Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Mongolia, of the other part

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Helmut SCHOLZ (GUE/NGL, DE) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Mongolia, of the other part.

Members stressed that the EU and Mongolia have many converging positions regarding most major international challenges. They appreciated the friendly and constructive relations between the EU and Mongolia. Recognising Mongolia's specific geographical position between China, Russia and the countries of Central Asia and North-East Asia, with its importance for stability within the region, Members stressed the democratic transformation of country and of the challenges that exist in the areas of sustainable development and economy, finance, good governance, fighting corruption, social security and environmental protection and political polarisation.

The committee went on to highlight certain aspects of the draft framework agreement on partnership and cooperation:

Institutional framework and diplomatic representation: Members began by emphasising the need to **further enhance the parliamentary dimension of EU-Mongolia relations**. They regretted the absence from the PCA text of articles that would establish a Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) under the PCA to undertake democratic scrutiny of the implementation of the agreement and encouraged negotiations, therefore, on a **new protocol** to remedy the situation. The committee was concerned at the fact that diplomatic relations with Mongolia are currently still being run from the EU Delegation to China. It urged the Council and the VP/HR to turn the European Union Liaison Office in Ulaanbaatar into a **fully-fledged EU Delegation.**

Democracy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights: whilst welcoming Mongolia's efforts to consolidate democratic progress and the rule of law, Members encouraged Mongolia to address the outstanding challenges of respect for independence of the judiciary. They recommended that the country strengthen its cooperation with the EU, the OSCE and the UN on dealing with corruption. They also recommended that Mongolia, in accordance with the already ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child, legally ban corporal punishment.

Sustainable development: Members welcomed the substantial progress made by Mongolia in economic development and poverty reduction. They encouraged Mongolia in its efforts to achieve sustained economic growth, but expressed concern at the sharp slowdown in GDP growth, which in 2011 stood at record levels (17.3 %) but was only 2.3 % in 2015. The committee welcomed the fact that EU development assistance to the country for 2014-2020 has been more than doubled – standing at EUR 65 million, in comparison with the 2007-2013 figure of EUR 30 million. It encouraged Mongolia's participation in **regional programmes financed by the EU**.

Trade and economic relations: Members noted that the EU has become Mongolia's third-biggest trading partner, and that Mongolian goods already enter the EU market virtually tariff-free under the current Generalised Scheme of Preferences. They noted that European investment in Mongolia has so far remained limited, and encouraged the EU and Mongolia to intensify their trade and investment relations. The committee stressed the importance of a stable business and legal environment for an increase in investment from the EU.

Regional and global challenges and cooperation: recognising the pivotal role Mongolia can play between the dynamic economies of China, Russia, South Korea and Japan and the Central Asian countries, and at the same time as an intermediary between Europe and the East Asian region, Members highlighted Mongolia's "third neighbour" foreign policy concept. This includes relations with the EU, balanced against constructive and intense relations with its influential strategic partners and direct neighbours Russia and China.

Lastly, the committee noted Mongolia's contribution to **UN peacekeeping** around the world.