



FROM PERIPHERY TO PARTNERSHIP: MONGOLIA'S INTENSIFYING FOREIGN POLICY TRENDS TOWARD CENTRAL ASIA

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ABSTRACT. *Mongolia's foreign policy has traditionally emphasized balance among its neighbors and "third neighbors", yet its relations with Central Asian states remained limited for decades after diplomatic ties were first established in the early 1990s. In recent years, however, Mongolia has intensified engagement with Central Asian states, reflected in new embassies, high-level visits, and the elevation of ties to strategic partnerships. This study analyzes the drivers and implications of this shift. Using a constructivist perspective complemented by liberal international relations theory, the research combines historical review, document and speech analysis, and comparative case studies of Mongolia's ties with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. Findings show that Mongolia's reinvigorated approach is motivated not only by strategic and economic considerations but also by cultural proximity and shared regional identity. The study argues that Mongolia is moving from a peripheral observer to an active partner in Central Asia, positioning itself as a like-minded actor in regional cooperation. By identifying the factors enabling this transformation, the paper contributes to broader debates on small-state diplomacy and regionalization in Eurasia.*

KEYWORDS: *Mongolia, intensifying foreign policy, Mongolia-Central Asia relations.*

INTRODUCTION

The growing complexity of international relations and the escalation of disputes and confrontations among states are spreading everywhere. During this period of intensified conflict, Mongolia needs to pursue a multilateral foreign policy in cooperation with neighboring states that face similar social, economic, and diplomatic challenges. In this context, Mongolia is faced with the growing necessity to take a more careful and deliberate approach to its foreign policy planning in relation to the countries of the region. This study aims to explore the political, social, and economic factors related to the growing activity of Mongolia's policy toward Central Asia.

The Central Asian states (formerly Soviet republics), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, became independent and began participating in international relations after declaring their independence in 1990. Researchers describe Central Asia from a geographical perspective as a region through which the Silk Road passed, a home to numerous ethnic groups, and a meeting point of various

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civilizations encompassing a vast area “*stretching from the Caspian Sea to the steppes of Eastern Mongolia*” (Kolya, 2022).

Mongolia is in close geographical proximity to the Central Asian states and shares a deep historical connection stemming from their nomadic culture. During Soviet times, the Mongolian People’s Republic maintained extensive economic, scientific, technical, and humanitarian exchanges with these Soviet republics. Furthermore, these Central Asian states are culturally, demographically, socially, and economically similar to Mongolia, with agricultural and pastoral traditions, which further brings them closer. Although Mongolia does not directly share borders with these states, historical ties, a tradition of warm relationships, and their analogous social and economic transformation foster growing and deepening cooperation.

Today, Central Asia is considered a key region in world politics, economics, and geopolitics. The region’s significant geographical location, rich in natural resources, makes it a major area of competition for influence by world powers. According to analysts, “*the way the Central Asian states develop will profoundly affect the balance of power in the world*” (Luguusharav, 2022). The rich energy resources, natural gas and oil, extracted from the Caspian Sea further raise its strategic significance. Thus, major powers pursue their geopolitical interests in the region, disregarding its ongoing political instabilities stemming from terrorism, separatism, and religious radicalism.

It is important to assess the political, social, economic, demographic, cultural, and humanitarian development of the Central Asian states, their role and significance in the region’s progression, their trade, economic, political, cultural, and humanitarian relations with Mongolia, and to identify opportunities to revive traditional forms of cooperation.

Mongolia shares geographical, historical, and cultural ties with the Central Asian states. Thus, understanding the political, social, and economic factors that contribute to the growing activity of Mongolia’s policy toward Central Asia is a significant aspect of this study.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding a country’s foreign policy requires more than counting visits, treaties, or policy statements. It requires asking why a state chooses to engage in certain ways, how it perceives its partners, and what kind of regional order it imagines itself belonging to. This study, therefore, approaches Mongolia’s evolving policy toward the countries of Central Asia through a constructivism-inspired view of regionalization, while also drawing on key insights from liberalism in international relations.

This framework departs from realism, which views international politics as a zero-sum arena where states are primarily concerned with maximizing power and ensuring survival. Realism can explain why major powers compete for influence in Central Asia, but it cannot adequately capture why a smaller state like Mongolia invests in sustained cooperation rooted in trust, cultural familiarity, and mutual gain. In practice, Mongolia’s diplomacy in Central Asia is driven less by efforts to deter threats or balance power, and more by the pursuit of enduring partnerships, a shared sense of regional

belonging, and mutually beneficial (win-win) forms of cooperation that can advance the interests of all sides.

Constructivism provides a more suitable lens because it emphasizes how state behavior is shaped not only by material interests but also by shared ideas, norms, and identities. Scholars such as Ilkhom Qoraboyev describe the history of Central Asia as a “long quest for regional identity,” showing that cooperation in the region often serves to affirm belonging as much as to achieve material gains (Qoraboyev, 2009). Together with scholar Kairat Moldashev, he develops the idea of soft institutionalism, a form of regionalism rooted in informal trust-building, social interaction, and consensus rather than rigid legal structures or supranational commitments (Moldashev & Qoraboyev, 2018). This perspective helps explain why Mongolia’s ties with Central Asian states are advancing mainly through diplomatic dialogue, cultural exchanges, and symbolic recognition rather than through formalized, binding institutions.

Rustam Burnashev adds a valuable nuance by showing how security perceptions are shaped by norms and shared understandings. In his studies on regional security with Irina Chernykh, they argue that even when Central Asian states face threats such as extremism or instability, they frame these challenges in terms of preserving a shared regional order, not simply through raw power calculations (Burnashev & Chernykh, 2013). This reinforces the idea that Mongolia’s policy operates within an environment where stability is understood as a collective responsibility rather than a competitive race for dominance. Assylzat Karabayeva, scholar from Kazakhstan, contributes another crucial dimension, showing how political leaders’ ideas and discourses shape which international norms are accepted or resisted in Central Asia (Karabayeva, 2021). She argues that foreign policy decisions are often entwined with questions of national identity and worldview. This insight is especially relevant to Mongolia, whose outreach to Central Asia is motivated not only by strategic interests but also by its self-image as a culturally proximate, like-minded partner that can contribute to building a stable and cooperative regional community.

Alongside this constructivist perspective, the study draws on liberal theory to account for how growing economic interdependence, institutional linkages, and multilateral diplomacy promote cooperative behavior. Mongolia’s efforts to open embassies, institutionalize intergovernmental commissions, and expand trade and cultural exchange with Central Asian countries reflect this liberal logic of “absolute gains,” where states seek shared benefits rather than competitive advantage.

Methodologically, the study combines historical analysis, document analysis, and comparative approaches to examine how Mongolia’s policies and practices toward Central Asia have evolved since the early 1990s. It analyzes speeches, agreements, and policy statements to trace shifting narratives and objectives, and uses comparative analysis to highlight both the commonalities and differences in Mongolia’s relations with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. It also employs tools from foreign policy analysis, especially means-ends analysis, which examines whether the policy instruments and actions used are appropriate and sufficient to achieve the stated strategic objectives, to evaluate the coherence between Mongolia’s goals and its actual engagement with Central Asia. Taken together, these approaches

allow for a more nuanced understanding of how Mongolia is gradually transforming its ties with Central Asia from sporadic bilateral contacts into a more coherent, identity-driven, and cooperation-oriented regional policy..

