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COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION KEY DOCUMENTS

MONGOLIA

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RDS-IND

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION SERVICE

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1. Preface

- i This Country of Origin Information (COI) Key Documents has been produced by Research, Development and Statistics (RDS), Home Office, for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. It provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The COI Key Documents includes information available up to 09 March 2007.
- ii The COI Key Documents is an indexed list of key reports, papers and articles produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources. It does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy.
- iii For Home Office users, the COI Key Documents provides direct electronic access to each source referred to in the document, via a link on the source numbers in the index and list of sources. For the benefit of external users, the relevant web link has also been included, together with the date that the link was accessed.
- iv As noted above, the documents identified concentrate mainly on human rights issues. By way of introduction, brief background information on Kenya is also provided. Please note, this background material is not intended to provide a summary of the material contained in the key documents listed.
- v This COI Key Documents and the documents listed are publicly disclosable.
- vi Any comments regarding this COI Key Documents or suggestions for additional documents are very welcome and should be submitted to the Home Office as below.

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It is not the function of the Advisory Panel to endorse any Home Office material or procedures. In the course of its work, the Advisory Panel directly reviews the content of selected Home Office COI documents, but neither the fact that such a review has been undertaken, nor any comments made, should be taken to imply

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2. Background Information on Mongolia

Area: 1,566,500 sq. km (602,829 sq. ml)

Population: 2.5 million (estimate)

Capital city: Ulaanbaatar

People (approx): Khalkh Mongols 86%, Kazakhs (6%), Other 8%

Language(s): Khalkh Mongol, Kazakh

Religion(s): Tibetan Buddhism, Shamanism, Muslim (in south-west)

Currency: Togrog (MNT)

Head of State: Emilio Mwai Kibaki (elected 27 December 2002)

Foreign Minister: Raphael Tuju

Major Political parties: Mongolia boasts 18 political parties, but the principle ones are the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), Mongolian Democratic Party (DP), Mongolian Civil Will and Republican Party (CWRP). The CWRP, DP and the New Socialist Democratic Party formed the Motherland-Democracy Coalitions to contest the June 2004 General Election. Although the coalition split again in 2005.

Government: Supreme legislative power vested in the 76-member Ikh Hural (Parliament), elected by universal adult suffrage for four years. Ikh Hural recognises the president on his election and appoints the Prime Minister (subject to the President's agreement) and members of the Cabinet, which is the highest executive body. President is the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and is directly elected for a term of four years.

President: Nambaryn Enkhbayer (MPRP)

Prime Minister: Miyegombo Enhbold (MPRP)

Foreign Minister: Nyamaa Enkhbold (MPRP)
(Foreign and Commonwealth Office) [1a] (p1)

GEOGRAPHY

"Mongolia is a huge landlocked country, more than six times the size of the UK, sandwiched between Russia and China. It is also one of the highest countries in the world, with an average elevation of 1580m. Mongolia can be divided into six distinct zones including desert, steppe, mountain and taiga. The southern third of Mongolia is dominated by the Gobi Desert. Climatic extremes are the norm, with temperatures ranging from -30°C in winter to +40°C in summer." (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) [1a] (p1)

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RECENT HISTORY

"From 1691, Mongolia was part of the Manchu Empire. After the fall of the Manchus in 1911, 'Outer Mongolia' declared independence. With Soviet help, a revolutionary government seized power in 1921 and, in 1924, the Mongolian People's Republic was established. Stalinist one-party rule by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) lasted until 1990 when, following a popular campaign of mass demonstrations calling for political and economic reform, the first multi-party elections took place."

