Since 9/11, there has been an emphasis on high-level exchange between China and Mongolia, and as these discussions indicate, terrorism prevention and cooperation on regional security issues have gradually become the core content of the talks. By contrast, pre-9/11 Sino-Mongolian exchange focused around economic cooperation. For the future, Beijing and Ulaanbaatar will work diligently together by taking further steps in making regional security a top priority.

In January 2002 Mongolian president Nambaryn Enkhbayar, while on an official trip to China, agreed to strengthen economic cooperation between Beijing and Ulaanbaatar, and went even further to condemn terrorism. The Chinese government approved of the Mongolian condemnation and responded by proposing the establishment of a cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia. While on an official visit to Mongolia in June 2003, Chinese President Hu Jintao gave a speech to the Mongolian parliament in which he articulated three focal points of Sino-Mongolian relations. First on the economic front, Beijing’s policy is to push forward with cooperation between China and Mongolia. China has already become Mongolia’s biggest trade and direct investment partner. Second in term of security, Beijing and Ulaanbaatar will strengthen cooperation and seek to create a peaceful and friendly border. At the same time, the two
sides will look to strengthen coordination and cooperation on both international and regional issues, and to defend regional peace and stability. And lastly, Hu pointed out that the People's Republic of China (PRC) supports Mongolia's policy against having foreign troops deployed within its borders and its status as a nuclear weapon and WMD-free state. In sum, China supports Mongolian equality and the development of friendly cooperation with global partners.

In July 2004, after Hu Jintao's official trip to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolian President Bagabandi paid a return visit to Beijing. While there, Bagabandi concluded the "Mongolia-China Joint Statement," which declared the content of not only future political, economic, and cultural exchange between the two countries, but also advocated keeping a watch on the Korean peninsula to see that the nuclear crisis is peacefully resolved, an essential part of maintaining regional security. In addition, China would support Mongolia's accession to the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), and demonstrate its good will by granting Ulaanbaatar observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In the future, China would also support Mongolia's bid to become a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). As far as preventing terrorism is concerned, both sides naturally agreed to strengthen international cooperation to oppose it.

**Mongolian Nationalism as a Potential Stumbling Block**

Despite the warm cooperation between Beijing and Ulaanbaatar, any surge in Mongolian nationalism would adversely affect the relationship. At present, Mongolian nationalist movements may be found in Mongolia, the Chinese province of Inner Mongolia, and Russia's regions of Buryatia and Kalmykia. Based on a common traditional culture, Mongolian nationalism quickly resumed salience during 1989 when Mongolia was making a political
turnaround. In 1990, after the Mongolian Democratic Party publicly put forward its argument on "Uniting the Three Mongolias" (Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, and Buryatskaya Mongolian), they also advocated "providing a unified spoken and written language and a nationality which could naturally be linked together." They also supported a union between Inner Mongolia, Buryatskaya Mongolian, Xinjiang Mongolian, and other regions which would in turn unite Mongolians under one "Great Mongolia." In September 1993 the movement went even further by convening a "Global Mongolian Clansmen Plenary Session" in Ulaanbaatar, which in the future became the force behind the so-called doctrine of "Pan-Mongolism" (this activity was first supported by Japan in 1919 against the Bolsheviks and later it was broadened and used by the Mongolian nationalist movement).

At that time, achieving Mongolian nationalist unity was a great undertaking, and as a result, different but interrelated Mongolian nationalist organizations were established in Inner Mongolia (the "Inner Mongolian Nationalist Liberation Alignment") and Buryatia (the "Buryatskaya Alliance") and proceeded to divide the Pan-Mongolism movement. Later in March 1997, Mongolians from China, Mongolia, Germany, the U.S., and other countries all convened at Princeton University for the "Global Mongolian Clansmen Plenary Session," to discuss the Inner Mongolian nationalist liberation movement. The resolution was to establish the "Inner Mongolian People's Party" (in Chinese neiren dang for "Inner People's Party") devoted to supporting an Inner Mongolian independence movement. After the meeting, Mongolians all over the world used the 50 year anniversary of the establishment of the "Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region" to stage all types of protest activity.