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although research on Central Asia has steadily expanded over the past two decades, Mongolia has rarely been included in these regional debates. Most studies of Mongolian foreign policy focus on its relations with Russia, China, and Northeast Asia, while Central Asia remains on the margins. Yet in practice, Mongolia's engagement with the region has grown markedly in recent years, and this shift has not been examined in a systematic way.

Early Mongolian scholarship emerged in the 1990s, as the region was still adjusting to post-Soviet independence. Batbayar Tsedendamba (1996), writing in the *The Mongolian Journal of International Affairs*, described how the collapse of the Soviet Union created both opportunities and instability for the new Central Asian republics. He highlighted Kazakhstan as Mongolia's most promising partner but noted the limited trade and infrastructure links constraining cooperation (Tsedendamba, 1996). Despite its age, the study captures the cautious optimism that marked Mongolia's first outreach to the region. A similar early effort, *Central Asian Geopolitics and Mongolia* by Demberel Kolya, Khurmetkhan Mukhamadi, and Shurkhuu Dorj (2005), explored the region's geography, energy security, and transport corridors (Kolya et.al, 2005), but ultimately portrayed Mongolia as an external observer rather than an active participant.

Some Mongolian analysts have examined Mongolia's limited role in regional institutions. Mendee Jargalsaikhan (2012), writing for the *Voices from Central Asia* series, explained why Mongolia has remained an observer rather than joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as a full member. He argued that this stance reflects Mongolia's closer integration with Northeast Asia, its democratic political system, and its desire to maintain foreign policy independence from Russia and China (Jargalsaikhan, 2012). Jargalsaikhan noted that Ulaanbaatar views the SCO as an "authoritarian club" and fears full membership could erode its democratic image and constrain its "third neighbour" strategy.

Other studies have explored how external actors view Mongolia in this regional context. Tsermaa Lkham (2016), in her monograph *Germany's Policy on Central Asia and Its Impact on Mongolian-German Relations (1990–2014)*, showed how Germany's policy toward Central Asia indirectly shaped its perception of Mongolia as a stabilizing partner, though her study does not explore Mongolia's own policies toward Central Asia, leaving it as a secondary actor in the regional picture.

At the institutional level, Mongolian interest in Central Asia has grown in recent years (Jargalsaikhan & Nyamjav, 2022). The Institute for Strategic Studies of Mongolia (ISS) published *Central Asian Geopolitics* in 2022, covering security challenges, the SCO's internal dynamics, and the policies of the United States and China, as well as the prospects for a "Greater Eurasian Partnership" (Institute for Strategic Studies of Mongolia (ISS), 2022). While this is one of Mongolia's most comprehensive regional studies, it largely treats Mongolia as an observer rather than an actor. Likewise, the

policy report *Goeconomics in Central Asia: Great Powers and Regional Countries* (National Institute for Security Studies & Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 2022) analyzes the goeconomic strategies of major external powers – Russia, China, the United States, India, Turkey, Japan, and the European Union. While it was the first Mongolian study to frame the region through goeconomics theory, Mongolia itself appears only as an outside observer, not as an active regional actor. This gap underscores the need to analyze Mongolia's emerging role in the region more directly, a task this study undertakes.

A few international scholars have touched on Mongolia–Central Asia ties from broader perspectives. Uradyn E.Bulag, a Mongolian-born scholar based at the University of Cambridge, offers a conceptually rich account of Mongolia's post-Cold War diplomacy in his 2017 chapter in *The Art of Neighbouring*. He frames Mongolia's "third neighbour" policy as part of a "world community of neighbours," arguing that it seeks to convert resource wealth into "fortune-sovereignty" and practise "collaborative nationalism" (Uradyn, *A world community of neighbours in the making: Resource cosmopolitics and Mongolia's "third neighbour" diplomacy*, 2017). Yet his analysis remains broad and global, with little attention to Mongolia's engagement with Central Asia. John Irgengioro (2022) provides one of the few direct studies of Mongolia's relations with Central Asia, especially Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in the context of China's expanding influence through the Belt and Road Initiative. He argues that these ties remain limited despite cultural and geopolitical affinities, citing weak connectivity and entrenched Russian influence. Vaishali Krishna (2020), an Indian scholar, analyzes India's engagement with both Mongolia and Central Asia, framing Mongolia as a "spiritual" and "third" neighbor under its "Act East" policy and viewing Central Asia through its "Connect Central Asia" policy. While her study situates Mongolia–Central Asia ties within wider Indo-Asian geopolitics, it views them mainly through India's lens and gives little attention to Mongolia's own agency.

Together, these works reveal a clear gap. Mongolian scholars have acknowledged Central Asia's significance but have not systematically analyzed Mongolia's recent, more proactive diplomacy toward the region, while most international studies either overlook Mongolia or treat it as marginal. The surge in high-level exchanges over ten presidential-level bilateral visits between 2024 and 2025 shows that Mongolia is moving beyond symbolic gestures toward sustained regional cooperation. By situating these developments within the emerging body of Mongolian research on regional diplomacy, this study addresses a neglected area of scholarship and examines how Mongolia is beginning to position itself as an engaged and integrated actor within the Central Asian region.

GEOPOLITICAL FEATURES OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN REGION

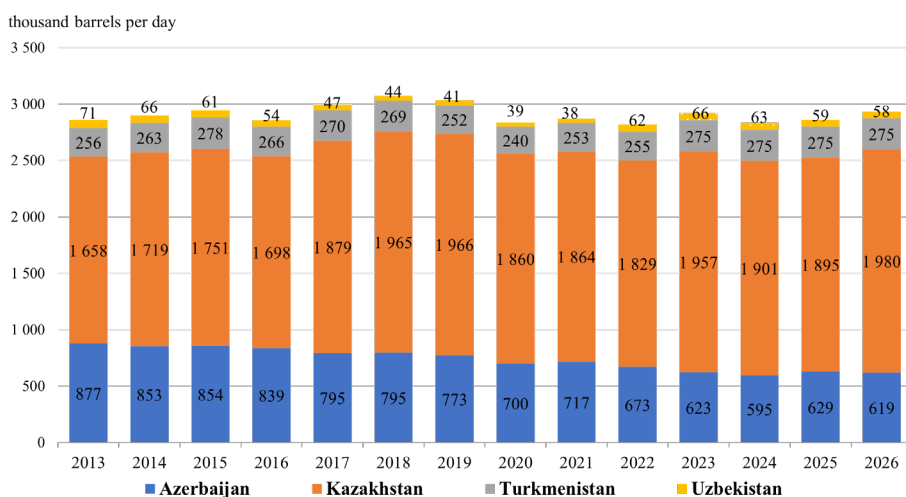
Researchers define the geographical location of Central Asia as situated in the center of the Eurasian continent, bounded by the Caspian Sea to the west, central China to the east, southern Russia to the north, and northern India to the south (Dynkin, Baranovsky, 2013). The geographic framework for this study includes the five former Soviet republics (Central Asian) — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Central Asia plays a crucial role in world geopolitics and geo-economics, the power that dominates this region can significantly influence the balance of power in the world (Kolya, 2022; Nyamjav, 2022). The factors fueling geopolitical conflict in the region include its unique geographical location, historical trajectory, energy resources, and ongoing disputes.

