

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT WORLD AFFAIRS AND THEIR IMPACT ON MONGOLIA

Dolgorsuren Dorj¹, Shinebayar Dorjbayar²

Abstract: *The phenomenon du jour of modern world affairs has huge impacts on international relations and communities. Mongolia may seem geographically isolated from some of the major global events, but due to its interdependence with the global community, it can still experience various effects from significant world affairs. Despite not always being at the center of major world affairs, Mongolia is still connected to the broader global community and can experience significant impacts and trends on the international stage. This academic paper aims to explore strategies to minimize the negative consequences of global events, some probable dangers and risks Mongolia faces due to its specific geographical, economic, and geopolitical context, and the ways and means to avoid the consequences of world affairs.*

Keywords: *world affairs, global significance, Mongolia, impacts and negative consequences*

Looking back at the events of 2023, plenty of developments captured the attention of people around the world – while others received minimal scrutiny. Vulnerable populations grappled with lethal conflicts, from Sudan to Gaza and Israel, alongside record-breaking heat conditions, drought, wildfires, and flooding. Societal discontent was palpable in many countries, with news cycles dominated by polarization, violent protests, riots, and strikes. Although globally destabilizing

consequences – such as those seen at the initial outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war or the COVID-19 pandemic – were largely avoided, the longer-term outlook for these developments could bring further global shocks. From major elections across the globe to simultaneous and converging catastrophes, 2024 has been a pivotal year that shaped the geopolitical landscape and humanity's collective future. It begins against a backdrop of unprecedented devastation, division, and instability as 27 regions experience massive violence and political insecurity. Meanwhile, people's rights are in jeopardy worldwide from threats old and new. At the same time, the year ahead provides meaningful opportunities for progress, whether at the ballot box or within our multilateral system. (UN, 2024)

Over the next two years, the attention and resources of global powers are likely to be focused on three hotspots in particular: the war in Ukraine, the Israel-Gaza conflict, and tensions over Taiwan. Escalation in any one of these hotspots would radically disrupt global supply chains, financial markets, security dynamics, and political stability, viscerally threatening the sense of security and safety of individuals worldwide. All three areas stand at a geopolitical crossroads, where major powers have vested interests: oil and trade routes in the Middle East, stability and the balance of power in Eastern Europe, and advanced technological supply chains in East Asia. Each could lead to broader regional destabilization, directly drawing in major power(s) and escalating the scale of conflict.

¹ PhD, Senior Lecturer, School of Political Science, International Relations, and Public Administration, National University of Mongolia. Dolgorsuren.d@num.edu.mn

² Senior Lecturer, School of Political Science, International Relations, and Public Administration, National University of Mongolia

"World affairs" refers to global events with significant implications for multiple countries. These include international relations, global politics, economic globalization, security issues, human rights, environmental challenges, global health, and cultural/social dynamics. The more nations collaborate on global issues, the better the chance for finding solutions towards a brighter future. In other words, the more nations that remain vigilant, engaged, and collaborate on global affairs, the greater the likelihood that they will identify and pursue viable solutions for achieving a more promising future. Determining the "most significant" world affairs can be subjective and can vary depending on perspectives, interests, and current events. However, some events and issues often stand out due to their widespread impact and global significance. Here are a few that have been particularly noteworthy in recent times (Report, 2024):

- COVID-19 Pandemic: The pandemic has been a monumental event in recent history, affecting nearly every country and aspect of daily life. It has resulted in widespread illness, loss of life, economic disruption, and significant changes in social behavior and governance.
- Climate change: The global climate crisis is still on the rise, with increasing temperatures, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation threatening ecosystems, economies, and livelihoods worldwide. International efforts to mitigate climate change and transition to renewable energy sources are becoming increasingly urgent.
- Geopolitical tensions: Geopolitical tensions, including those between major powers like the United States, China, and Russia, influence global dynamics and affect issues ranging from trade and security to technology and human rights.
- Humanitarian and refugee crisis: Conflict, persecution, and environmental disasters have resulted in a significant refugee crisis, with millions of people displaced from their homes and seeking safety and stability in other countries. This crisis has profound humanitarian, social, and political implications. Conflict, displacement, and humanitarian emergencies in regions like Syria, Yemen, and Myanmar continue to pose significant challenges, requiring global attention and cooperation.
- Technology and Digital Transformation: Rapid advancements in technology, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and biotechnology, are transforming societies, economies, and global power dynamics, presenting both opportunities and challenges.
- Social and Political Movements: Movements promoting social justice, human rights, and political reform have gained momentum worldwide, challenging entrenched power structures and influencing public discourse and policymaking.
- Economic Inequality and Globalization: Economic inequality within and between countries remains a pressing issue, compounded by globalization, technological change, and the COVID-19 pandemic, with implications for social stability, political legitimacy, and international cooperation.
- Terrorism and Extremism: Terrorism and extremist ideologies continue to pose threats to global security, necessitating international cooperation and counterterrorism efforts.
- Democracy and Governance: Developments related to democracy, human rights, and governance, including democratic backsliding in some regions, impact global stability and the rule of law.