Even though under Mongolia's direction the nationalist movement has progressed rapidly, in fact the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region has only gained some 4 million adherents (according to the fifth census completed in
2000), which only constitutes 17 percent of the total population. In addition, daily Sinification has hindered the success of nationalist activity. Thus, the influence of Mongolian nationalism will progressively decrease.

From the Chinese perspective, there is already a worry that the democratic nature of Mongolia will foment the political demands of clans within the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. This would cause an identity problem amongst large numbers of Mongolians, inciting them to unite inside China's borders. Such an event could give rise to a chain reaction which would critically jeopardize Chinese national security, leading to Xinjiang independence, Tibetan independence, and even Taiwan independence. Therefore for its part, the Chinese government has not been soft-hearted toward Mongolian independence, and Beijing has taken strong steps to repress protests and demonstration.

Another reason the Chinese are against the spread of Pan-Mongolism is because of history: China has never abandoned its wild goal of recapturing Mongolia, and correspondingly, China will absolutely not permit Mongolian nationalist thought to foment within its borders. This factor is also compelling the Chinese government to enlarge economic aid to Mongolia to strengthen bilateral relations, and at the same time to strengthen Mongolia's degree of economic dependence on China, all in order to obtain Beijing's long-term political objectives.

Considering Mongolia's economic needs, Ulaanbaatar is cautious about contradicting its political relationship with China. After 9/11, under the pressure of combating international terrorism and opposing Mongolian independence, Xinjiang independence, Tibetan independence, and others, the doctrine of national minority movements has been given less leeway and gradually been suppressed. Hence, so-called "Pan-Mongolism" will have no choice but to remain behind the scenes. Sino-Mongolian relations has de-emphasized Mongolian nationalism and focused more on regional security
America's Impact on the Sino-Mongolian relationship

After 9/11, both China and Mongolia each respectively had different methods and different degrees of participating with the U.S. in its actions against terrorism. Due to Mongolia's strategic positioning in Northeast Asia, Ulaanbaatar fit in well with America's new wartime strategy to project superior force in the region. As a result, Washington has begun to push forward many facets of political, economic, and military exchange.

Previously a socialist state, Mongolia has since succeeded in transitioning toward becoming an Asian democracy. Consequently, the U.S. has looked to create an important ally in Northeast Asia by assisting Ulaanbaatar with continued improvements in its democratic culture. Economically, the U.S. has already become Mongolia's third largest trading partner behind China and Russia (first and second respectively). Beginning in 2004 and running through 2005, Mongolia has been classified by the Bush administration as a recipient of aid, or as a "Millennium Challenge Account." In terms of regional military security, the U.S. in 2003 and 2004 held joint military exercises and other cooperative projects with Ulaanbaatar, both on the inside and outside of Mongolia.

As Ulaanbaatar's 1994 "Mongolia White Paper on Foreign Affairs" clearly demonstrates, even though Russia and China would receive priority status in Mongolian foreign relations, it also showed that the U.S., Japan, Western Europe (the so-called "Third Neighbors"), would also be a focal point of external relations. Since Russian influence over Mongolia has gradually dried up, the PRC has rapidly moved in to replace Moscow as Ulaanbaatar's primary investor. China's port at Tianjin server as an economic lifeline for Ulaanbaatar.
since Mongolian exports must be transported through it. Because of this, China has maintained an influence over Mongolia and it only has increased since 9/11.

Since 9/11, the U.S. has not merely broken into central Asia by means of fighting terrorism or by dispatching forces to defend its interests there, but Washington has also established military cooperation and exchange with Mongolia. China has analyzed these actions as part of a new U.S. military strategy for Asia designed for its needs. The Chinese government regards the U.S. as "a potential foe" which is threatening to deploy an encirclement strategy connecting from Central Asia on up to Mongolia. In the future this will make China feel more restricted and less secure. Therefore from now on, Beijing cannot afford to overlook the importance of developing relations with Mongolia to counter the U.S. encirclement strategy.

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