The growing influence of major powers in Central Asia can be explained by their political, economic, security, historical, and cultural ties with the region as follows.

1. *Strategically significant geographical location:* The geographical position of Central Asia forms a key transit corridor, linking Asia and Europe. Furthermore, the region borders both Russia and China, making their influence particularly strong. The USA, the European Union, Japan, and Turkey also pursue their political and strategic interests in the region.
2. *Abundant natural resources:* The region's rich energy resources make it a major area of competition for great powers. For instance, as of 2025, the Caspian basin contains 46 billion barrels of oil and 610 trillion cubic meters of natural gas (E+E Leader, 2025), which account for nearly 12% of the world's natural gas (Tsereteli, 2020). The shores of the Caspian Sea border five countries: Kazakhstan (29% — 2340 km), Russia (16%), Azerbaijan (20%), Turkmenistan (21%), and Iran (14%) (Akhmetuly, 2018).

Figure 1. Caspian region petroleum and other liquid fuels production, 2013–2026



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *International Energy Statistics and Short-Term Energy Outlook*. Note: Data for 2025 and 2026 are forecast in the *Short-Term Energy Outlook*. Excludes production in Iran and Russia.

In other words, competition is underway in the region for control over energy resources and their transportation routes. This primarily involves the USA, the European Union, Turkey, India, Japan, and other countries. For instance, a major reason for the USA's growing economic interest in Central Asia is its aim to control energy resources,

particularly the large deposits of natural gas, oil, and uranium in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, the Central Asian region is considered one of the world's richest in strategic raw materials, with abundant deposits of coal, gold, uranium, and aluminum, further increasing its economic significance. Kazakhstan, for example, is the world's largest uranium producer and is among the most resource-rich countries in the region.

Table 1. Kazakhstan's Global Ranking in Mineral Extraction

Uranium	2
Petroleum	12
Gold	15
Silver	2
Copper	3
Lead	3
Zinc	4
Iron	8
Chrome	1
Magnesium	3
Molybdenum	4
Natural gas production	19

Source: Absametov et al. (2019)

Moreover, under the framework of China's massive infrastructure and logistics Belt and Road initiative, which is based on substantial financial lending, there has been a growing focus on economic policy and gaining access to regional energy resources at significantly lower costs.

In recent years, the Central Asian region has become a stage for active multilateral diplomacy by major powers. For instance, in May 2023, the first China–Central Asia Summit was held in Xi'an, China, and the second summit was organized in June 2025 in Astana, Kazakhstan. While China had previously focused primarily on trade, investment, and economic cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative, a noticeable shift has occurred toward issues of security and stability. China has expressed its readiness to assist in strengthening the security and defense capacities of the region.

3. *Ensuring stability and security in the region.* Scholars note that external actors such as the United States, the European Union, and India have sought to contribute to stability in Central Asia through a mix of political, security, and economic initiatives (Luguusharav, 2022; World Bank, 2023; EU External Action Service, 2024). The United States has emphasized democratization, governance reform, and security assistance, often framed through its soft power policies. The European Union has supported institutional capacity-building, border management, and rule-of-law projects, while India has expanded cooperation in counterterrorism, training, and infrastructure development. At the same time, some findings highlight that challenges such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and transnational crime complicate these efforts and continue to shape the regional security agenda (SIPRI, 2024; UNODC, 2023). Consequently, while external powers promote stability, their policies interact with persistent local security threats, making the region a contested space for influence and cooperation.

4. *A region located at the intersection of major world civilizations.* The Central Asian region occupies a unique geographical position at the intersection of several major world civilizations. To the east lie China and the Asia-Pacific region; to the south, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Islamic states of the Middle East; to the west and north, Europe, Russia, and the Caucasus. The region's population shares historical and cultural ties stemming from Turkic heritage, and many states aim to consolidate their influence by emphasizing these shared historical and cultural values. Turkey and Azerbaijan, for instance, are such states. Some researchers view Turkey's ambitions in Central Asia as stemming from a policy of strengthening its political and military role (Dorjpalam & Purevdorj, 2022). Turkey's largest economic market in Central Asia is Kazakhstan, a key trading partner, and Turkey is eager to further expand its economic relations with Kazakhstan. The main tool for Turkey's policy in Central Asia is the Organization of Turkic States, an association composed of Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, which serves as a platform for Turkey to promote its soft power and to balance Russian and Chinese influence in the region. One of the reasons why the countries of this region are pursuing economic cooperation with wealthy Middle Eastern countries without damaging their newly established relations with Russia is their deep-rooted religious and cultural ties with the Muslim background countries.

In recent years, the Central Asian countries have been experiencing significant economic growth. According to the study (HKTDC Research, 2024), the total GDP of the Central Asian countries reached USD 468.6 billion in 2023. Among them, Kazakhstan stands out as the region's largest economy, based on its natural gas and oil resources. It led the region in GDP growth, reaching USD 263.4 billion in 2023, with its economy growing by 5.1%. As of 2023, Uzbekistan's GDP was USD 101.6 billion, Turkmenistan's was USD 77.7 billion, Kyrgyzstan's was USD 14 billion, and Tajikistan's was USD 11.9 billion (Table 2).

Table 2. Some Socio-Economic Indicators of Central Asian Countries (2023)

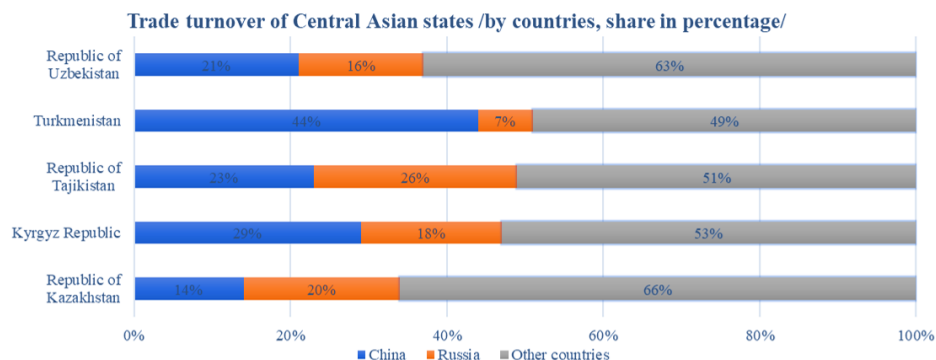
Uranium	Area (square kilometers)	Population (millions)	Nominal GDP (billion USD)	GDP per capita (thousands. USD)	GDP growth (%)	Inflation (%)
Central Asia	3,940,870	79.3	468.6	5.9*	6.3*	-
Republic of Kazakhstan	2,699,700	19.9	263.4	13.3	5.1	14.6
Republic of Uzbekistan	440,650	36	101.6	2.8	6.3	10
Republic of Turkmenistan	469,930	6.5	77.7	11.9	2	-1.6
Kyrgyz Republic	191,800	6.9	14	2	6.2	10.8
Republic of Tajikistan	138,790	10	11.9	1.2	8.3	3.7

Source: HKTDC Research (2024)

The main trading partners of the region include the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. As of 2023, China accounted for 23% of the region's exports and 33% of its imports, making it the largest trading partner. In terms of trade policy, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have been members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) since 2015, while Uzbekistan became an observer in 2020. The Union

maintains a policy of high tariff harmonization, protective measures for its markets, and the facilitation of free movement of goods.

