

HMDC Presents... CRISIS - MONGOL 1225: Part 2 (The United Nations)

HMDC Presents... Mongol Empire 1225: Death of Genghis Khan (Research Report, December 2026)

Prepared for HMDC Forensics delegates attending Harvard Model United Nations Online, December 5-6, 2026. Every fact below comes from a page or official document that was opened and read in October 2026. Each evidence entry repeats its publication and date so the source is always visible.

This is a historical crisis committee. The real history of 1225-1229 is the foundation, but the committee staff will invent events. In this report, anything that did not happen is clearly marked **CRISIS INVENTION** so that no delegate mistakes an invented scenario for history. Parts 2 and 3 also include brief modern parallels, clearly marked **MODERN PARALLEL**, because the United Nations did not exist in 1225.

A note on names: the same person appears in sources as Genghis Khan, Chinggis Khan or Čengiz Khan. His sons appear as Jochi (Jöchi, Joči), Chagatai (Chaghatai), Ögedei (Ögödei, Ogodei) and Tolui (Toluy). These are different spellings of the same names.

WHAT OUR CHAIRS WILL FOCUS ON

Harvard tells us that in December we sit as members of the Mongol Empire in 1225, at the moment when Genghis Khan is close to death. The empire is huge, but it has two weak points that Harvard names directly: keeping the family and the army united, and finding a steady way to pass power to the next ruler. As delegates, we will face growing threats to the empire and decide which direction it takes next. Harvard asks us to work together to keep the Mongols in power while we shape the empire's "political, economic, and military institutions."

Harvard Model United Nations, HMUN Online Committee Page, Last Accessed: October 2026
<https://www.harvardmun.org/mongol-online>

The parts of this report that match that focus most closely are the **TIMELINE**, the **CRISIS INVENTION BOX**, 1A (the succession and unity entries), Major Solutions 1 to 5 in 1B to 1F, 2H (the factions of the Mongol court) and 3A to 3C (envoys, the postal relay network and trade).

How we use this report: Our first job is succession and unity, so we study 1B to 1D and 2H until we can defend one plan for who rules next and how the family stays together. Next we prepare ideas for the empire's institutions: taxes and trade in 1E and 3A to 3C, and law, writing and army units in 1F. The modern United Nations material in Part 2 (2A to 2G) and in 3D and 3E, along with the DNA and climate entries in 1A, is background only, because none of it can be used inside a committee set in 1225. We read it once for understanding, but we spend our practice time on the 1225 court.

PART 2, THE UNITED NATIONS RECORD (MODERN PARALLELS)

The United Nations was founded in 1945, more than seven hundred years after this committee's events, so it has no record on the death of Chinggis Khan itself. This part briefly explains the closest **MODERN PARALLELS**: how the UN today deals with mass killing, the destruction of cities and heritage, the protection of envoys, and the modern state of Mongolia. Delegates should not cite modern law as if it applied in 1225, but these parallels can help them understand why the committee's choices matter.

2A. TABLE OF UN RESOLUTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS

Every symbol below was confirmed on an official UN site (documents.un.org, undocs.org, un.org, legal.un.org or unesco.org); each resolution was rechecked against the official UN document on October 14, 2026.

Symbol	Year	Body	What it does
A/RES/260 (III)	1948	General Assembly	Adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
1954 Hague Convention (UNESCO instrument)	1954	UNESCO intergovernmental conference	Protects cultural property, such as monuments and libraries, during armed conflict.
Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (UN conference instrument)	1961	UN Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities	Makes the person of a diplomat inviolable and protects envoys from arrest and harm.
S/RES/166 (1961)	1961	Security Council	Recommended that the Mongolian People's Republic be admitted to the UN.
A/RES/1630 (XVI)	1961	General Assembly	Admitted the Mongolian People's Republic as a member of the United Nations.
A/RES/53/77 D	1998	General Assembly	Welcomed Mongolia's decision to declare its territory free of nuclear weapons and supported its security.
S/RES/2347 (2017)	2017	Security Council	Condemned the destruction of cultural heritage in war and said attacks on historic sites may be war crimes.
A/RES/76/253	2022	General Assembly	Declared 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

A/RES/79/30	2024	General Assembly	Renewed support for Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status.
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2B. MONGOLIA AT THE UNITED NATIONS

MODERN PARALLEL: The Mongolian homeland of Chinggis Khan is today the independent state of Mongolia. Its path at the UN shows how a small state between two large neighbours protects itself through international recognition rather than conquest.

