

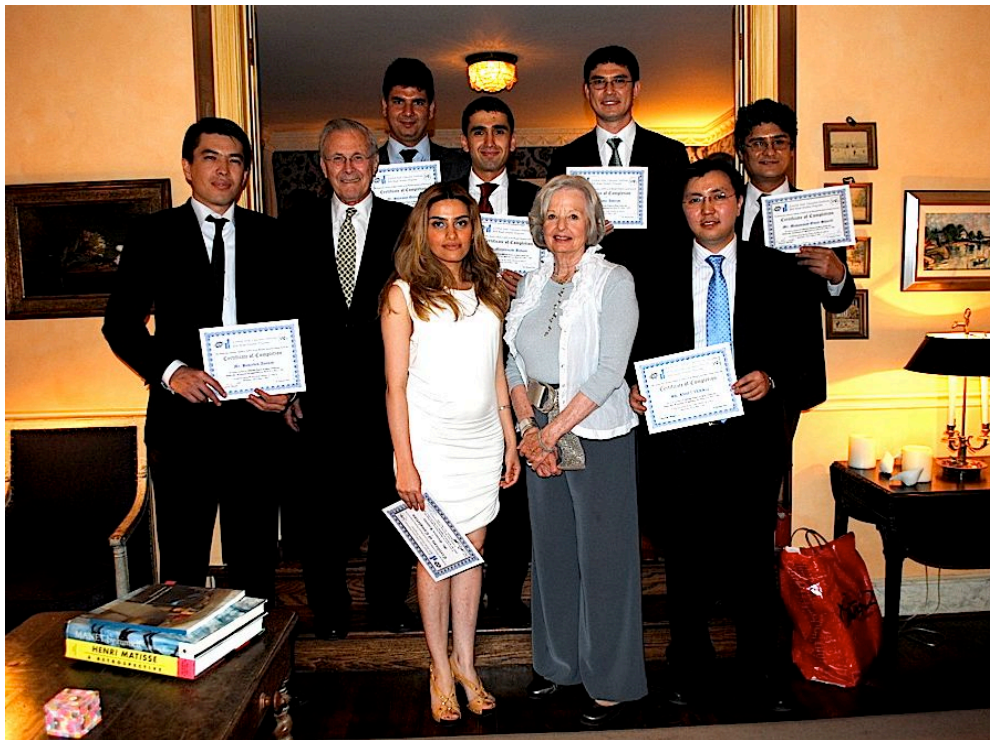


# Central Asia- Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program

*A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center*

## **The Fourth Group of CACI Fellows Complete Program in Washington, DC**

The fourth group of seven fellows completed a six-week program of high-level meetings and research in Washington, DC from March 29 to May 7, 2010. The group included Dr. Mohammad Omar Sharifi (Afghanistan), the Director of the American Institute of Afghanistan Studies, Kabul Office, Mr. Sulaiman Qeyamat (Afghanistan), a fellow at the Afghanistan's Center for Research and Policy Studies, Ms. Gulmira Rzayeva (Azerbaijan), a research fellow at the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Asset Yerali (Kazakhstan), a Project Director at JSC "KUN Renewables", Mr. Baktybek Asanov (Kyrgyzstan), a Managing Director of Closed JSC "Textonic", Dr. Muhammadi Boboev (Tajikistan), a Deputy Director of the International Financial Relations Department at Open JSC "Agroinvestbank" and the Chairman of the Board of the Tajik Branch of the Open Society Institute-Assistance Foundation, and Mr. Ashir Ashirov (Turkmenistan), a staff member of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Turkmenistan.



*Fellows with Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, Former Secretary of Defense and currently the Chairman of Rumsfeld Foundation, which is sponsoring the fellowship program*

The group had an intensive schedule of high-level group meetings with representatives of the US Administration, the US Congress, business community, media, think tanks, universities, NGOs, and advocacy organizations.



*Fellows with Mr. George Krol, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs*

The group also traveled to Chicago for high-level meetings at the Mayor's office, the University of Chicago, the Chicago Tribune, and local foundations, which offered them a view of the United States beyond Washington.



*Fellows in Chicago*



*Fellows at the Chicago Tribune*



*Fellows with Professor Gary Becker of University of Chicago, Nobel Prize winner in economics*

In addition, through arranging individual meetings with relevant officials and experts the fellows were able to focus more specifically on their current research topics in order to accommodate to their professional interests. Finally, at the end of the program the fellows gave a presentation at the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute where the topic of discussion was, "Is Regional Cooperation in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan Happening? Developing?"



*Fellows with Professor Francis Fukuyama, Director of the International Development Program at SAIS*

**Omar Sharifi:** *"This program was an incredible experience full of inspiring, challenging, and powerful moments. We were able to witness how ideas, thoughts, and determination influence decision making, which will ultimately affect the course of history."*

**Asset Yerali:** *"This program was a tremendous learning experience focused on a policy-making processes in the United States. I was extremely impressed by the quantity and quality of high-level meetings where interaction with different people allowed me to create new ideas. The people I met brought a wealth of experience, and pushed me to think about what I can do back in my home country. I believe the program has motivated all of the fellows in becoming more effective and self-confident, which will only further our leadership abilities."*

**Gulmira Rzayeva:** *"This program is unique because it provides a tremendous opportunity to explore and become familiar with a unique system of opinion-making, decision-making and policy-making processes in the United States. The program has also provided all of us with a vast network and access to high-level opinion and policy makers in and outside of Washington, D.C. Thanks to this program I now feel much more prepared to further pursue stronger US-Azeri relations in the governmental organization that I work for."*



*Fellows with Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Counselor and Trustee, Center for Strategic and International Studies*

**Muhammadi Boboev:** *“This program was an eye-opening experience to understand how policy is shaped in the United States. Without any exaggeration it can be said that during these six weeks I attended outstanding meetings that are unforgettable, and will stay with me for the rest of my life. The program is certainly a significant and commendable contribution to the development of Tajikistan’s relations with not only the United States, but also the other countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Afghanistan.”*

The next group of fellows will visit Washington, DC from October 3 to November 14, 2010. The winners of the Fellowship Program will be announced in mid-August.