Figure 2. Trade turnover of Central Asian States



Source: International Trade Center (2025)

Table 3. Main export products of Central Asian countries (2023)

HS code	Product type	Percentage
27	Fossil fuels, oil	52.4%
71	Natural gemstones, semi-precious stones, and precious metals	11.6%
26	Ore concentrate	4.9%
28	Inorganic chemicals; organic and inorganic compounds of precious metals, rare earth metals	4.0%
72	Iron and steel	4.0%
74	Copper and copper concentrate	3.8%
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery, and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	2.0%
10	Grains	1.9%
31	Soil fertilizer	1.7%
85	Electrical machinery and equipment parts	1.3%
	Other	12.4%

Source: International Trade Center (2025)

Table 4. Main export products of Central Asian countries (2023)

HS code	Product type	Percentage
84	Nuclear reactors, machinery, mechanical devices, and their accessories	17.1%
87	Vehicles and car parts	15.7%
85	Electrical equipment and its parts	10.0%
27	Minerals and oil	3.7%
73	Iron and steel products	3.6%
39	Plastic products and their parts	3.2%
72	Iron alloy	3.1%
30	Pharmaceutical products	3.0%
90	Optical goods	2.3%
62	Knitted and woven clothing and related products	1.8%
	Other	36.6%

Source: International Trade Center (2025)

The process by which the newly independent Central Asian states are revitalizing their societies and economies and pursuing accelerated development is a subject of considerable interest. During the past thirty years, these countries have faced many of the same developmental challenges as Mongolia. In the years following independence, their foreign policy was predominantly aimed at avoiding domination by any major power, while pursuing an open, multilateral, and Western-oriented approach. Scholar Udo Barkmann (2014) explains the relations between the Central Asian countries in the post-independence period as follows: *“The new Central Asian states remained distant from each other, emphasizing their own unique identity, and perhaps even fearing that Turkey would have some influence on their recognition of their national identity”* (Barkmann, 2014).

Furthermore, the geographical location of the Central Asian states, being landlocked, possessing vast territories with low population densities, and uneven settlements, has posed significant constraints to their economic development. During that period, their economies fell into crisis, their GNP fell sharply, and unemployment, poverty, and social stratification grew, fueling social unrest and internal conflict, including disputes related to religion. A vivid example of this is the civil conflict in Tajikistan in 1992, which turned into a fratricidal war (Nazarbayev, 2010). Tajikistan, with a population of approximately 5 million, remained in a state of civil war for five years after gaining independence, suffering heavy human casualties and extensive material damage.

While the Central Asian states gradually began strengthening their stability, structural weaknesses remained. These states have historically maintained close political, economic, religious, and cultural ties, yet disputes over ethnic, religious, and territorial issues, as well as water resources, frequently triggered conflict. Also, the region faced significant economic hardships. Nursultan Nazarbayev, former President of Kazakhstan, described the country’s difficult financial situation by stating: *“...the country was in a state of a patient in a coma”, adding that “conflicts stemming from ethnic disputes, political controversies, and armed conflict turned the region into a major hotspot”* (Nazarbayev, 2010). This illustrates the depth of the political, social, and economic crises in the Central Asian states during that period.

Kazakhstan, much like Mongolia, is a landlocked developing country. Nevertheless, over the past two decades, it has successfully implemented operations related to its border dry port, yielding significant progress, a process from which Mongolia can draw valuable lessons. Foreign analysts have described the Khorgos dry port, located within Kazakhstan’s territory, as a strategic hub linking China and Europe by land, emphasizing that choosing an appropriate location for a new city can enable the creation of a new intersection for economic activity. The Ministry of Road Transport and Development of Mongolia (2020) identifies the Khorgos project as a clear example of how a country can effectively manage a major Belt and Road Initiative project within its borders for its own benefit.

Among the Central Asian states, Kazakhstan has experienced the most rapid economic growth since independence. International financial institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and Asian Development Bank classify it as an upper-middle-income economy, highlighting consistent GDP growth, diversification efforts, and major inflows of

foreign direct investment (World Bank, 2023; IMF, 2024; IsDB & ADB, 2024). Analysts also note Kazakhstan's gradual structural reforms in energy, infrastructure, and services, which have helped stabilize domestic demand and attract external capital. While significant vulnerabilities remain—such as dependence on resource exports and exposure to external shocks—the country's development trajectory provides a reference point for other states in the region, including Mongolia, in terms of balancing resource management with broader economic modernization.

The geopolitical competition among major powers in Central Asia is closely tied to the utilization of its vast natural resources. In this context, the region is expected to become a significant center of international political and economic activity in the future.

Today, the Central Asian states are pursuing a policy aimed at transitioning toward innovation-oriented economies. The main goals in this process include allocating their resources toward developing key sectors with strong future potential, creating a more favorable business and investment climate, and strengthening the efficiency and productivity of their domestic industries.

The Central Asian countries are interested in deepening their relations with Mongolia, and this can be explained by several factors, such as Mongolia's policy that is oriented toward Western democratic values, its ability to consolidate political stability, the preservation of its nomadic culture and traditions, and the presence of a Muslim community within its borders.

Central Asia is a region that shares geographical proximity, historical and cultural ties, ethnic relations, and a similar level of development with Mongolia. In the future, it is essential for Mongolia to further foster cooperation and collaborate more closely with the Central Asian states as they collectively go through the process of addressing their social and economic challenges. Therefore, strengthening and deepening trade, economic, and cultural relations with Central Asia through a multilateral diplomatic policy is of great significance.

DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONSHIPS AND COOPERATION BETWEEN MONGOLIA AND THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA

One of the main directions of Mongolia's foreign policy is extensive cooperation with neighboring countries in the political, economic, security, social, and humanitarian fields. In this context, Mongolia conducts its diplomatic policy through both bilateral and multilateral channels with various states across the world.

Mongolia's Increasing Political and Diplomatic Relations with Central Asian Countries

In recent years, Mongolia has expanded its foreign policy focus toward friendly cooperation with the countries of Central Asia, with both sides showing mutual efforts to strengthen and deepen their relations. Since 2015, Mongolia's foreign policy toward Central Asia has become more active, characterized by regular high-level reciprocal visits with increasing frequency. New embassies have been established to enhance Mongolia's diplomatic presence in the region. For example, Mongolia opened new

embassies in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and established its first strategic partnership in the Central Asian region with Kazakhstan. These developments have contributed significantly to strengthening the foundation of political and diplomatic relations and reflect Mongolia's tendency to pursue a balanced foreign policy oriented toward the Central Asian region.

Within the framework of bilateral cooperation, Mongolia initially established diplomatic relations with the Central Asian countries in 1992 (see Table 5).