United Nations Security Council (S/RES/166 (1961)), October 25, 1961: Recommending Mongolia's admission to the UN

Tagline: Admitting Mongolia to the UN

Source: According to... United Nations Security Council, October 25, 1961

Link: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/166\(1961\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/166(1961))

Fact: It states... At its 971st meeting on October 25, 1961, the Security Council examined the application of the Mongolian People's Republic and recommended to the General Assembly that it be admitted to UN membership. The General Assembly then admitted Mongolia in resolution 1630 (XVI).

This means... Modern Mongolia gained its place in the world through recognition by other states, not by force. Delegates can compare this with 1225, when the Mongol position depended entirely on military strength and one leader's authority.

United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/53/77 D), December 4, 1998: Recognising Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status

Tagline: Recognising Mongolia's nuclear-free status

Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly, December 4, 1998

Link: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/53/77>

Fact: It states... Section D of resolution 53/77, titled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", recalls the UN Charter and the principles of friendly relations among states, and welcomes Mongolia's decision to declare its territory free of nuclear weapons.

This means... Today's Mongolia seeks security through international guarantees. This is a sharp contrast with the empire of 1225, and delegates may reflect on which approach offers longer-lasting security.

United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/79/30), December 2, 2024: The UN still supports Mongolia's nuclear-free status every two years

Tagline: Renewing support for a small state

Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly, December 2, 2024

Link: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/79/30>

Fact: It states... The General Assembly has repeated its support for Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status every two years since 1998 (resolution 53/77 D). The 2024 resolution welcomes the declarations of September 17, 2012, by Mongolia and by the five nuclear-weapon states on that status. It supports Mongolia's balanced relationship with its neighbours, invites member states to help protect Mongolia's independence, sovereignty, borders, economic security and ecological balance, and asks the Secretary-General and UN bodies to keep assisting Mongolia.

This means... **MODERN PARALLEL:** The homeland that once conquered its neighbours now protects itself through promises from the great powers. Delegates can compare this with the 1225 court, where security came only from military strength and the loyalty of the khan's family.

2C. MASS KILLING AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CITIES

MODERN PARALLEL: The killings in Khorasan and the end of the Tangut kingdom (see 1A) would today fall under international laws on genocide, war crimes and the protection of cultural heritage. No such laws existed in 1225.

United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention, Last Accessed: October 2026: The Genocide Convention was adopted on December 9, 1948

Tagline: Outlawing genocide since 1948

Source: According to... United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide-convention.shtml>

Fact: It states... The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on December 9, 1948 (resolution 260 (III)), and it entered into force on January 12, 1951. As of July 2019 it had 152 states parties. The Convention says genocide can happen in war or peace, and its definition has been widely adopted, including in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

This means... Modern law treats the deliberate destruction of a people as an international crime. Delegates can use this to understand why historians today describe some Mongol campaigns in such strong terms.

United Nations Security Council (S/RES/2347 (2017)), March 24, 2017: Attacks on historic monuments may be war crimes

Tagline: Protecting cultural heritage in war

Source: According to... United Nations Security Council, March 24, 2017

Link: [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2347\(2017\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2347(2017))

Fact: It states... The Security Council deplores and condemns the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage, including religious sites and artefacts, and the looting and smuggling of cultural property during armed conflicts. It affirms that unlawful attacks on sites dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charity, or on historic monuments, may in some circumstances be war crimes. It also says peacekeeping missions may help protect cultural heritage when mandated.

This means... The loss of cities, libraries and irrigation works in 1219-1227 (see 1A) is the kind of harm the modern Council now condemns. Delegates can weigh how much of a conquered people's culture the empire should preserve.

UNESCO, Last Accessed: October 2026: The 1954 Hague Convention was the first treaty devoted only to protecting cultural heritage

Tagline: Shielding cultural property in war

Source: According to... UNESCO, Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://www.unesco.org/en/heritage-armed-conflicts/1954-convention>

Fact: It states... The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, adopted in 1954, was the first and most complete treaty devoted only to protecting cultural heritage, in peace and in war. It covers monuments, archaeological sites, artworks, manuscripts, books and scientific collections. States parties must prepare to protect such property, avoid using it in ways that expose it to damage, and refrain from hostile acts against it.