"The MPRP dominated the elections in 1992, representing the majority in the newly created Ikh Hural. However, in the elections of June 1996, the MPRP was displaced by the Democratic Alliance (DA), a coalition made up of the Mongolian Social Democratic Party (MSDP) and the Mongolian National Democratic Party (MNDP). The DA stood on a

platform of quickening the transition to a free market economy, eliminating corruption and protecting human rights, as well as reducing poverty and correcting social inequalities. However, the problems associated with transition, various corruption scandals and divisions within the DA combined to lead to a loss of public confidence. On 2 July 2000, when 81% of Mongolians went to the polls in the country's fourth democratic election, the MPRP secured an unexpected landslide victory - winning a staggering 72 of the 76 Ikh Hural seats."

"The fourth parliamentary elections since the introduction of multi-party democracy were held on 27th June 2004. The MPRP was widely expected to win, with the opposition MDC gaining an increased number of seats. Following the polling, however, the projected unofficial results showed that both the MPRP and the MDC had won 36 seats each. The Republican Party won a single seat and three independents with close ties to the Coalition won the remaining three seats. A number of complaints about electoral irregularities were made and these protests were resolved by the Supreme Court."

"Talks between the MPRP and the Motherland Democratic Coalition (MDC) led to an agreement to form a government of national unity. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj was appointed Prime Minister. The new Government was approved by Parliament and sworn in on 28 September 2004."

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RECENT EVENTS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

"On 11 January 2006, 10 ministers of the MPRP [Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party], who formed a majority in the cabinet (10 of 18), resigned in protest at the country's domestic political course. This ended the coalition government of the MPRP, Democratic Party and other smaller parties, (previously known as the MDC) [Motherland Democratic Coalition]... Prime Minister Ts Elbegdorj (Democratic Party) stepped down as Prime Minister and Parliament was dissolved. The MPRP subsequently gained agreement from other political parties to form a new coalition government, with Miyegombo Enbold as head." (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) [1a] (p3)

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ECONOMY

GDP: US\$1.2bn

GDP per head: US\$500 (2002)

Annual growth: 1.1% (2002); 5.7% in 2003

Inflation: 1.6% (2002)

Major Industries: Mining, Cashmere, agriculture

Major trading partners: China, Republic of Korea, Russia

Exchange Rate: GBP £1 = 2,106 Tobrogs, US\$1 = 1,170 Tobrogs (January 2004)

KSh 128 = £1 sterling (January 2006)

[1a] (Foreign and Commonwealth Office - p3)

"Animal herding is the main economic activity and is practised throughout the country. By mid-1995 more than 90% of all livestock was privately owned. [2a](Economic Affairs)

However, “Severe winters and summer droughts in 2000-2002 resulted in massive livestock die-off and zero or negative GDP growth. This was compounded by falling prices for Mongolia's primary sector exports and widespread opposition to privatization. Growth was 10.6% in 2004, 5.5% in 2005, and 7.5% in 2006, largely because of high copper prices and new gold production.” (CIA World Factbook 2007) [6a] “The copper-molybdenum works at Erdenet, a Mongolian-Russian joint venture, is the most important mining operation in the country.” [2a] (Economic Affairs)

“Mongolia's economy continues to be heavily influenced by its neighbors. For example, Mongolia purchases 80% of its petroleum products and a substantial amount of electric power from Russia, leaving it vulnerable to price increases. China is Mongolia's chief export partner and a main source of the ‘shadow’ or ‘grey’ economy. The World Bank and other international financial institutions estimate the grey economy to be at least equal to that of the official economy, but the former's actual size is difficult to calculate since the money does not pass through the hands of tax authorities or the banking sector.” (CIA World Factbook 2007) [6a]

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HUMAN RIGHTS

The US State Department report on Human Rights Practices Mongolia 2005 noted the following human rights problems:

- police abuse of prisoners and detainees, including at least one suspicious death due to violence in a pre-trial detention centre
- poor conditions at prisons and pre-trial detention centres
- arbitrary arrests, lengthy detention, and corruption within the judicial system
- possible government intimidation of the media, resulting in self-censorship by the press
- domestic violence against women
- child abuse and child labour
- several reported cases of international trafficking of persons, and some domestic cases of child prostitution

(US State Department: Human Rights Practices Mongolia 2005)