Table 5. Mongolia's establishment of diplomatic relations with Central Asian countries

Country	Date	Capital
The Republic of Kazakhstan	January 22, 1992	Astana
The Republic of Uzbekistan	January 25, 1992	Tashkent
Turkmenistan	April 23, 1992	Ashkhabad
The Kyrgyz Republic	April 22, 1992	Bishkek
The Republic of Tajikistan	April 24, 1992	Dushanbe

Source: Central Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia (1992-1994)

Over the past approximately thirty years, the intensity and activity of relations with these countries have remained relatively weak. The Central Asian region has been characterized by its remote location in the world, susceptibility to ethnic and national conflicts, and political instability. Although Mongolia has been unable to deepen its cooperation with Central Asian countries for nearly 30 years after establishing diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan, this slow development of relations can be largely explained by geographic remoteness, underdeveloped transport and communication infrastructure, weak regional economic integration, and Mongolia's limited opportunities to participate due to Central Asia's historical reliance on the oil and gas sectors.

Foreign policy toward Central Asia has intensified, particularly in recent years, with frequent high-level reciprocal visits becoming more regular. The establishment of mutual embassies and the increasing frequency of diplomatic consultations indicate a strengthening of political trust between the parties. For instance, since 2015, the President, Prime Minister, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia have made a total of ten visits to Central Asian countries.

In recent years, Mongolia has placed significant emphasis on strengthening its relations with Central Asian countries as part of its broader foreign policy strategy (Jargalsaikhan & Nyamjav, 2022). Since 2023, the presidents of four Central Asian nations have visited Mongolia, while the President of Mongolia has reciprocated with visits to the same number of countries in the region. The frequency of these mutual visits has increased notably, during which heads of states have conducted bilateral meetings and formal negotiations. These engagements have focused on expanding mutually beneficial cooperation, enhancing regional and international collaboration, and establishing substantive and effective partnerships. This trend underscores Mongolia's growing

interest in deepening its ties with the Central Asian region, as illustrated by the following developments:

- In 2015, Mongolia opened a Consulate General in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- In 2015, the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan visited Mongolia and organized the first Mongolia-Turkmenistan Foreign Ministries consultation meeting in Ulaanbaatar.
- In 2019, the second Mongolia-Turkmenistan Foreign Ministries consultation meeting took place in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.
- In 2019, the Prime Minister of Mongolia made an official visit to Kazakhstan, marking the first visit at the Prime Ministerial level in 25 years.
- In 2019, Mongolian President Khaltmaagiin Battulga made an official visit to Kyrgyzstan.
- In 2019, Mongolia opened its Embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- In 2021, Mongolian Foreign Minister Battsetseg Battsengel visited Kazakhstan, the first official visit at the Foreign Ministerial level in 29 years.
- In 2023, the President of Kyrgyzstan made a state visit to Mongolia, the first presidential visit since the establishment of diplomatic relations 21 years prior.
- In 2023, Foreign Minister Battsetseg Battsengel made an official visit to Uzbekistan, the first Foreign Minister-level visit since diplomatic relations were established in 1992.
- The 4th meeting of the Mongolia–Kyrgyzstan Intergovernmental Commission was held in Ulaanbaatar on March 28–29, 2022.
- In 2024, Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh made an official state visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan, marking the first presidential-level visit since diplomatic relations were established in 1992, a highly significant event opening a new chapter in bilateral relations.
- In 2024, Mongolia opened its Embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- In 2024, President Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh made an official visit to Turkmenistan, the first high-level visit since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992.
- In 2024, the Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament made an official visit to Mongolia, the first such visit at the parliamentary speaker level since diplomatic relations were established.
- In 2024, Mongolia elevated its relations with Kazakhstan to the level of “Strategic Partnership,” becoming Mongolia’s first major “Strategic Partner” in the Central Asian region. On October 29–30, 2024, the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, conducted a state visit to Mongolia. During this visit, Mongolia and Kazakhstan formally established a Strategic Partnership. This marked a significant and historic milestone, as it represented Mongolia’s first Strategic Partnership with a country in the Central Asian region
- On June 1–2, 2025, President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedow paid an official state visit to Mongolia, marking the first presidential-level visit since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. This historic visit opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. This marked the first official visit by a Turkmen head of state since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and Turkmenistan in 1992.

- On June 24–25, 2025, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev paid an official state visit to Mongolia, also marking the first presidential-level visit since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. This marked the first state visit by an Uzbek head of state since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992. During the visit, Mongolia and Uzbekistan elevated their bilateral relationship to a “Comprehensive Partnership” and signed a “Joint Statement,” signifying a deepening of strategic cooperation.
- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan paid an official visit to Mongolia on June 26–27, 2025. This was the first-ever visit at the level of Deputy Prime Minister and the first official visit by a Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan in 19 years since 2006. During the visit, the two sides agreed to regularize high-level dialogues and reciprocal visits, as well as inter-ministerial consultations and consular meetings. They also agreed to hold the next session of the Mongolia-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Cooperation within 2025 to further advance bilateral cooperation.
- On June 26–27, 2025, the 5th meeting of the Mongolia-Kyrgyzstan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Cooperation was held in Bishkek, the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- On July 20–23, 2025, the President of Mongolia, U.Khurelsukh, paid a state visit to the Kyrgyz Republic. During the visit, the President of Kyrgyzstan personally welcomed the President of Mongolia at the airport. It was a unique visit that elevated traditional friendly relations to a “Comprehensive Partnership” relationship.
- On July 23–26, 2025, the President of Mongolia, U.Khurelsukh, paid a state visit to the Republic of Tajikistan. This visit is notable for being the first state visit by a Mongolian head of state since Mongolia established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Tajikistan in 1992.
- The Speaker of the State Great Khural of Mongolia, D. Amarbayasgalan, paid an official visit to Kazakhstan from September 4–7, 2025, with the aim of strengthening inter-parliamentary relations between Mongolia and the Republic of Kazakhstan. This marked a significant visit from the Mongolian side at the level of the Speaker of Parliament, 22 years after the last such visit in 2003.

The increasing frequency and regularity of such high-level visits demonstrate Mongolia's commitment to elevating its cooperation with Central Asian countries to a new stage. This trend is further evidenced by the growing number of intergovernmental commission meetings, ministerial consultations, and consular discussions being held actively and on a regular basis in recent years. These developments express Mongolia's aspiration to elevate its relations and cooperation with the Central Asian countries to a new level.

The content of agreements and treaties with Central Asian states has become richer, aiming for more innovative and broader cooperation, with an increasing focus on developing collaboration in an efficient, sustainable, and balanced manner. For example, the agreements between Mongolia and Kazakhstan, based on their “Strategic Partnership,” cover a wide range of areas, including political affairs, security, defense, nuclear energy, information technology, e-governance, space technology, border

infrastructure, environment, green development, and mutual support for international initiatives. This indicates that priority is being given to fostering stable and well-rounded cooperation in the future.

