

The Spring 2017 Group of Rumsfeld Fellows Completes Program in Washington, D.C.

The Spring 2017 group of Fellows from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Mongolia completed a six-week program of high-level meetings and research in Washington, D.C. from April 4 to May 12, 2017. The group included *Mr. Basir Yosufi (Afghanistan)*, General Director for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan; *Ms. Farishta Sakhi (Afghanistan)*, independent consultant and former Director General of the Department of Security Cooperation and Border Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; *Mr. Hamid Saboory (Afghanistan)*, the Founder and CEO of Strategic Analysis for Peace and Stability (SAPS); *Dr. Eduard Abrahamyan (Armenia)*, Deputy Director and Programs Coordinator at the Council for Cooperation with NATO in Yerevan; *Mr. Samir Mammadov (Azerbaijan)*, Chief Sales Officer at Nar Mobile; *Colonel Grigol Chelidze (Georgia)*, Commander of the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre (JTEC) at the Ministry of Defense of Georgia; *Mr. Tengiz Pkhaladze (Georgia)*, Advisor-Foreign Relations Secretary to the President of Georgia; *Mr. Aman Tentiyeu (Kyrgyzstan)*, Founder and Managing Partner at the IT Investment Company, The Farm, and the investment group, Avanta Capital; *Ms. Assel Zhumadil (Kazakhstan)*, Senior Manager at the Treasury Department of the “Samruk-Kazyna” Sovereign Wealth Fund; *Mr. Badamdash Dashdavaa (Mongolia)*, CEO of the Mongolian Media Corporation; *Mr. Erdene-Urnukh Oyun (Mongolia)*, Secretary of a Working Group on the Reforming of the Party bylaws of the Democratic Party of Mongolia; *Mr. Akmal Asoev (Tajikistan)*, CEO & Co-Founder of NURAFZO MEDICAL GROUP; and *Mr. Laziz Kudratov (Uzbekistan)*, CEO of Samina Project, an IT company.

The group had an intensive schedule of high-level group meetings with representatives of the U.S. Administration, the U.S. Congress, business community, media, think tanks, academia and NGOs, as well as attended conferences, seminars and workshops at different institutions that helped them understand how opinion-making and policy-making work in Washington, D.C.



Fellows with Don and Joyce Rumsfeld, Founders of the Rumsfeld Foundation

The Spring 2017 group met with American politician, historian, author and former Speaker of the House of Representatives, *Newt Gingrich*; former National Security Adviser to President Jimmy Carter, the late *Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski*; Vice Chairman of The Cohen Group and former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *General Joseph Ralston*; President of Gryphon Partners and former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq and to the United Nations, *Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad*; Vice Chairman of McLarty Associates and former Director of National Intelligence, *Ambassador John Negroponte*; as well as with members of the current Administration including representatives of the Departments of State, Defense and Commerce, the U.S. National Security Council, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and many others.



Fellows with Newt Gingrich, Former Speaker of the House of Representatives

In addition, the group had the opportunity to meet with business leaders and representatives of the media, think tanks, non-profits and other organizations including President and Chief Executive Officer of Rockefeller & Co., *Reuben Jeffery III*; Corporate Officer and Vice President of International Governmental Affairs of Ford Motor Company, *Stephen Biegun*; Founder and President of The Institute of World Politics, *Dr. John Lenczowski*; television news anchor for NBC News, *Greta Van Susteren*; American author and journalist, *Robert Kaplan*; pollster and television commentator, *Kristen Soltis Anderson*; Partner at Hogan Lovells US LLP, *Robert Bennett*; and others.



Fellows with Kristen Soltis Anderson, Republican pollster, television commentator and writer



Fellows with Amb. John Negroponte, former Director of National Intelligence

Since the fall of 2011, the Rumsfeld Fellowship has partnered with the Open World Program to organize local programs with host communities outside of Washington, D.C. to help demonstrate American democracy on the grassroots level, how business and government work on the local level, and how people are empowered to take responsibility for themselves and others in their community. This spring the Fellows traveled to Des Moines, Iowa and Hartford, Connecticut. The entire group then traveled to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the program included meetings at *The Union League of Philadelphia*, *Comcast Corporation*, *AmerisourceBergen*, the *University of Pennsylvania* and the *National Constitution Center*.



Fellows with Robert Kapan, bestselling author

In the final weeks of their program, the Fellows gave a presentation at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Forum on their chosen topic of *“Rising Leaders from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Mongolia: Their Perspectives.”*

The next group of Fellows will visit Washington, D.C. from October 1 to November 12, 2017. The selected participants of the Rumsfeld Fellowship Program for Fall 2017 will be announced in August of 2017.



Fellows with National Security Council staff and Elaine Chao, U.S. Secretary of Transportation



Fellows with the late Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor

Hamid Saboory: “If there is any program that could give you the opportunity to become a better leader, entrepreneur or politician, or if you simply wish to expand your network among current and forthcoming leaders in politics, business and policy, this is it. The Rumsfeld Fellowship Program will open all those doors for you.”

Aman Tentiyeu: “The experience of meeting top decision-makers through the program was an exceptional, once-in-a-life-time opportunity. However, meeting the incredibly talented young leaders from the CAMCA region with a variety of cultures and personalities was truly the best part of the Rumsfeld Fellowship.”



Fellows with Greta Van Susteren, MSNBC news correspondent and anchor

Laziz Kudratov: “It is unbelievable how many new things we learned during 6 weeks. The Program was unique in the way that it not only gave us an excellent opportunity to meet with prominent public figures, experts and business leaders in the United States, but it also brought together representatives of all the region of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Mongolia. The Program created a perfect environment that allowed us to make new connections, share ideas and formulate partnerships for future collaboration at the regional level.”



Fellows with Governor Terry Branstad, U.S. Ambassador to China and former Iowa Governor

Badamdash Dashdavaa: “The Rumsfeld Fellowship provided me a great opportunity to meet with the brightest minds and experts during a short, but rich and intense 6-week program. During our program, we saw the full picture of how decision-making takes place within the realm of U.S. foreign policy and we returned home with the momentum to be active as a nation, engage with each other within the CAMCA region and forge a strong and self-realized region.”

Farishta Sakhi: “Meeting with several pioneers, leaders and successful managers allowed me to re-think my role as an active agent of change. I learned that democracy is not a gift, but a hard-earned process that requires continuous investment in institution building, accountability and transparency.”

Tengiz Pkhaladze: “It does not matter how many times you have been to the U.S., the Rumsfeld Fellowship is your manual and guide to understand America, the pillars of its statehood and the spirit of the American people. The six weeks are overflowing with opportunities, knowledge, experience and impressions. At the same time, it is your chance to discover the CAMCA region and meet remarkable leaders from neighboring countries.”



Fellows with “Benjamin Franklin” in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Eduard Abrahamyan: “The program does not only provide guidance towards understanding how America works, but it also allows the Fellowship participants to think and act coherently as a team. This program invests in its participants and encourages them to be the catalysts of their nations’ cooperation and integration while demonstrating the great potential of the entire CAMCA region.”

Grigol Chelidze: “This Program is the networking platform for rising leaders of the Central Asia-Caucasus region connected by the Rumsfeld Foundation from thousands of miles away.”



Fellows with Zalmay Khalilzad, former Ambassador to the UN, Afghanistan and Iraq



Fellows with General Joe Ralston, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe