

HMDC Presents... MONGOL 1225: Sample Directives and Crisis Notes

HMDC Presents... Sample Directives: Mongol Empire 1225

THIS IS A MODEL TO LEARN FROM, NOT TO COPY. We study these samples at home to learn the shape of a crisis update, a directive and a speech that answers a crisis update. Harvard forbids pre-written documents and forbids artificial intelligence tools for any conference material, including directives and backroom notes (Harvard Model United Nations, Guide to Delegate Preparation, Pre-Writing Policy and AI Policy, September 14, 2026). So we read these, learn the method, and then write every directive and speech ourselves, live, in committee.

WE WORK IN THE FRONT ROOM ONLY. At HMUN Online, our committee is a Specialized Body, and Harvard says: "Specialized bodies are directive-based and small-sized, at 20 to 40 delegates each, with no backroom elements, simulating the fast-paced and unpredictable challenges that face our global leaders." (Harvard Model United Nations, HMUN Online Committees, Last Accessed: October 2026). This means we will not write secret crisis notes or build a private plan for one character. We answer each crisis update together, in open debate, by speaking well and by writing and passing directives.

WE ACT WITH THE TOOLS OF 1225. This is a historical crisis. Our characters have horses, riders, armies, herds, written orders, envoys, merchants and assemblies. They do not have telephones, radios, guns, trains, satellites or the United Nations. News travels only as fast as a rider can carry it, and every plan we write must work with that limit.

HOW TO READ THIS FILE

Every sample below mixes two kinds of material, and we always keep them apart.

1. **REAL (CITED):** a fact from our research report, *[2026-10-14] HMDC MUN DEC - CRISIS - MONGOL 1225 - REPORT*, with its source in brackets. We may use these facts in committee with confidence.
2. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** an event, a person or a detail made up for this sample. It did not happen. We never repeat an invented detail as history.

The exact rules for directives and speeches at our conference come from our chair. Where Harvard's guide is silent, our chair will explain the exact rules.

SAMPLE CRISIS UPDATE

INVENTED FOR PRACTICE. THIS EVENT DID NOT HAPPEN. It is built on real history from our report, and the section called HOW EACH SAMPLE IS BUILT shows which parts are real.

CRISIS UPDATE: AUTUMN 1225, THE GREAT KHAN'S CAMP

The Great Khan has returned from the long war in Central Asia, leaving Mongol troops behind to hold the conquered cities. Tonight a rider arrives with three pieces of news.

First, the Great Khan has fallen ill with a fever. His doctors say he will recover, but he is about 63 years old, and the court whispers the question no one dares to ask aloud: who rules next?

Second, a Mongol envoy sent to the Tangut kingdom of Xi Xia has been held at the border for twenty days. The Tangut king says the envoy insulted him. Some commanders remember Otrar and call for war at once.

Third, a message was sent to Jochi, the eldest son, in the western lands. He has not answered.

The commanders of ten thousand are waiting for orders. The court must act before the news spreads.

SAMPLE DIRECTIVE 1: CALLING A KURILTAI

Harvard's sample directive has a title, a list of sponsors and signatories, and numbered actions with lettered sub-points, and Directors "will be generous with the format" because directives are written quickly (Harvard Model United Nations, Guide to Delegate Preparation, Rule 37, September 14, 2026). Our chair will explain how many sponsors and signatories each directive needs.

Directive 1.1: The Kuriltai of the Homeland

Sponsors: Tolui, Ögedei, Yelü Chucai **Signatories:** [signatories]

1. **Calls** a kuriltai, the great assembly of princes and nobles, to meet in the homeland of eastern Mongolia by the first spring grass:
 - a. Riders carry a written summons, in the Mongol script, to each of the four sons and to every commander of ten thousand;
 - b. The summons to Jochi is carried by two senior nobles together, with gifts and a promise of safe passage, so that he is invited with honour and not ordered.
2. **Asks** the Great Khan to name his chosen heir before the whole court while he still lives:
 - a. Each son swears in public to obey the named heir;
 - b. The oath is written down and kept by the court's scribes.
3. **Names** Tolui, keeper of the homeland, to guard the camps and herds of the kuriltai and to keep order there until the assembly ends.
4. **Orders** that every commander of ten thousand swear loyalty to the house of the Great Khan as a whole, not only to one man, so that the army stays together whatever happens.

SAMPLE DIRECTIVE 2: PROTECTING ENVOYS AND THE RELAY ROADS

Directive 1.2: Safe Roads and Safe Envoys

Sponsors: Ögedei, Chinkai, Yelü Chucai **Signatories:** [signatories]

1. **Declares** that any envoy or merchant travelling under the Great Khan's protection may not be harmed or held:
 - a. Every envoy carries a pass marked with the Great Khan's authority;
 - b. Any ruler who harms an envoy is treated as an enemy of the whole court.