Mongolia's Trade and Economic Relations with Central Asian Countries

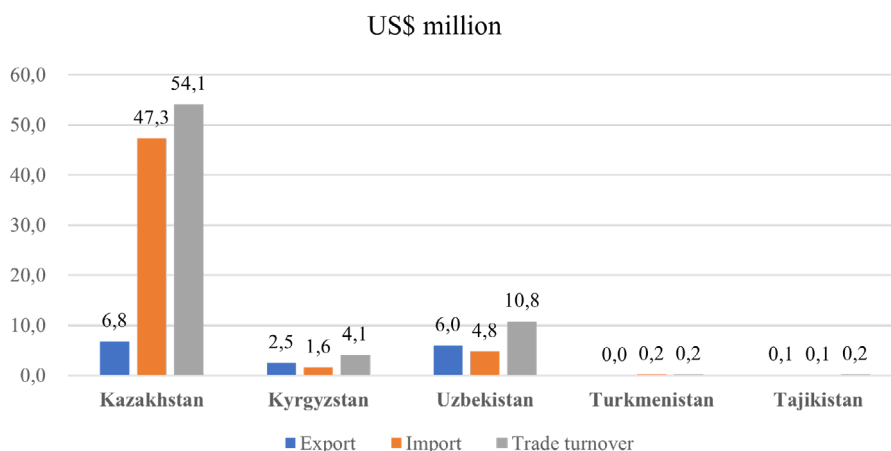
The Central Asian region is becoming a politically and economically active area attracting global attention, which is important for Mongolia in many respects. Mongolia exports animal-derived products such as meat, leather, knitted goods, wool, and cashmere products, clothing, and footwear to Central Asian countries. Conversely, Mongolia mainly imports foodstuffs and consumer goods from Central Asia, including flour, fruits and berries, hand-woven carpets, automotive equipment oils, hygiene products, detergents, tea, vegetable oils, cotton fabrics, wheat, and blue corn flour.

Common challenges facing Mongolia's economic relations with Central Asian countries include the paradox of geographical proximity but a lack of shared borders and direct road or railway connections. Transport routes passing through Russia or China entail high taxes and tariffs, which hinder the expansion of trade and economic ties. Therefore, to enhance trade relations with Central Asian countries, Mongolia needs to develop trilateral partnership mechanisms involving its two neighboring powers and negotiate agreements aligned with its national interests.

In the future, the agricultural and mining sectors present opportunities for joint cooperation to expand economic collaboration. Moreover, intensifying cooperation requires increasing investment from the region and raising the frequency of air transport connections.

Trade and economic cooperation play a vital role in deepening Mongolia's relations with Central Asian countries, and an attempt has been made to explain trade turnover by each country individually.

Figure 3. Trade between Mongolia and Central Asian countries (2024)



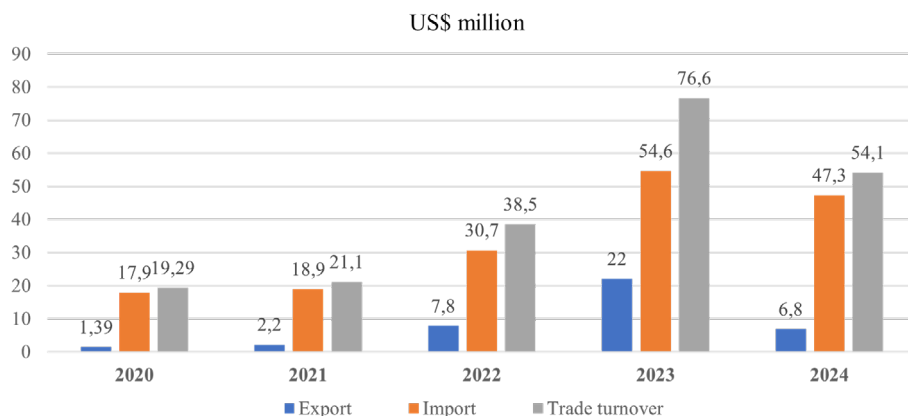
Source: International Trade Center (2025)

As shown in the above diagram, Kazakhstan stands out as Mongolia's largest trading partner among Central Asian countries (Figure 3). Although Mongolia is geographically close to Kazakhstan, with a distance of only 40 km to its west, the two countries do not share a direct border. This, in turn, constitutes a weakness for the expansion of their trade and economic relations, as all exchanges must pass through the territory of the Russian Federation. Mongolia does not have a direct border with Kazakhstan in the Central Asian region, but it is geographically very close. Mongolia and Kazakhstan are separated by about 40 kilometers of Russian territory. This lack of a direct border poses a significant challenge to Mongolia's relations with Central Asian countries. If the transport and logistics issue is resolved, Mongolia will have the opportunity to further develop trade and economic relations with Kazakhstan and the Central Asian countries. This will increase the flow of goods and services from Central Asian countries, which will be of great importance for the bilateral cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, and others. Furthermore, direct investment and business relations with Central Asian countries can improve. Therefore, in order for Mongolia to improve its relations with Central Asian countries in the future, it is important to resolve the transit transport and logistics issues through Russia and China.

Mongolia–Kazakhstan Trade

Trade between Mongolia and Kazakhstan has been growing steadily over the last five years. As of 2024, total trade turnover stands at US\$54.1 million, with US\$6.8 million in exports and US\$47.3 million in imports (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Mongolia-Kazakhstan trade turnover (2020-2024)



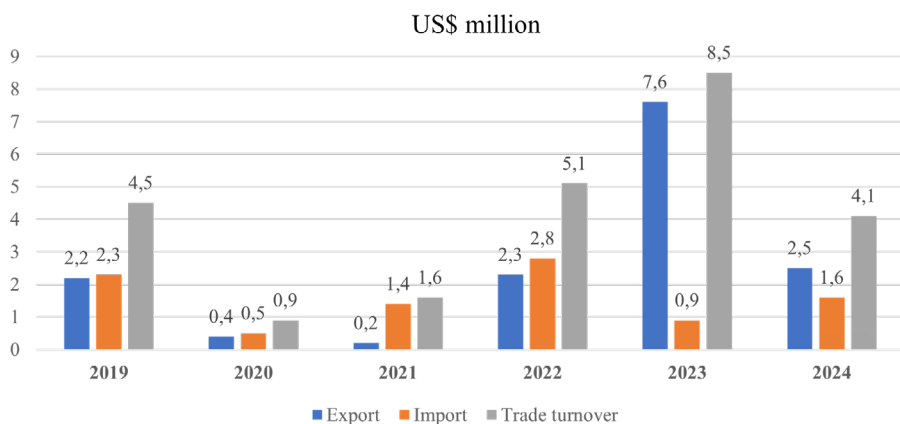
Source: International Trade Center (2025)

Mongolia's exports to Kazakhstan primarily include animal-derived products such as meat, leather, knitted goods, wool, cashmere products, clothing, and footwear. From Kazakhstan, Mongolia predominantly imports processed tobacco, sanitary products, laundry detergents, tea, vegetable oil, cotton fabrics, wheat, rye flour, and food products.

Mongolia–Kyrgyzstan Trade

The Consulate General of Mongolia in the Kyrgyz Republic opened in 2014. However, it was limited in its ability to perform all diplomatic functions typically carried out by an embassy, such as negotiating with the host government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia subsequently raised the proposal to establish an embassy, and in June 2019, Mongolia opened its Embassy in Bishkek, the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic. This move contributed significantly to strengthening and deepening the two countries' bilateral relations, with high-level meetings, reciprocal visits, and the exchange of embassies becoming more frequent.