- Health and Environmental Crises: Beyond pandemics, issues such as antibiotic resistance, pollution, and biodiversity loss have significant implications for human health and the environment globally.

These are just a few examples, and many other important world affairs are shaping our interconnected global landscape.

How do these significant world affairs affect Mongolia?

Mongolia may seem geographically isolated from some of the major global events, but due to its interdependence with the global community, it can still experience various effects from significant world affairs. Let's look at some of how major world affairs can impact Mongolia:

1. Economic Effects: Mongolia's economy can be affected by economic developments such as global recessions, fluctuations in commodity prices, or changes in trade policies among major trading partners. Mongolia's exports of minerals such as coal, copper, and gold play a crucial role in its economy. Therefore, global demand and prices for these commodities can significantly impact the country's economy.

2. Geopolitical Dynamics: Mongolia's geopolitical position and relationships with neighboring countries are influenced by broader geopolitical tensions and developments. Changes in regional power dynamics or conflicts in neighboring countries can affect Mongolia's security and foreign policy priorities.

3. Climate Change: Mongolia is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which include desertification, water scarcity, and extreme weather events. Mongolia's environment and economy can be influenced by global efforts to address climate change, such as international agreements and initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3. Health and Pandemics: Global health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic can have significant impacts on Mongolia's public health system, economy, and society. Mongolia may experience disruptions in global supply chains, travel restrictions, and changes in international cooperation on health issues that could affect its economy and society.

4. Technology and Connectivity: Mongolia's technology sector and digital infrastructure can be influenced by global trends in technology and innovation. Developments in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and telecommunications can impact Mongolia's digital economy and connectivity with the rest of the world.

5. Social and Cultural Influences: Global social and cultural movements such as trends in popular culture, social media, and activism can influence Mongolia's society and youth culture. Mongolia's engagement with global ideas and values can shape social norms, attitudes, and behaviors within the country.

Mongolia faces unique challenges and opportunities, and to survive in the current world affairs, it is crucial to understand and adapt to them. Although Mongolia may not receive as much global attention as some other countries, it still has significant issues that its neighboring countries and residents must navigate. Overall, despite not always being at the center of major world affairs, Mongolia is still connected to the broader global community and can experience significant impacts and trends on the international stage.

Probable dangers and risks to a small state: The specific dangers and risks faced by a small state can vary depending on its location, geopolitical situation, economic status, and other factors. However, here are some common probable dangers and risks (Projections):

1. *Security Threats*: Small states may face security challenges such as military aggression, terrorism, or cyber-attacks from larger neighboring states or non-state actors.
2. *Economic Vulnerability*: Economic stability can be a significant concern for small states due to their limited resources, dependence on a few industries, and susceptibility to global economic fluctuations. (Index)
3. *Political Instability*: Small states may be more prone to political instability due to factors such as weak governance structures, ethnic or religious tensions, or external interference.
4. *Environmental Risks*: Small states are often disproportionately affected by environmental risks such as natural disasters, climate change impacts, and resource depletion, which can have severe economic and social consequences.
5. *Dependency on External Powers*: Small states may become overly reliant on larger countries or international organizations for economic aid, trade, and security assistance, which can compromise their sovereignty and independence.
6. *Isolation and Marginalization*: Small states may struggle to have their voices heard on the global stage, leading to marginalization in international decision-making processes and difficulties in asserting their interests.
7. *Demographic Challenges*: Small states may face demographic challenges such as aging populations, brain drain, or migration pressures, which can strain social welfare systems and economic productivity.
8. *Health Risks*: Small states may have limited healthcare infrastructure and resources, making them more vulnerable to disease outbreaks, pandemics, and public health emergencies.
9. *Natural Resource Constraints*: Small states often have limited natural resources, which can constrain economic development and exacerbate dependency on external sources for energy, food, and other essential resources.
10. *Technological Disadvantages*: Small states may lack the technological capabilities and expertise to compete in the global economy or defend against cyber threats, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and disruption.

To mitigate these risks, small states often rely on diplomacy, alliances, regional cooperation, and strategic partnerships to enhance their security, promote economic development, and strengthen their resilience to external threats and internal challenges.

Probable dangers and risks to Mongolia

Mongolia faces a unique set of probable dangers and risks due to its specific geographical, economic, and geopolitical context. Here are some key ones (Risks):

1. *Border Security*: Mongolia shares borders with two major powers, Russia, and China. While relations with these neighbors have generally been stable, border security remains a concern, especially given regional tensions or disputes over resources and territory.
2. *Resource Dependence*: Mongolia's economy is heavily reliant on natural resources, particularly mining. Fluctuations in commodity prices can significantly impact the country's economic stability and growth prospects, leaving it vulnerable to global market trends.
3. *Climate Change and Environmental Degradation*: Mongolia is susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change, including desertification, droughts, and extreme weather events.