2. **Sends** a second envoy to the Tangut king with a calm message: free our envoy within thirty days, and we will discuss the matter at the kuriltai before any army moves.
3. **Strengthens** the relay stations along the main roads:
 - a. Each station keeps fresh horses, food and lodging for riders and merchants;
 - b. A guard of fifty riders protects each stretch of road between the homeland and the western lands.
4. **Asks** the merchant partnerships of the roads to keep their caravans moving during the illness of the Great Khan, so that trade and news do not stop.

SAMPLE DIRECTIVE 3: KEEPING THE HERDS AND THE PEOPLE CALM

This third directive answers a quieter danger in the update. While the court waits for news, the herds must be fed and the conquered peoples must stay calm, or the empire weakens without a single battle.

Directive 1.3: Grass, Herds and Every Faith

Sponsors: Tolui, Yelü Chucai **Signatories:** [signatories]

1. **Orders** every camp in the homeland to prepare for a dry year:
 - a. Herds are moved so the best pastures are saved for the horses of the kuriltai;
 - b. Each camp stores dried meat and milk products for the winter.
2. **Invites** the holy men of every faith, Buddhist, Muslim, Daoist and Christian, to pray for the Great Khan's health, each in their own way.
3. **Confirms** that the clergy of every faith keep their tax benefits during the Great Khan's illness, so that the conquered peoples see that nothing has changed.
4. **Asks** the court's scribes to keep a written count of the herds and stores in each camp, and to send it to the kuriltai.

SAMPLE SPEECH IN RESPONSE TO A CRISIS UPDATE

When a crisis update arrives, the chair may open a moderated caucus, and each speaker has a short time to tell the room what to do. We use that time to win votes for our directive. We name the danger, give the plan, show one real fact from our report, and end by asking for support. Our chair will explain the exact speaking time.

The speech below is given by Tolui, keeper of the homeland, to win votes for Directive 1.1. It is about 120 words.

Honoured princes and commanders, our father is ill, and we have no rule for who comes next. If we wait, every commander will follow his own road, because each one swore loyalty to our father alone.

Some of you want war with the Tanguts tonight. Remember Otrar. When the shah killed our envoy, we went to war with Khwarazm. Let us not make another war before we have chosen our next leader.

In 1206 a kuriltai of nobles made our father Chinggis Khan. A kuriltai can unite us again. Directive 1.1 calls the princes to the homeland by spring, asks our father to name his heir, and makes every commander swear loyalty to the whole house. Vote yes.

HOW EACH SAMPLE IS BUILT

Each sample uses real facts from our report, and every report section is named so we can check it ourselves. Anything not on this list was invented for practice.

THE CRISIS UPDATE

1. **REAL (CITED):** The Great Khan left Central Asia in 1225 and, unlike earlier campaigns, left troops behind to hold the conquered land (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1A, "Slaughtering on both sides". Our report notes that Encyclopaedia Iranica gives 1223 instead, so the date is debated.
2. **REAL (CITED):** The empire had no orderly system of succession (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1A, "Leaving no succession system". His age of about 63 in 1225 comes from our report's Introduction, which names no source for it, so we check it before using it in a speech.
3. **REAL (CITED):** In 1218 the governor of Otrar had a Mongol caravan killed, and the Khwarazmshah then executed the Mongol envoy who came to protest, which led to war with Khwarazm (Encyclopaedia Iranica, December 15, 1990). Report section: 3A, "Killing the caravan at Otrar".
4. **REAL (CITED):** The Great Khan's last campaign, in 1226-1227, was against the Tangut kingdom of Xi Xia (Encyclopaedia Iranica, December 15, 1990; Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report sections: Timeline; 1A, "Ending the Tangut kingdom".
5. **REAL (CITED):** Jochi had been distant from his father since about 1221 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1A, "Breaking between father and eldest son".
6. **REAL (CITED):** The commanders of ten thousand were bound to the Great Khan personally (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1A, "Tying commanders to one man".
7. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** The fever in autumn 1225, the envoy held for twenty days, the Tangut king's complaint and Jochi's silence. The real Great Khan died in August 1227 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Accessed: October 2026), so this is the kind of early illness our report's Crisis Invention Box warns may appear.

DIRECTIVE 1: THE KURILTAI

1. **REAL (CITED):** A kuriltai of nobles gave Temujin the title Chinggis Khan in 1206, and a kuriltai confirmed Ögedei in 1229 (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026; Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026). Report section: 1B.
2. **REAL (CITED):** The Great Khan chose Ögedei "with great care" and made sure his other sons would accept him (Encyclopaedia Britannica, September 21, 2026). Report section: 1B, "Choosing an heir with great care". This supports action 2.
3. **REAL (CITED):** The first Mongol written language was ordered in 1204 from the Uyghur script (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1F, "Leaving four great legacies". This supports the written summons and the written oath.