Figure 5. Mongolia–Kyrgyzstan trade turnover (2019–2024)



Source: International Trade Center (2025)

The total trade turnover between the two countries in 2024 stands at US\$4.1 million, with US\$2.5 million in exports and US\$1.6 million in imports (Figure 5). Mongolia's exports predominantly include mutton, goat meat, by-products, ready-made clothing, and knitted products, while its imports from Kyrgyzstan mainly comprise fruits, seed grains, and carpets.

Mongolia–Uzbekistan Trade

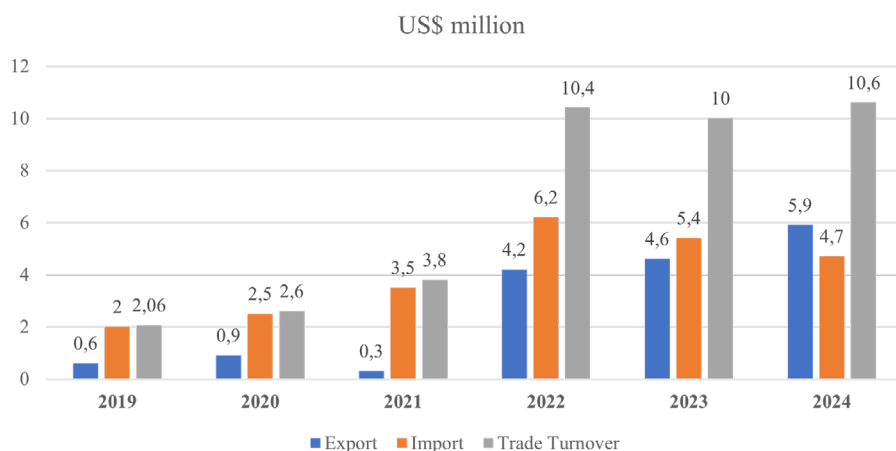
Uzbekistan, with a population of over 35 million, stands out in Central Asia due to its strong agricultural and light industrial base. In contrast to its neighbors, Uzbekistan shares no borders with Russia or China, is not a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization or the Eurasian Economic Union, and maintains an independent foreign policy. Determining that there was a clear need for a diplomatic presence in a country of growing political and economic significance, Mongolia opened its Embassy in Tashkent on June 25, 2024. The two governments held their first Intergovernmental Commission meeting in Tashkent in February 2025, following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. President of Mongolia, U.Khurelsukh, made a state visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan in June 2025. In 2023, Minister of Foreign Affairs B.Battsetseg also paid an official visit to Uzbekistan. An agreement was signed to

establish a Mongolia–Uzbekistan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Cooperation.

On June 24–25, 2025, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev paid a state visit to Mongolia, the first visit at the presidential level since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992.

During the visit, the Presidents of Mongolia and Uzbekistan signed a Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between Mongolia and the Republic of Uzbekistan, thereby elevating bilateral relations to the level of a Comprehensive Partnership. A series of events was held in conjunction with the visit, including the Mongolia-Uzbekistan Tourism Forum, the Mongolia-Uzbekistan Business Forum, a cultural performance by Uzbek artists, a photo exhibition, and a traditional Uzbek cuisine day. This historic visit, the first-ever state visit to Mongolia by the President of Uzbekistan in 33 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, opened a new chapter in the history of bilateral relations and marked a highly significant milestone in deepening cooperation between the two countries.

Figure 6. Mongolia-Uzbekistan trade turnover (2019-2024)



Source: International Trade Center (2025)

The total trade turnover between the two countries in 2024 reached US\$10.6 million. Mongolia exported processed sheep and lamb skins, casings, mutton, chevon, frozen beef, polyacetals, and polycarbonate, valued at US\$5.9 million, while it imported grapes, fruits, food products, refrigeration equipment, freezing equipment, and trucks from Uzbekistan, totaling US\$4.7 million (Figure 6).

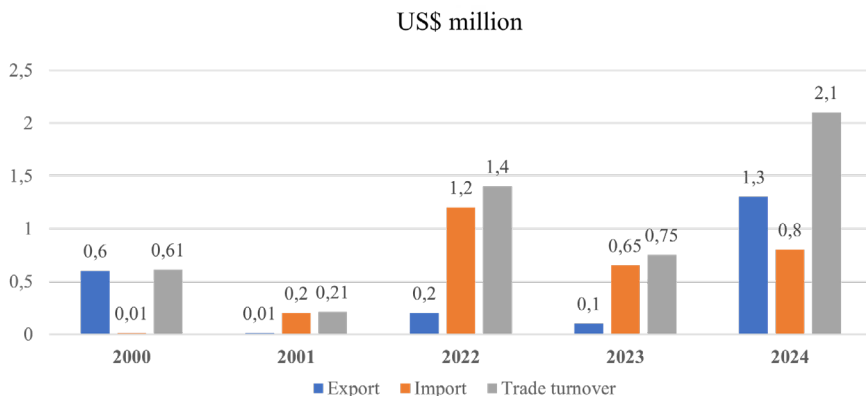
As of 2024, 240 Mongolian nationals reside in Uzbekistan, while 1,020 Uzbek nationals reside in Mongolia. Currently, 25 Mongolian nationals live in Uzbekistan, and 40 Uzbek nationals reside in Mongolia. In 2022, the two countries abolished their respective tourist visas for stays of up to 30 days.

Mongolia and Uzbekistan have significant potential for cooperation in strengthening food security and increasing the supply of healthy food products.

Mongolia–Tajikistan Trade

Mongolia's relations with Tajikistan are the weakest and slowest to develop in comparison with its relationships with other Central Asian states.

Figure 7. Mongolia-Tajikistan trade turnover (2019-2024)



Source: International Trade Center (2025)

The total trade turnover between the two countries in 2024 stands at US\$2.1 million, with US\$1.3 million in exports and US\$0.8 million in imports (Figure 7).

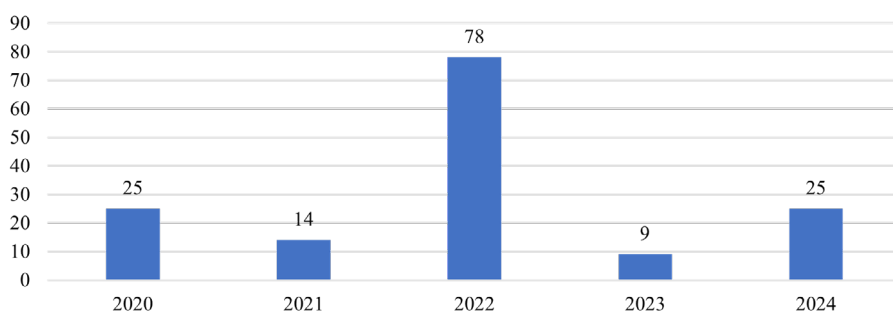
Mongolia–Turkmenistan Trade

In 2015, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan visited Mongolia, and the first consultation meeting between the two Foreign Ministries was held in Ulaanbaatar. Subsequently, in 2019, the second consultation meeting was held in Ashgabat.

