

**CENTRAL ASIA-CAUCASUS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM  
Announcement of Fall 2017 Fellows**

Today the Rumsfeld Foundation announced the 13 professionals who were selected to participate in the Fall 2017 session of the Central Asia-Caucasus Fellowship Program. Launched in 2008, the Program is a partnership with the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, now at the American Foreign Policy Council, which brings rising young leaders from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Mongolia to the United States to promote better understanding and stronger relations among the people of the ten countries of the region, as well as between the United States and the region. The Program aims to foster dialogue and an exchange of ideas among exceptional young professionals working across all sectors and encourages increased regional cooperation.

As participants of the Program's 19<sup>th</sup> session, the Fall 2017 group will join a growing alumni network of 171 former Fellows.

Throughout their six-week program, the Fellows will attend a series of private high-level meetings with top policy-makers, business leaders, journalists, academics, military personnel and regional experts exposing them to inside perspectives on how opinion making, decision making and policy making processes work in the U.S. The group will also spend a week traveling to additional cities including Memphis, TN, Cheyenne, WY and Atlanta, GA for meetings with local businesses and officials, providing them a view of the U.S. beyond the nation's capital. In addition to group meetings, the Program staff will assist Fellows in arranging individual meetings for their independent research projects and provide opportunities for professional development and networking. Near the Program's conclusion, the Fellows will participate in a group presentation at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute public forum, where they will engage with representatives from local embassies, businesses, universities, the media and others interested in current perspectives from the region.

The Fall 2017 Fellows consist of a diverse group of talented regional leaders:



**Mr. Ahmad Zia Asey – Afghanistan** – Director-General for Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan; Head of the Secretariat of the Strategic Leadership Board for the Ministry of Interior Affairs.  
***Research Project: "Greater Central Asia: Envisioning Functioning Cooperation Architecture."***

**Mr. Abdul Wahid Wafa – Afghanistan** – Director of the Afghanistan Center at Kabul University, a non-profit organization that promotes and facilitates research and information sharing through the dissemination of knowledge and the capacity enhancement of Kabul University and other private Afghan institutions.

**Research Project: "Prospects of Integration between Afghanistan and Central Asia."**



**Mr. Suren Sargsyan – Armenia** – Foreign Policy Adviser to the Speaker of the Parliament of Armenia; Co-founder and expert/analyst at the International and Comparative Law Center of Armenia. **Research Project: "25 Years of U.S. Foreign Policy in the South Caucasus and Black Sea Region."**

**Mr. Emil Majidov – Azerbaijan** – CEO and Co-owner of Blaurad, a project management company operating in Azerbaijan and Georgia; Managing Partner of two IT companies, RedDot and Onbranch, specializing in the development of social networking, gaming apps and managerial software. **Research Project:**

**"Greater Central Asia & the Caucasus: Tapping into the Region's True Potential."**



**Mr. Varlam (Vako) Avaliani – Georgia** – Founder and Managing Partner at "ABSolutions," a company focused on public relations consulting; Director General of "Euromedia Georgia," a production company specializing on sports events and show business production. **Research Project: "The New U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan: Implications for CAMCA."**

**Mr. Ali Koichumanov – Kazakhstan** – Regional Director for CIS at Fircroft Engineering Services Ltd., Kazakhstan. **Research Project: "Sustainable Economic Growth in the CAMCA Region through Skills Development and Workforce Mobility."**





**Mr. Bolat Duisenov – Kazakhstan** – Chief Investment Officer (Global) at Kusto Group, Kazakhstan; Co-Founder and CEO of Kusto Vietnam.

**Research Project:** *"Creating a New CAMCA Investment Platform: Challenges and Opportunities."*

**Ms. Baigalmaa Purevsuren – Mongolia** – Principal Advisor at Rio Tinto Mongolia managing in-country stakeholder engagement and shareholder issues relating to the Oyu Tolgoi project, Rio Tinto's investment into a world class copper and gold project in Southgobi, Mongolia. **Research Project:** *"Enabling Model for Public-Private Partnership for Regional Connectivity."*



**Mr. Munkhbayar Tsedevsuren – Mongolia** – Economic Policy Advisor to the Speaker of the Parliament of Mongolia; External member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of Mongolia; Chairman of the Research Institute of Renewable Energy Studies. **Research Project:** *"Think Tanks in Developing Countries: Lessons for Mongolia."*

**Mr. Ilhom Aliev – Tajikistan** – Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Tajikistan; Founder of the "Innovate for Change" program, exposing university students to hands-on business courses led by CEOs that provide them with opportunities to experience consulting with real clients with a focus on social responsibility. **Research Project:** *"How can Central Asia become a Leading Regional Hub for Attracting Foreign Investment?"*



**Ms. Manizha Mamadnabieva – Tajikistan** – Country Officer at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Tajikistan covering both investments and advisory support for the private sector. **Research Project:** *"Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and Afghanistan: Development of Regional Projects."*

**Mr. Muhammet Yuvshanov – Turkmenistan** – Country Project Coordinator of Unger Steel Group responsible for the operational and strategic management of the country office, the attraction of new projects and the management of initial-stage construction projects. **Research Project: "The Development of IT Industries amid Crises and the Management of Associated Risks."**



**Mr. Bobur Karimov – Uzbekistan** – Co-founder and Partner at Karimov and Partners Law Firm (Avrora Law), an independent law firm specializing in advising foreign private and public investors on legal aspects of doing business in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. **Research Project: "Competition Law in the U.S. and the Application of its Principles in Emerging Markets."**

To learn more about the Central Asia-Caucasus Fellowship Program please visit:

[www.rumsfeldfoundation.org/greater\\_central\\_asia/central\\_asia\\_caucasus\\_fellowship\\_program](http://www.rumsfeldfoundation.org/greater_central_asia/central_asia_caucasus_fellowship_program).

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