4. **REAL (CITED):** Tolui held the homeland in eastern Mongolia and was called "guardian of the hearth and fire" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, July 14, 2026). Report section: 1C. This supports action 3.
5. **REAL (CITED):** Yelü Chucai advised both Chinggis Khan and Ögedei (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1E. This is why he is a sponsor.
6. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** The meeting time of "the first spring grass", the two nobles sent to Jochi, the gifts, and the army-wide oath in action 4. These are ideas for practice, built on the real problem in report section 1A, "Tying commanders to one man".

DIRECTIVE 2: ENVOYS AND RELAY ROADS

1. **REAL (CITED):** The war with Khwarazm began after the shah executed a Mongol envoy who came to protest the Otrar killings (Encyclopaedia Iranica, December 15, 1990). Report section: 3A. This is why action 1 protects envoys.
2. **REAL (CITED):** Relay stations about every twenty miles supplied food, horses and lodging, and helped merchants as well as official riders (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 3B, "Connecting the empire every twenty miles". Our report does not give the year the stations began, and Britannica links the messenger network to Ögedei's reign (report section 1B, "Building Karakorum and expanding"), so in 1225 we write "strengthen" or "build" the stations rather than claim they already cover the empire.
3. **REAL (CITED):** Mongol safe-conduct passes carried the khan's authority (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 3B, "Carrying the khan's travel pass". The pass in the museum is from later in the 13th century, so we use the idea, not that exact object.
4. **REAL (CITED):** Merchant partnerships called ortogh shared the risks of caravan trade (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 3C, "Sharing risk in caravan partnerships". Our report does not date when they began, so action 4 is a practice idea built on this fact.
5. **REAL (CITED):** Chinkai, a Kerait Nestorian Christian, later headed Ögedei's writing office (Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026). Report section: 1B, "Electing by traditional custom". Our report does not say what post Chinkai held in 1225, so the samples do not give him a title for that year.
6. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** The thirty-day deadline, the second envoy and the guard of fifty riders.

DIRECTIVE 3: GRASS, HERDS AND EVERY FAITH

1. **REAL (CITED):** The Mongol rise came during 15 unusually wet years, and the empire's power rested on grass and herds (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, March 25, 2014). Report section: 1A, "Depending on unusual wet years". This supports action 1.
2. **REAL (CITED):** The Mongols tolerated every faith and gave tax benefits to its clergy, naming Buddhism, Islam, Daoism and Nestorian Christianity (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1F, "Courting the clergy of every faith". This supports actions 2 and 3.
3. **REAL (CITED):** Tolui held the homeland in eastern Mongolia (Encyclopaedia Britannica, July 14, 2026). Report section: 1C. This is why he sponsors a directive about the homeland camps.
4. **REAL (CITED):** Yelü Chucai advised both Chinggis Khan and Ögedei (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Accessed: October 2026), and the first Mongol written language was ordered in 1204 (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report sections: 1E; 1F, "Leaving four great legacies". This supports his sponsorship and the written count in action 4.

5. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** The saved pastures, the stored food, the prayers for the Great Khan's health and the written count of herds. These are practice ideas built on the real facts above.

THE SPEECH

1. **REAL (CITED):** The empire had no orderly system of succession, and the commanders of ten thousand were bound to the Great Khan personally (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1A, "Leaving no succession system" and "Tying commanders to one man". This is the danger in the first paragraph.
2. **REAL (CITED):** The Khwarazm-shah executed the Mongol envoy who came to protest the Otrar killings, which led to war with Khwarazm (Encyclopaedia Iranica, December 15, 1990). Report section: 3A, "Killing the caravan at Otrar". This is the warning in the second paragraph.
3. **REAL (CITED):** A kuriltai of nobles gave Temujin the title Chinggis Khan in 1206 (Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026). Report section: 1B. This is the proof in the third paragraph.
4. **REAL (CITED):** Tolui held the homeland in eastern Mongolia (Encyclopaedia Britannica, July 14, 2026). Report section: 1C. This is why Tolui speaks for a kuriltai in the homeland.
5. **INVENTED FOR PRACTICE:** The illness, the Tangut quarrel and the call for war tonight all come from the invented crisis update. The speech only uses real history from 1225 or earlier, because a character in 1225 cannot know what happens later.

WHAT WE PRACTISE NEXT

1. **Writing a directive from a fresh update:** We take the sample crisis update, close this file, and write our own short directive in ten minutes, with numbered actions and lettered sub-points.
2. **Giving a speech that wins votes:** We choose one directive, then speak for about one minute in character. We name the danger, give the plan, use one real fact from our report, and end by asking the room to vote yes.
3. **Checking every fact:** Before we use a fact in committee, we find it in our report and say its source aloud. If we cannot find it, we treat it as invented.

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