



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia



Institute for Strategic Studies of Mongolia

ULAANBAATAR DIALOGUE ON NORTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY Tenth International Conference

The Concept Note

Ulaanbaatar Dialogue International Conference on Northeast Asian Security has been held regularly since 2014 to contribute to the establishment of a dialogue mechanism within the region.

The International Conference is not only in line with the Foreign Policy Concept of Mongolia but also highlights Mongolia's historical tradition of multilateral cooperation efforts. The conference has been co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Strategic Studies of the National Security Council of Mongolia.

The UBD2025 will be held in Ulaanbaatar on 5–6 June 2025. The conference consists of the following main parts.

Session One: Northeast Asian Security Challenges and Opportunities

While global attention is often drawn to crises in Ukraine and the Middle East, security tensions in Northeast Asia remain persistent and complex due to ongoing geopolitical and geo-economic rivalries among major powers and continued uncertainty on the Korean Peninsula. The region faces a delicate balance of power, shaped by US-China strategic competition, Japan's evolving security policies, Russia's regional influence, and North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

This session will serve as a platform for regional experts, policymakers, and academics to analyze and discuss key security challenges and emerging opportunities in Northeast Asia. Discussions will address a range of pressing issues, including the evolving dynamics of US-China relations, Japan's security posture, Russia's role in the region, the implications of North Korea's nuclear ambitions, inter-Korean relations, diplomatic efforts for peace and denuclearization, rising military spending, regional arms races, and the impact of alliances such as the US-Japan and US-South Korea partnerships.

While security risks remain high, Northeast Asia also presents opportunities for diplomatic engagement, regional confidence-building, and economic cooperation. This session will explore policy recommendations and potential pathways toward a more stable and secure Northeast Asia, drawing on regional expertise and comparative global perspectives.

Session Two: Multilateral Cooperation in Northeast Asia

Unlike other regions with established security frameworks, Northeast Asia lacks a formal, overarching security mechanism. However, various state and non-state actors have consistently sought to build confidence and trust through confidence-building measures (CBMs) aimed at reducing tensions, preventing conflicts, and fostering cooperation.

This session will bring together experts, policymakers, and scholars from the region and beyond to assess the role of CBMs, examine past and ongoing CBM initiatives, identify challenges to multilateral cooperation, and explore practical and sustainable CBMs discussing realistic steps for designing and implementing long-term confidence-building mechanisms and drawing lessons from other regions such as Europe's OSCE framework and ASEAN's cooperative models.

While security rivalries and historical grievances remain significant obstacles, there are growing incentives for dialogue and cooperation in Northeast Asia. This session aims to generate innovative policy recommendations and identify concrete pathways toward a more stable and predictable regional security environment.

Session Three: Climate Change and Security Challenges in Northeast Asia

This session, jointly organized with the Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance, will welcome government representatives, regional experts, academics, and other relevant stakeholders to share their views on how to address climate change and security challenges in Northeast Asia. Climate change is a salient issue for Northeast Asia countries in terms of adapting to and mitigating its impact.

Climate change and extreme weather events have significantly harmed the region, leading to notable natural disasters that have caused widespread human and economic costs, displacing communities, driving migration, and potentially triggering political destabilization and insecurity. Currently, there are urgent calls to prepare for better preparation to deal with these harmful climate change impacts, and, importantly, to prevent further environmental disasters, involving national and regional actors, including security sectors.

There are also urgent calls for large greenhouse gas emitters in the region to make great strides in reducing their carbon footprint. Vulnerable to climate change-related risks and responding to the global calls for action, countries in Northeast Asia are raising their ambitions and accelerating the transformation of development pathways towards a low-carbon, resilient future, and in preparing to manage more effectively the negative impacts that are already unfolding. The session hopes to collaboratively tackle national and regional climate change challenges, with the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue offering a common and neutral ground for cooperation in the region.

Session Four: Regional cooperation between Northeast Asia and Central Asia

This session explores opportunities and challenges of fostering regional cooperation between Central Asia and Northeast Asia, by welcoming leading scholars and experts from both regions. Given Mongolia's unique geopolitical position not only between China and Russia, but also between two dynamic regions, Mongolia could serve a multilateral platform for academics of Central and Northeast Asia.

Participants will engage in discussions on key issues related to peace and security, economic cooperation, and share their insights, experiences, and best practices. While both regions have distinct historical trajectories, they also share common strategic interests for peace and prosperity.

Northeast Asia boasts strong economies but lacks a formal regional economic mechanism, while Central Asia is more economically fragmented yet benefits from Russia and China-led frameworks such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This session aims to identify pathways for deeper regional cooperation, addressing institutional gaps and exploring synergies between the two regions.

Session Five: Energy resilience and climate change in North-East Asia

The energy sector is the lifeblood of modern society and a key driver of economic development. The impacts of climate change, including an increasing number of severe weather events, are posing an array of challenges for the energy sector. This is especially the case for clean and renewable energy resources such as hydro, wind and solar, which are vital enablers of energy transition. North-East Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to global warming and climate change. Extreme weather events like heavy precipitation, strong winds and extended periods of drought are already affecting energy infrastructure and disrupting services in countries in the region.

Building resilience throughout the energy sector to the impacts of climate change is a key strategy to ensuring energy security and achieving national energy goals. Understanding of the climate riskscape, both in current and future scenarios at the local level will help countries to develop adaptation options and policy responses to climate change, particularly for the energy sector.

Building off ongoing experiences in Mongolia, this session will explore opportunities to and the benefits of building resilience in the energy sector to climate change. Participants will share knowledge and best practices towards shaping a secure and resilient energy future in North-East Asia and beyond.

The conference participants will be responsible for their own accommodation and travel expenses. The organizers will cover the cost of local transportation and cultural events. Meals will be provided during the conference.

Please refer to UBD2025 website at <https://ubd.iss.gov.mn/> for more information.

For further inquiries, please contact the UBD organizing team at UBDialogue2025@iss.gov.mn

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