

**Opening address by Mr Z Enkhbold, Member of Parliament of Mongolia  
for the GDLN AP Annual Meeting  
at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, June 29, 2009 – Draft**

It is my great pleasure to be able to speak to you today. It is always a pleasure to receive overseas visitors here in Mongolia and I hope your visit will be a fruitful experience personally and for the Global Development Learning Network.

Mongolia's journey along the development path has been rapid and with great success. We are blessed with an extremely capable workforce which is determined to perform and eager to learn. The world is in economic crisis – that has been well documented. But we are not in a knowledge crisis and now, more than ever, the sharing of experiences, the importing of knowledge and the building of capacity should flow in abundance.

For that I not only extend welcomes but I thank you for your efforts to be here for this meeting. Thank you also must go the World Bank Mongolia Office team for hosting and organizing this event. Their tireless efforts do not go unnoticed and I applaud them for the dedication and professionalism with which they approach international development, particularly in Mongolia.

Thanks should also go to the local organizations here today, for carrying the program within Ulaanbaatar and the hard to reach places throughout Mongolia. GDLN reaches parts of Mongolia that is not easily accessible to many of us. Capacity is required in many of these provincial centers and without their assistance, information swapping would be limited.

I know a lot about GDLN but I intend to learn more during this morning's sessions.

Why DL is more important for Mongolia? There are 2 most important factors:

1. According to Guinness book of records Mongolia is the most scarcely populated country in the world. We are living in 1.5 mln sq.km land. 2.6 mln Mongolians scattered in more than 500 administrative units cities, soums. Distances between them usually measured by hundreds of km. In order to spread knowledge we have to use DL.
2. Mongolia made transition to democracy and free market only 20 years ago. We have a lot to learn from developed countries experience and accumulated knowledge.

So I would again like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for coming. I hope you enjoy the sessions. I also hope you have some time to learn about this country during your time here.

But most of all I hope your coming together can further add value to this already impressive piece of infrastructure and discuss ways that you can further develop the relationship with your Mongolian partners.

Thank you.