This means... Modern law asks armies to plan ahead to protect heritage. Delegates may consider whether the Mongol court of 1225 could have chosen to spare the Tangut capital and its Buddhist and written heritage.

2D. PROTECTING ENVOYS

MODERN PARALLEL: The war with Khwarazm began after the murder of Mongol envoys and merchants (see Part 3). Today the safety of diplomats is protected by treaty.

United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, March 2009: The Vienna Convention makes diplomats inviolable

Tagline: Protecting diplomats from harm

Source: According to... United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Audiovisual Library of International Law, March 2009

Link: <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/vcdr/vcdr.html>

Fact: It states... The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations was adopted in Vienna on April 18, 1961, at the close of a UN conference, and entered into force on April 24, 1964. Article 29 protects the person of diplomatic agents (they may not be arrested or harmed), and Article 31 gives them immunity from the civil and criminal courts of the host state, with specific exceptions.

This means... Modern law now protects envoys the way the Mongols demanded in 1218. The Mongol view that killing an envoy was the worst of crimes became, centuries later, a rule of international law.

2E. PROTECTING MONGOL HERITAGE TODAY

MODERN PARALLEL: UNESCO, the UN's agency for education, science and culture, now protects places linked to Chinggis Khan and the early empire.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Last Accessed: October 2026: Burkhan Khaldun, believed to be Chinggis Khan's birthplace and burial site

Tagline: Honouring Chinggis Khan's sacred mountain

Source: According to... UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1440/>

Fact: It states... The Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain and its surrounding sacred landscape, in the Khentii mountains of northeastern Mongolia, was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2015. It is believed to be the place of Chinggis Khan's birth and burial. During his lifetime he made it one of four sacred mountains, giving official status to mountain worship. Worship there declined after Buddhism was adopted in the late 15th century but has revived since the 1990s.

This means... The location of the khan's grave is still uncertain today. A court that chooses secrecy for the burial (see 1G) shapes how the khan is remembered for centuries.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Last Accessed: October 2026: Orkhon Valley, home of the Mongol capital Kharakhorum

Tagline: Preserving the old capital's valley

Source: According to... UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1081/>

Fact: It states... The Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape in central Mongolia, about 360 km southwest of Ulaanbaatar, was inscribed in 2004. It includes Kharakhorum, which UNESCO describes as the grand capital of the vast Mongol Empire established by Chinggis Khaan in 1220, at the height of its influence in the 13th and 14th centuries.

This means... The capital chosen in Chinggis Khan's time became the centre of the empire under his successor. Delegates must decide where power will sit after 1227: at a fixed capital or in the moving camps of the khan.

UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2021: Mongolia set up a management authority for Burkhan Khaldun and was asked to control tourism

Tagline: Managing the khan's sacred mountain

Source: According to... UNESCO World Heritage Committee (Decision 44 COM 7B.147), 2021

Link: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4195>

Fact: It states... Mongolia sent UNESCO a report on the state of the Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain on November 30, 2020, and the World Heritage Committee reviewed it in 2021. The Committee praised Mongolia for setting up a working management authority for the site, and noted that earlier concerns about its legal protection and about mining were now resolved. It asked Mongolia to finish a management plan with a monitoring system, a stronger policy to control tourism and visitors, and a detailed action plan with timelines and budgets, and to send an updated report by December 1, 2022.

This means... **MODERN PARALLEL:** Eight centuries after his death, the mountain linked to Chinggis Khan's birth and burial needs a government plan to protect it from visitors and development. Delegates can see that decisions about a ruler's burial place, made in 1227, still shape what a nation must protect today.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, Last Accessed: October 2026: Mongolian worship of sacred sites was placed on the urgent safeguarding list in 2017

Tagline: Reviving worship at sacred sites

Source: According to... UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/00871>

Fact: It states... In 2017 UNESCO placed "Mongolian traditional practices of worshipping the sacred sites" on its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. The practices grew out of nomadic life close to nature and an ancient belief in spirits of the sky, earth and mountains; elders teach the young how to take part, and the ceremonies build a sense of community. Worship of sacred sites was banned under the communist government, and today it is threatened by fast globalisation and city growth, by herders moving to cities, by a sharp fall in the number of masters who hold the knowledge, and by mining.

