

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

The Fall 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 October 2 to November 9, 2017. The group included *Mr. Ahmad Zia Asey (Afghanistan)*, Director-General for Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan; *Mr. Abdul Wahid Wafa (Afghanistan)*, Director of the Afghanistan Center at Kabul University; *Mr. Suren Sargsyan (Armenia)*, Foreign Policy Adviser to the Speaker of the Parliament of Armenia; *Mr. Emil Majidov (Azerbaijan)*, CEO and co-owner of Blaurad, a project management company operating in Azerbaijan and Georgia; *Mr. Varlam Avaliani (Georgia)*, Founder and Managing Partner at "ABSolutions," a public relations consulting company; *Mr. Ali Koichumanov (Kazakhstan)*, Regional Director for CIS at Fircroft Engineering Services Ltd.; *Mr. Bolat Duisenov (Kazakhstan)*, Chief Investment Officer (Global) at Kusto Group, Kazakhstan and Co-Founder and CEO of Kusto Vietnam; *Ms. Baigalmaa Purevsuren (Mongolia)*, Principal Advisor at Rio Tinto Mongolia; *Mr. Munkhbayar Tsedevsuren (Mongolia)*, Economic Policy Advisor to the Speaker of the Parliament of Mongolia; *Mr. Ilhomjon Aliev (Tajikistan)*, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Tajikistan; *Ms. Manizha Mamadnabieva (Tajikistan)*, Country Officer at the International Finance Corporation in Tajikistan; *Mr. Muhammet Yuvshanov (Turkmenistan)*, Country Project Coordinator at Unger Steel Group in Turkmenistan; and *Mr. Bobur Karimov (Uzbekistan)*, Co-founder and Partner at Karimov and Partners Law Firm.

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 various institutions that helped them understand how opinion-making and policy-making work in Washington, D.C.



Fellows with Donald Rumsfeld, President of the Rumsfeld Foundation

The Fall 2017 group met with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury *Steven Mnuchin*; U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice *Clarence Thomas*; Senior Circuit Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit *Laurence Silberman*; *Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)*; *Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY)*; former Secretary of State and former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs *Dr. Henry Kissinger*; former Commander of Joint Special Operations Command *General Stanley McChrystal (Ret.)*; former National Counterintelligence Executive under President George W. Bush *Michelle Van Cleave*; Chairman of Goldman Sachs' International Advisors and former President of the World Bank *Robert Zoellick*; Senior Director for the India & South Asia

Practice at McLarty Associates and former Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia *Ambassador Robert Blake*; as well as with members of the current Administration including representatives of the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, U.S. Small Business Administration and many others. The group was also hosted by the Ambassadors of Azerbaijan and Afghanistan for receptions at their respective embassies in Washington, D.C.

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 Senior Vice President of Strategic Enterprise Initiatives at Lockheed Martin Corporation *Robert Rangel*; President of Eurasia Group *Ian Bremmer*; Editorial Page Editor of *The Washington Post* *Fred Hiatt*; Senior Vice President-Global Corporate Affairs at SAP and Rumsfeld Foundation Board Member *Torie Clarke*; Partner at Hogan Lovells US LLP *Robert Bennett*; CEO of the International Executive Service Corps *Ambassador Tom Miller*; Senior Vice President for Research and Analysis at the RAND Corporation *Andrew Hoehn*; and others.



Fellows with U.S. Treasury Secretary Mnuchin



Fellow with Justice Clarence Thomas

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 fall the Fellows traveled to Cheyenne, Wyoming and Memphis, Tennessee. The entire group then traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, where the program included meetings with leadership at the headquarters of *Coca-Cola*, *CNN*, *Delta Airlines*, *Bank of America* and *Switchyards Club*.



Fellows with Dr. Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State



Fellows with General Stanley McChrystal (Ret.), former Commander of Joint Special Operations Command

In the final weeks of their program, the Fellows gave a presentation at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Forum on “Strengthening U.S. Engagement with Greater Central Asia: A View from the Region.”

The next group of Fellows will visit Washington, D.C. from April 1 to May 12, 2018. The winners of the Rumsfeld Fellowship Program for Spring 2018 will be announced in February of 2018.



Fellows with Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY)

Abdul Wahid Wafa: “Above all, six weeks spent bonding with rising leaders of the CAMCA region is an invaluable investment for your future.”

Bolat Duisenov: “Participants must be ready for six weeks of an intellectual marathon to think, listen, digest, ask the right questions and then debate them. Only upon returning home are you able to truly appreciate and reflect on the breadth of new knowledge and alternative opinions you gained throughout the program on everything from political issues to the future of the world order.”



Fellows at Delta Airlines Headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia

Manizha Mamadnabieva: “It was a terrific opportunity to develop excellent skills, meet new people and be inspired to take on new challenges. The format of the program is really an exciting, dynamic first-hand experience. Its focus on practical experience makes it a standout from other programs.”

Muhammet Yuvshanov: “If you are a person who wants to better understand the world and to have an opportunity to get to know a pool of talented and creative young leaders, this program is for you.”



Fellows with Robert Zoellick, former President of the World Bank

Ahmad Zia Asey: “You are exposed to practitioners who have actually experienced every detail of what you have only read about in books. Every meeting encourages you to think critically on how you define success and failure in your professional life.”

Ilhomjon Aliev: “I have previously attended a number of exchange programs in the U.S., but never had a solid grasp on how policy-making truly works in America. The ability to openly communicate with political and business leaders during the six weeks showed me in depth how Washington, D.C. operates. I also learned so much about our region and my eyes were opened to the potential benefits of more intraregional cooperation and communication. This program is truly an experience of a lifetime.”



Fellows with Robert Rangel, Senior Vice President of Strategic Enterprise Initiatives at Lockheed Martin



Fellows with Michelle Van Cleave, former National Counterintelligence Executive

Emil Majidov: “The level of commitment and openness of the speakers during the program was amazing and demonstrates both the transparency in the American culture of debate and the reputation of the Rumsfeld Fellows as a collection of engaging and rising talents worth having an open discourse with.”

Baigalmaa Purevsuren: “The most efficient and exciting opportunity to learn about U.S. foreign policy, world affairs and international relations, the program is also a crash course on one of the most sophisticated political systems and its players. It gives you a fresh perspective and ample food for thought on your world and political views, likely to last a lifetime.”