These environmental challenges can exacerbate water scarcity, threaten agriculture and livestock herding, and contribute to social and economic instability.

4. *Dependency on China*: Mongolia's economic ties with China are crucial for trade and investment. However, excessive dependency on China exposes Mongolia to risks such as economic coercion, market fluctuations, and potential political pressure from Beijing. (Muggah)
5. *Nomadic Livelihoods*: Traditional nomadic herding practices are central to Mongolia's culture and economy. However, environmental degradation, urbanization, and economic pressures pose challenges to the sustainability of nomadic livelihoods, threatening social cohesion and rural communities.
6. *Political Instability*: Mongolia's transition to democracy has been relatively successful, but political stability has occasionally been challenged by corruption, governance issues, and fluctuations in public trust in political institutions.
7. *Infrastructure Development*: Despite efforts to improve infrastructure, Mongolia still faces challenges in transportation, energy, and telecommunications. Inadequate infrastructure hampers economic diversification, limits access to services in remote areas, and impedes overall development.
8. *Healthcare Access*: Access to healthcare services, particularly in rural and remote areas, remains a concern in Mongolia. Limited healthcare infrastructure and resources can exacerbate health disparities and hinder the country's ability to respond to public health emergencies such as pandemics.
9. *Foreign Influence*: Mongolia's strategic location between Russia and China makes it subject to influence from both powers, as well as other regional actors. Balancing relations with multiple countries while safeguarding national interests requires careful diplomacy and strategic decision-making.
10. *Youth Unemployment*: Mongolia has a relatively young population, and youth unemployment rates are high. Limited job opportunities, especially outside of the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, contribute to social and economic challenges, including urban migration and youth disenchantment.

Addressing these risks requires comprehensive strategies focused on economic diversification, environmental sustainability, infrastructure development, social welfare, and diplomatic engagement to ensure Mongolia's long-term stability and prosperity. Mongolia's independence can be threatened by a combination of internal and external factors. Here are some key threats:

1. *Geopolitical Pressures*: Mongolia's geopolitical position between two major powers, Russia and China, poses a challenge to its independence. Both countries have significant influence in the region, and Mongolia must navigate carefully to maintain its sovereignty and autonomy in the face of geopolitical pressures.
2. *Dependency on China*: Mongolia's economic ties with China are crucial for trade and investment, but excessive dependency on its neighbor can potentially undermine Mongolia's independence. Economic coercion or political pressure from Beijing could compromise Mongolia's ability to pursue its own interests and policies.
3. *Resource Exploitation*: Mongolia's rich natural resources, including minerals and rare earth elements, attract foreign investment and economic development. However, excessive exploitation of these resources by foreign companies without adequate regulation or oversight could undermine Mongolia's sovereignty and environmental sustainability.

4. *Internal Instability*: Political instability, governance challenges, and social unrest within Mongolia can also threaten its independence. Weak institutions, corruption, and ethnic tensions could create vulnerabilities that external actors might exploit to undermine Mongolia's sovereignty.
5. *Border Disputes*: Border disputes with neighboring countries, particularly China and Russia, could escalate and pose a threat to Mongolia's territorial integrity and independence. Resolving these disputes through diplomatic means and maintaining good relations with neighboring states is essential to safeguard Mongolia's sovereignty.
6. *Cyber Threats*: As digital technologies become increasingly integral to modern societies, cyber threats pose a significant risk to Mongolia's independence. Cyber-attacks targeting critical infrastructure, government institutions, or communication networks could disrupt governance processes. (Lawson, 2023)
7. *Foreign Influence*: Mongolia is subject to influence from various foreign powers and international organizations. While engagement with the international community is essential for economic development and security cooperation, undue influence or interference in Mongolia's internal affairs could undermine its independence.
8. *Environmental Challenges*: Mongolia's vulnerability to climate change and environmental degradation can also threaten its independence. Natural disasters, water scarcity, and desertification could exacerbate social and economic challenges, making Mongolia more susceptible to external pressures and interventions.