This means... **MODERN PARALLEL:** Chinggis Khan made mountain worship official (see the Burkhan Khaldun entry above), and the tradition he backed is still alive but fragile. Delegates can argue that what a ruler chooses to honour can outlast his empire, so the court's choices about religion and ritual in 1225 have very long effects.

2F. HERDERS AND GRASSLANDS TODAY

MODERN PARALLEL: The Mongol empire was built on grass and herds (see the PNAS entry in 1A). The UN now treats pastoral herding as a way of life that must be protected.

United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/76/253), March 15, 2022: Declaring 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

Tagline: Honouring herders and grasslands

Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly, March 15, 2022

Link: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/76/253>

Fact: It states... The General Assembly decided to declare 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, and invited the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to help carry it out. The resolution notes that more than half of the Earth's land surface is classified as rangelands and that these areas are suffering serious desertification. It describes pastoralism, the herding of animals across grasslands, as a changing livelihood linked to many cultures, identities and forms of traditional knowledge.

This means... The year of this committee's Harvard conference, 2026, is the UN's year of herders. Delegates can point out that the way of life that powered the Mongol armies is still practised today and still depends on healthy grasslands.

2G. WHAT IS WORKING AND WHAT IS NOT

1. **Working (modern):** Mongolia has been a UN member since 1961 and has used the UN to gain recognition of its nuclear-weapon-free status.
2. **Working (modern):** UNESCO protects key Mongol heritage sites such as Burkhan Khaldun and the Orkhon Valley.
3. **Working (modern):** Envoys are protected by the widely accepted Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.
4. **Not working (modern):** Destruction of cultural heritage in war continues, which is why the Security Council had to adopt resolution 2347 in 2017.
5. **Not working (modern):** As of 2019, 42 UN members had still not joined the Genocide Convention.

6. **Working (modern):** The General Assembly has renewed its support for Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status every two years since 1998, most recently in 2024 (A/RES/79/30).
7. **Working (modern):** Mongolia set up a management authority for Burkhan Khaldun, which the World Heritage Committee praised in 2021.
8. **Not working (modern):** Mongolian worship of sacred sites is still on UNESCO's urgent safeguarding list, threatened by city growth, mining and the loss of masters who hold the knowledge.

2H. WHERE THE MAJOR BLOCS STAND: THE FACTIONS OF THE MONGOL COURT

In a historical crisis committee, the "blocs" are the families and groups inside the Mongol court, not modern countries. Every position below comes from historical sources about the years around 1225-1260. A delegate's character will usually belong to one of these groups.

1. **The house of Jochi (Jochi and his son Batu):** Jochi held the western lands but was estranged from his father from about 1221 and died in February 1227. His son Batu later argued that, as the heir of the eldest son, he had a better right to the khanate.
 - Source: According to... Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026 (with Encyclopaedia Britannica, Jochi, Last Accessed: October 2026)
2. **The house of Chagatai:** Chagatai was the oldest surviving son but was passed over in 1229. His family later felt slighted when power moved to Tolui's line in 1251, and bitter hostility grew between the two branches.
 - Source: According to... Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026
3. **The house of Ögedei:** Ögedei was his father's chosen heir and was confirmed by the 1229 assembly. After his death, his widow Töregene ruled with the nobles' consent and worked to have their son Güyük elected in 1246, over Batu's opposition.
 - Source: According to... Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026
4. **The house of Tolui (Tolui and his wife Sorghaghtani Beki):** Tolui held the homeland, was known as the "guardian of the hearth", and served as regent from 1227 to 1229. His sons Möngke and Kublai later became Great Khans, moving power to his branch.
 - Source: According to... Encyclopaedia Britannica, July 14, 2026
5. **The advisers from conquered peoples:** Statesmen such as the Khitan Yelü Chucai and the Kerait Christian Chinkai ran the bureaucracy and writing office. They pushed to tax and govern settled lands instead of destroying them.
 - Source: According to... Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 1, 2026 (with Encyclopaedia Britannica, Yelü Chucai, Last Accessed: October 2026)
6. **The traditionalists and the commanders:** Many Mongols wanted to keep the nomadic way of life rather than adopt the institutions of settled peoples. The great commanders of ten thousand men were loyal to Chinggis Khan personally, so their support must be won again by each new khan.
 - Source: According to... Columbia University Asia for Educators, Last Accessed: October 2026 (Collapse of the Empire; Organization and Tactics)