

The Fifth Group of the Rumsfeld Fellows Complete Program in Washington, DC

The fifth group of eight fellows from Central Asia and the Caucasus completed a six-week program of high-level meetings and research in Washington, DC from October 10 to November 21, 2010. The group included *Dr. Artak Shakaryan* (Armenia), a Manager of the Armenia-Turkey Program at the Eurasia Partnership Foundation's Armenia Office, *Mr. Hanifa Ahmadov* (Azerbaijan), a Deputy Head of the Department for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan, *Ms. Marika Laliashvili* (Georgia), a Head of the International Relations and Euro-Atlantic Integration Department at the Georgian Ministry of Defense, *Dr. Aigerim Shilibekova* (Kazakhstan), the founding director of the Center for International and Regional Studies at the Lev Gumilyov Eurasian National University in Astana, *Mr. Kuban Ashyrkulov* (Kyrgyzstan), an Executive Director of the International Business Council (IBC), *Ms. Firuza Rahimova* (Tajikistan), an Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Tajikistan, *Mr. Döwrän Orazqylyjow* (Turkmenistan), a counselor to the Director General of the Lotus Enerji EPC Company and the editor of the "Turkmen Weekly Energy Review" (TWER), and *Mr. Khurshid Kholov* (Uzbekistan), a Managing Director of Ansher Investments.



Fellows with Mr. and Mrs. Rumsfeld

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



Fellows with Admiral James Stavridis, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe

The group also traveled to Boston for meetings at the Boston Globe, the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, which offered them a view of the United States beyond Washington.



Fellows at The Boston Globe



Fellows with the US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia

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, “Does the US Matter to Governments and People in Central Asia and the Caucasus? Should It?”





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

Khurshid Kholov: *“This program is a unique and fulfilling experience that clearly depicts a true and complicated picture of how policy is made in Washington and what the main driving forces are in identifying these policies. It is once in a lifetime opportunity for anyone to experience and to have an inside look into the whole process.”*

Artak Shakaryan: *“The Rumsfeld Fellowship was an unthinkable experience for me. The methodology of having such high-level meetings and in-depth interviews really helped me to understand the United States: the people, the state and the chemistry between them. I won’t overstate if I say that this fellowship has been a turning point in my life and changed my life goals drastically.”*

Kuban Ashyrkulov: *“What an awesome experience! This program consolidates your internal resources and within just six weeks allows you to absorb and understand how US foreign policy works, and what the priorities are. It’s like going through a PhD program in 6 weeks”.*

Firuzah Rahimova: *“This program became a remarkable milestone in my life from plunging into the depth of US political life to meeting with outstanding people who have played a major role in creating history. Being able to witness the process was a very gratifying experience, and a big thanks to the organizers for this opportunity.”*

Marika Laliashvili: *“This program is a solid opportunity for young leaders to get a deeper understanding of the U.S. policymaking process as it gives a true sense of how everything works in Washington. While pursuing concrete topics of interest it enables participants to meet a variety of high-level officials/experts and establish important connections for further cooperation. And indeed, the program greatly supports the ultimate goal of each of us to bring this new knowledge back home and implement it for the betterment of our countries.”*

The next group of fellows will visit Washington, DC from March 28 to May 8, 2011. The winners of the Rumsfeld Fellowship Program for spring 2011 will be announced in mid-February.



Fellows with General James Cartwright, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



Fellows with Stephen Hadley, Former National Security Adviser to President George W. Bush