Mongolia, to safeguard its independence, must pursue a balanced foreign policy, strengthen its democratic institutions, promote economic diversification, enhance cybersecurity measures, and actively engage with international partners while asserting its sovereignty and national interests. Diplomacy, dialogue, and cooperation are essential tools in navigating the complex geopolitical landscape and ensuring Mongolia's continued independence. What do the citizens of a country, like Mongolia need to do to avoid the consequences of world affairs? Avoiding the consequences of world affairs entirely might be unrealistic, but there are steps you can take to mitigate their impact on your life:

Stay informed: Keep yourself updated on current events and global trends. Understanding what's happening in the world allows you to anticipate potential consequences and plan accordingly. **Diversify your investments:** Spread your investments across different asset classes and geographical regions to reduce the risk of being adversely affected by specific world events or economic downturns. **Build a resilient network:** Cultivate relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and industries. A strong network can provide support and opportunities, even in challenging times. **Focus on personal development:** Invest in acquiring skills and knowledge that are valuable regardless of external circumstances. Continuous learning and self-improvement can enhance your adaptability and resilience. **Practice mindfulness and stress management:** Develop habits such as meditation, exercise, and spending time in nature to reduce stress and maintain mental well-being, which can help you cope with the uncertainties of world affairs. **Prepare for emergencies:** Have contingency plans in place for various scenarios, including natural disasters, economic crises, or geopolitical instability. This might involve building an emergency fund, creating a disaster preparedness kit, or establishing alternative sources of income.

In order to minimize the negative consequences of global events, individuals and nations can implement these strategies: 1. Diversify industries and trade partners to buffer against economic downturns. 2. Invest in resilience by developing infrastructure, healthcare, education,

and social safety nets. 3. Engage in diplomacy and build strong international partnerships to navigate global challenges. 4. Embrace change and innovation to thrive in dynamic global environments. 5. Identify potential risks and develop contingency plans to mitigate their impact. 6. Foster awareness and educate citizens to empower them to make informed decisions. 7. Take proactive steps to address climate change and environmental degradation. 8. Work towards peaceful resolutions of conflicts to avoid escalation of tensions. 9. Address inequalities and promote social justice to build more resilient societies. By implementing these strategies, we can create more stable and prosperous communities and nations that are better prepared to handle the consequences of global events.

The Summit of the Future, took place during the 79th UN General Assembly in September, was an opportunity to reset and refocus on the needs of future generations. The Summit presents a rare opportunity to think critically about what we can do now to prepare for the next 10, 20, or 50 years. Being able to take more farsighted decisions and actions matters for everyone, but especially for younger countries, young people, and future generations. So the first thing that we all need to do is fight for the future in the Summit of the Future. That includes who gets to shape the agenda. Is it going to be set by older, richer countries that have entrenched power within the international system, or will this be a moment for countries and regions that have a large, unprotected interest in the future to mobilize and work together to protect that interest more effectively? We will see.

CONCLUSION

"World affairs" refers to global events with significant implications for multiple countries/regions. These include international relations, global politics, economic globalization, security issues, human rights, environmental challenges, global health, and cultural/social dynamics. The more states that stay informed, engaged, and work together on world affairs, the more solutions they can find for creating a better future.

Mongolia, despite being geographically isolated, is interdependent with the global community and can experience effects from significant world affairs. Major world affairs can impact Mongolia's economy, geopolitical position, climate, health, technology, and culture. Although Mongolia may not receive as much global attention as some other countries, it still faces unique challenges and opportunities that require understanding and adaptation. Overall, Mongolia is connected to the broader global community and can experience significant impacts and trends on the international stage.

Mongolia faces several potential dangers and risks due to its unique geographical, economic, and geopolitical context. These include border security, resource dependence, and climate change, dependency on China, nomadic livelihoods, political instability, infrastructure development, healthcare access, foreign influence, and youth unemployment. To ensure Mongolia's long-term stability and prosperity, it is crucial to address these risks with comprehensive strategies focused on economic diversification, environmental sustainability, infrastructure development, social welfare, and diplomatic engagement. Mongolia's independence can be threatened by geopolitical pressures, dependency on China, resource exploitation, internal instability, and border disputes. Therefore, Mongolia must navigate these challenges carefully and take proactive steps to safeguard its sovereignty and autonomy.

At no other point in history has our world experienced such a significant set of security challenges. The post-Cold War system has witnessed the rise of multifaceted challenges – traditional power rivalries have re-emerged while non-traditional security issues have disrupted global stability. To face these challenges, governments and organizations need analysts who

understand complex geostrategic issues and can engineer solutions. To mitigate the consequences of global events, individuals and countries can take proactive measures such as diversification, investment in resilience, diplomacy and cooperation, adaptability and innovation, risk management, education and awareness, environmental stewardship, conflict resolution, and promoting equality and justice. While it may not be possible to completely avoid the impact of world affairs, these strategies can help build more resilient communities and nations.

Thus, Mongolia, despite its geographical isolation, is interdependent with the global community and can experience significant effects from world affairs. Major world affairs can impact Mongolia in several ways, including its economy, geopolitical position, climate, health, technology, and culture. Mongolia, like any other country, faces unique challenges and opportunities that require a deep understanding and prompt adaptation to stay ahead in the fast-changing world. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize that Mongolia is connected to the broader global community and can experience significant impacts and trends on the international stage.

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