re-examined the legal frameworks for peacekeeping deployment and submitted a revised version of the 2002 law to the Parliament. The Parliament approved the revised "Law on Peacekeeping Deployment," in 2010.

Legal obstacles: There are now no legal obstacles to participation in UN mandated missions.

Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues

Since 1996, when the Democratic Coalition won parliamentary elections, Mongolia's president, parliament, and its government have become supportive of the military's participation in UN peacekeeping operations. Today, support for peacekeeping is reflected in election campaign platforms and post-election action plans. There are, however a number of challenges. First, there are political and legal challenges, such as a cumbersome decision-making process, ongoing issues in relation to funding and the defense budget, not least with respect to training and the procurement of equipment. There is also the government's general lack of legal expertise in international law, particularly in legal matters related to military operations abroad. There are also significant challenges in training and education. The growing demand and expanded participation in UN peacekeeping requires more intensive training of the military personnel at all levels. There is also a need to develop infrastructure for research, education, and training to circulate peacekeeping lessons learned. Mongolia

faces major limitations when it comes to weaponry and equipment. In particular, Mongolia lacks air transport and is dependent on airlift provided by others. Nor does it have modern communication equipment and many armored vehicles. Personnel challenges stem from the limited number of well-trained officers and senior non-commissioned officers and the repeated deployments of the best-trained cadre for peacekeeping missions.

Part 6: Key Champions and Opponents

In general, the majority of political leaders are supportive of Mongolia's peacekeeping deployments. As a result, there is no shortage of champions for peacekeeping among the country's political and military elite. A former President, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Parliament, N. Enkhbayar and Ambassador R. Bold (a former Secretary of the National Security Council and Ambassador to the United States) played an influential role in convincing politicians (Cabinet Members and Parliament Members) to deploy the military in support of the US-led coalition operations in Iraq. Late Major General Ragchaa, who is regarded as the "father of Mongolian peacekeeping," played the most important role in setting up the Peacekeeping Office at the General Staff, Peacekeeping Training Center, Peacekeeping Elite Unit. He drafted the initial law and regulations for peacekeeping deployments, found and selected the best/brightest for peacekeeping exercises, and organized events to promote best practices in Mongolia. Lieutenant General Dashzeveg, a former Chief of the General Staff and later Advisor to the President, provided all necessary supports for Major General Ragchaa. Former Defense Minister L. Bold, who is the current Foreign Minister, engaged personally with the UN DPKO and expanded Mongolia's peacekeeping participation in the UN operations. Lieutenant General Ts. Togoo, a former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, played a very constructive role in deploying Mongolian military to Iraq and Afghanistan as well as transforming the Mongolian peacekeeping training center as a regional hub for field and command post exercises. There are no notable opponents of UN peacekeeping.

Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats

As noted earlier, Mongolia faces significant limits when it comes to capabilities. In relation to mobility, it lacks air transport and tactical/utility helicopters, possessing only a small number of very old helicopters. Progress has been made on some critical enabling capabilities, however. Besides motorized infantry units, Mongolia has been creating niche capabilities such as engineering/construction units (3 battalions were established), a level-II field hospital, a WMD (chemical warfare) response team, and a military police company. Mongolia has also increased the portion of female military personnel deployed to UN peacekeeping operations and is actively trying to increase further the proportion on women in its military and police forces.

Part 8: Further Reading

- Mendee Jargalsaikhan & Thomas Bruneau, "Discovering Peacekeeping as a New Mission: Mongolia," in T. Bruneau and F. Matei (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Civil-Military Relations* (Routledge, 2012), pp.204-218.
- Mendee Jargalsaikhan, "Asymmetrical Military Socialization - Mongolia as a Case Study," *Armed Forces & Society Journal*, 39:2 (April, 2013), 305-330.
- Mendee Jargalsaikhan, "Military Training Assistance Program (MTAP): Merging Interests of Canada and Mongolia," *Canadian Military Journal*, No.1 (2009), 30-38.
- Mendee Jargalsaikhan & David Last, "Whole of Government Responses in Mongolia: From Domestic Response to International Implication," *The Pearson Papers*, 11:2 (2008), 1-22.

Mendee Jargalsaikhan, "[Mongolia's Peacekeeping Commitment](#)," *Discussion Paper*, National Defense Intelligence College, May 2007.
Ariunbold Dashjivaa, [Why has Mongolia Chosen to Participate in Peace Support Operations](#) (MA Thesis), Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 2013).

Notes

¹ Unless otherwise stated, data is drawn from the IISS, *The Military Balance 2014* (London: IISS/Routledge, 2014).

² Defense Spending/Troop is the total defense budget (in US\$) divided by the total number of active armed forces. The approximate global average is the mean defense spending/troop of the 136 countries that a) have armed forces and b) for which data on expenditures and troop numbers are available. Uses figures from IISS, *The Military Balance 2014* (London: IISS/ Routledge, 2014).

³ *Defense White Paper* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 2000).