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office in its Country Profile of Mongolia (last reviewed, 29 March 2006) noted that: “Mongolia established a Human Rights Commission in 2001 and is receiving substantial support from the UNDP to develop HR awareness. Generally, Mongolia's HR record is good, but there is continuing concern over the conditions in pre-trial detention centres. Mongolia has ratified all the UN HR conventions, but its reporting record is less than perfect. Capital punishment, for a range of crimes, still exists. The Embassy has a rolling programme of prison visiting.” [1a] (p5)

Amnesty International in its Annual Report – Mongolia 2005, stated that: “Journalists exposing corruption and abuse of power and lawyers defending victims of torture were at risk of intimidation and criminal charges because of their work. Detention conditions remained harsh. Violence against women was widespread.” [5a]

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3. Index to key source documents

(KB users - click source number to access document directly)

KEY FACTS AND GEOGRAPHY	[1a]	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Country Profile: Mongolia (last updated on 29 March 2006) http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=CountryProfile&aid=1019041550447
	[2a]	Europa World Online, Economic Affairs (accessed on 21 February 2007)
	[3a]	UNHCR, Mongolia Atlas map – January 2007 http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/doclist
	[4a]	United States Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices – 2006, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78783.htm
	[4b]	United States Department of State (USDOS), Background Note: Mongolia, last updated January 2007 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2779.htm
	[6a]	CIA – The World Factbook, 2007 https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mg.html
	[7a]	British Broadcasting Company, Country Profile: Mongolia, last updated 19 December 2006 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1235560.stm
	[12a]	Reliefweb: Country Profile: Mongolia http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/bkg.nsf/doc200?OpenForm&rc=3&cc=mng&mode=cp
	[16b]	The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF): Mongolia - Statistics http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mongolia_statistics.html
[24]	Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessments: Mongolia Country Profile 2006. (Hard copy only)	
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	[25a]	Lonely Planet: Map of Mongolia http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mapshells/north_east_asia/mongolia/mongolia.htm
HISTORY	[1a]	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Country Profile: Mongolia, last updated 29 March 2006 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=CountryProfile&aid=1019041550447
	[4c]	United States Department of State (USSD), Background Note: Mongolia, last updated January 2007

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	[9a]	Freedom in the World 2006: Mongolia http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&country=7020&year=2006
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	[5a]	Amnesty International (AI) Human Rights Report 2006: Mongolia, Covering events from January to December 2005 http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/mng-summary-eng
	[5b]	Amnesty International (AI) Human Rights Report 2005: Mongolia, Covering events from January to December 2004 http://web.amnesty.org/web/web.nsf/print/E5DEFBEA64C3409880256FE1005CACC8
CHILDREN	[4a]	United States Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2006, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78783.htm
	[4d]	Trafficking in Persons Report, 6 June 2006 http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65989.htm
	[8a]	United States Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs – Mongolia: Incidence and Nature of Child Labor http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/tda2004/mongolia.htm
	[29a]	Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Global Report 2004:Mongolia http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=859
	[23a]	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: Committee on the Rights of the Child: Thirty-ninth session - Concluding Observations, 21 September 2005 http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CRC.C.15.Add.264.En?Opendocument
	[16b]	The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF): Mongolia - Statistics http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mongolia_statistics.html
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	[14d]	USAID: Assessment of Corruption in Mongolia, Final Report, 31 August 2005 http://www.usaid.gov/mn/library/documents/MongoliaCorruptionAssessmentFinalReport.pdf
	[9a]	Freedom in the World 2006: Mongolia http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&country=7020&year=2006
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	[15a]	The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), World Legal Survey: Mongolia, Last updated 31 July 2000 http://www.ilga.info/Information/Legal_survey/Asia_Pacific/mongolia.htm
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	[21]	UNGASS (United Nations General Assembly) Country Progress Report 2006: Mongolia http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2006/2006_country_progress_report_mongolia_en.pdf
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	[6a]	CIA World Fact-book: Mongolia https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mg.html
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