President of Mongolia, U.Khurelsukh, made his first state visit to Turkmenistan in October 2024, which represented a significant step forward in strengthening and developing bilateral relations.

There has been no high-level presidential visit between the two countries in more than 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations. In June 2025, President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov made his first state official visit to Mongolia. This visit was a significant visit that strengthened mutual trust between the two countries and sought to enrich relations with new content.

Turkmenistan stands as the country with the lowest trade turnover with Mongolia in Central Asia. As of 2024, there were no exports from Mongolia to Turkmenistan, while US\$25,000 worth of products were imported from Turkmenistan (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Volume of Imports to Mongolia from Turkmenistan (US\$ thousands)

Source: International Trade Center (2025)

Although the exchange of presidential-level visits has taken place within a relatively short span of time, both sides have demonstrated strong mutual commitment to implementing the agreements reached during the visits and producing tangible results in various areas of cooperation. This practical and results-oriented approach was evident during this state visit.

For instance, following the official visit of President U.Khurelsukh to Turkmenistan in 2024, several agreements were successfully implemented. These include the establishment of the Mongolia-Turkmenistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, the creation of an Intergovernmental Joint Commission between the Governments of Mongolia and Turkmenistan, as well as the formation of the Joint Committee on Road Transport, the Joint Committee on Agriculture, and the Joint Committee on Veterinary and Livestock Husbandry. These achievements reflect the successful outcomes of last year's state visit and the dynamic progress in bilateral cooperation.

Overall, in the future, establishing free economic and trade zones in border areas with the participation of Russia, China, and Kazakhstan could be a key way to foster international trade and investment and to further promote Mongolia's relations with Central Asian countries.

FEATURES OF MONGOLIA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS CENTRAL ASIA

Mongolia maintains traditional friendly relations with Central Asian countries, shares deep historical and cultural ties, and has a similar level of economic and social development. Therefore, it is important to deepen relations with Central Asian countries based on shared interests.

Mongolia's geographical and geopolitical location falls within both Northeast Asia and Central Asia. Mongolia emphasizes a policy of "balanced" relationships in its regional interactions. Mongolia's Central Asia-directed foreign policy aims to guarantee the country's security, maintain ecological balance, develop its western region through expanded cooperation with its neighbors, and further deepen collaboration based on historical and cultural traditions.

Point 14.3 of Mongolia's Foreign Policy Concept states: *"To develop bilateral friendly relations and cooperation with Asian countries, and to contribute to strengthening strategic stability and security cooperation in East Asia, Northeast Asia, and Central Asia"* (State Great Khural, 2011). Therefore, it is important for Mongolia to work closely with Central Asian countries to promote common regional interests and establish clear mechanisms to jointly combat the challenges and threats they face, in order to strengthen regional security and stability. The absence of any territorial disputes between Mongolia and the countries of the Central Asian region is a significant achievement in its foreign policy

While Mongolia established diplomatic relations with Central Asian countries in the early 1990s, their interaction remained weak and slow due to regional instability, weak economic integration, and limited opportunity for Mongolia's participation in that process. At the same time, Mongolia has been eager to foster extensive relations with its Northeast Asian neighbors, such as Japan and South Korea. In this context, in order to balance power in the region, Mongolia's policy toward Central Asia in recent years shows a growing tendency toward deepening its engagement. There are significant opportunities for strengthening Mongolia's cooperation with Central Asia in the field of trade. Scholar Alicia Campi (2002) in her paper *Mongolia's Integration into Central Asia: Defining its Future by Rediscovering its Past*, stressed that, *"... today Mongolia should not be turning away from Central Asia, but instead looking for a third neighbor there. Mongolia's reintegration into Central Asia might seem a step backward toward its past, but in reality, it is a path toward a better future."* Thus, Mongolia's policy toward Central Asia should aim to make use of cooperation mechanisms to promote regional stability, protect the environment, foster the development of its western region, and further deepen traditional relations based on historical and cultural ties. Mongolia has established embassies in the Central Asian countries of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, and is showing a tendency to promote large-scale business activities with the business entities of these countries. This trend was clearly visible during the business forums held as part of high-level visits.

Mongolia's foreign policy toward Central Asia can be explained by the following factors:

First: Trade and Economic Cooperation Based on Traditional Friendly Relations. Mongolia's geographical location, landlocked and situated between two neighbors, constitutes a geopolitical vulnerability. Therefore, it is crucial for Mongolia to seek access to European markets by strengthening its transport links through Central Asia. It is especially important to foster relations with Central Asian countries that pursue a Western-oriented economic policy.

Second: Cooperation to Strengthen Regional Peace, Security, and Stability. Mongolia can connect its interests with those of Central Asia by promoting political stability, strengthening democracy, and securing peace and stability in the region. The country should collaborate closely with its neighbors on topical global and regional issues. This includes:

- Mutual support for initiatives put forward by the UN, WTO, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO);
- Support for Mongolia's "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security" initiative;
- Mutual support in international organization elections;
- Combating climate change, desertification, and conserving the environment;
- Support for cooperation in the energy sector.

Third: Cooperation Based on Historical and Cultural Ties. Mongolia is connected to Central Asia through its shared nomadic culture and history. The Central Asian countries lie at the intersection of multiple cultures and blend Islam with modern social progress (Chuluumbaatar, 2020). Mongolia itself stands at a crossroads of many cultures, with Christian-Orthodox culture to the north (Russian Federation) and Confucian- and Buddhist-dominant culture to the south (China). Also, about 5% of Mongolia's total population is Muslim. The western region of Mongolia is geographically close to the countries of Central Asia, where the population is culturally or traditionally Muslim. Thus, these historical and cultural ties enable strengthening relations with Central Asia. There are further opportunities to develop cooperation based on these shared historical and cultural connections.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, due to the complex issues arising in international relations, it has become important for Mongolia to deepen its relations with neighboring countries in the region. In this context, it is crucial for Mongolia to pursue a diplomatic policy with innovative initiatives that align with its own interests and to increase its number of partners.

Mongolia's relations with Central Asian countries have been weak and inactive over the last nearly 30 years. In recent years, Mongolia has intensified its policy toward Central Asia, putting significant effort into strengthening its political and diplomatic foundations and focusing more on developing these relations.

The Central Asian countries, where the majority is of Muslim background, share with Mongolia a nomadic lifestyle and deep historical and cultural ties. These commonalities provide a strong foundation for fostering closer political, economic, and cultural cooperation.

To expand its international partnerships, Mongolia must pursue a more active, innovative, and purposeful foreign policy. Therefore, deepening relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is particularly important, as these two countries share common interests with Mongolia and follow a Western-oriented development trajectory.

Looking ahead, it will be essential for Mongolia to carry out a detailed study of the specific features of each Central Asian state to formulate a well-grounded regional policy. Within the framework of its "New Revival" in foreign relations, Mongolia's active and balanced diplomacy is already gaining broad international support, which strengthens its prospects for successful engagement with the Central Asian region.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

ASh: writing – original draft, conceptualization, formal analysis, data curation, investigation, methodology, planning, and execution of the research; KB: methodology, writing – theoretical and methodological framework, literature review, investigation, resources, software, translation of the article.

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