

# CAMCA FELLOWSHIP REPORT



FALL 2022

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## The Fall 2022 group of CAMCA Fellows from Central Asia, Mongolia, the Caucasus and Afghanistan completed a six-week program of high-level meetings and research from October 4th-November 11th, 2022.

The Fellows had an intensive schedule of group meetings in Washington, D.C. with representatives of the U.S. government, business community, media, think tanks, academia and NGOs, as well as attended conferences at top institutions to better understand opinion-making and policy-making in the U.S. Fellows also traveled to Detroit, Michigan and Chicago, Illinois for meetings with local government officials, businesses and organizations, gaining insights on American democracy beyond the nation's capital.

In the final week of their program Fellows collaborated to present on the topic of "CAMCA: A New Era" at a Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Forum for local professionals interested in the region.

## FALL 2022 FELLOWS

CAMCA Fellows represent some of the best and brightest rising leaders from the region. Fellows were selected for their demonstrated excellence and leadership within their professional fields and broader community, as well as for their commitment to promoting development, prosperity and cooperation in the CAMCA region.

Below are the 12 representatives who comprised the Fall 2022 cohort:

- **Mr. Hamid Arsalan (Afghanistan)** - Senior Expert on Fragility, Conflict and Violence, World Bank Group
- **Ms. Helal Massomi (Afghanistan)** - Member of the Afghan Adjustment Act Coalition and human rights advocate and researcher
- **Dr. Grigor Vardanyan (Armenia)** - Co-founder & Deputy CEO, Green Food LLC, a strawberry farming and trading company
- **Mr. Ali Hajizade (Azerbaijan)** - Founder & CEO, Hajizade Group LLC, a strategic communications and public relations company
- **Mr. Parviz Baghirov (Azerbaijan)** - Director of the National Erasmus+ Office in Azerbaijan (Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency of the European Commission)
- **Mr. Giorgi Khojevanishvili (Georgia)** - Attorney and majoritarian Member of the Parliament of Georgia
- **Mr. Timur Naizabekov (Kazakhstan)** - Private equity professional in the fields of investment banking, telecommunications, real estate and energy
- **Mr. Azizbek Omorkulov (Kyrgyz Republic)** - Board Chairman, Development Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic
- **Ms. Nazgul Konurbaeva (Kyrgyz Republic)** - Co-founder, CEO and Editor-in-Chief, Capital Media Company
- **Ms. Gereltuya Orgil (Mongolia)** - Founder & CEO, EMPR, a management agency delivering strategic communications services and brand PR campaigns
- **Mr. Fayoz Rizvonov (Tajikistan)** - Founder & CEO, Trigma.AI, a tech start-up innovating AI driven commercial optimization platform
- **Mr. Kakajan Berdiyev (Turkmenistan)** - Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Maslahatçylar HJ, a management consulting company

## MEETINGS

Fall 2022 Fellows met with top leaders including:

Ian Brzezinski, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe and NATO Policy  
 Doug Conant, former CEO of Campbell Soup Company  
 Lawrence Di Rita, Greater Washington, D.C. Market President for Bank of America  
 Dan Fata, former Vice President at Lockheed Martin  
 Francis Finelli, Managing Director at the Carlyle Group  
 Neal Gram, Market Manager for J.P. Morgan's Private Bank in Chicago, the North Shore, West Michigan and St. Louis  
 Amb. Richard Hoagland, former Amb. to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan  
 H.E. Khazar Ibrahim, Amb. of Azerbaijan to the U.S.  
 Donald Lu, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia at the U.S. Department of State  
 Kay McGowan, Co-founder of Future State  
 Erica Olson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs  
 Peggy Parfenoff, President of WorldChicago  
 Amb. Kurt Volker, former U.S. Amb. to NATO  
 William Winkenwerder Jr., former CEO of Highmark  
 Rufus Yerxa, former Deputy U.S. Trade Representative

Fellows also met with representatives from the following organizations and more:

1871 Chicago  
 American Foreign Policy Council  
 Atlantic Council  
 BGR Group  
 Caspian Policy Center  
 Center for International Private Enterprise  
 Center for Strategic and International Studies  
 Georgetown University  
 German Marshall Fund  
 Heritage Foundation  
 Hudson Institute  
 Kennan Institute  
 McLarty Associates  
 Middle East Institute  
 Open World Leadership Center  
 Partnership for Public Service  
 USAID  
 U.S. Department of State  
 U.S. Institute of Peace  
 U.S. International Development Finance Corporation



## TESTIMONIALS

"Returning home, I am deeply inspired to step into a public leadership role and to work as a policy advocate supporting strong institutional governance, urban and regional development, and finally, U.S.-Mongolia relations."  
- Gerel, Mongolia

"Now 14 years since this program began, it is apparent how great of a visionary Donald Rumsfeld was. I feel a deep sense of appreciation and admiration for his aspirations and strategic mindset for tomorrow's leaders of Central Asia, Mongolia, the Caucasus and Afghanistan." - Timur, Kazakhstan

"To me, the two greatest benefits of this program were the exposure to a wide network of exceptional professional speakers, friends and organizations that are knowledgeable on the region and contributed to the high-level knowledge exchange and depth of conversations in our meetings, and secondly, and possibly more importantly, the opportunity to introduce a new 'face of CAMCA' - a generation of rising leaders from our region to U.S. policymakers."  
- Helal, Afghanistan

"On one hand, this program was a helpful refresher in some lessons I was familiar with, while on the other hand, it was a time of discovery of new knowledge. It was an exciting and informative journey into the corridors of Washington's decision-making - as if we were backstage of one of the greatest theaters in the world, just hours before the start of a magnificent performance. Participating in this program was truly a life-changing experience for me and I am grateful to all those who spent their hours and days devising the program." - Ali, Azerbaijan

"This was the most eye-opening program for me, resulting in a deeper and clearer understanding of regional and global trends and politics. I was particularly grateful for the candid and honest dialogue that speakers used, rather than the language of diplomacy, as well as the generally accessible and open atmosphere of the meetings. I know I will be reflecting on and analyzing the points and lessons from those conversations for a long time to come. They have certainly broadened the horizons of my thinking and understanding of the world order." - Nazgul, Kyrgyz Republic

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to become a member of the CAMCA Fellowship family. This six-week program is the most effective and efficient way one can understand and explore firsthand how real American politics work as well as how decisions of a global scale are made in the U.S. This experience will undoubtedly have a long-lasting impact on me." - Giorgi, Georgia





"The honest assessments and intelligence provided on the world order and regional geopolitics from program speakers were exceptional and changed my perception of U.S. foreign policies. The program gave me a rare opportunity to meet some of the most legendary business executives, lobbyists and storybook PR professionals who have made their mark within the U.S. and to a certain extent, the world.

I learned ways to effectively engage with the U.S. Congress, government institutions and policymakers and the knowledge and connections gained during the program will help me participate in driving my country's national agenda forward to become an unwavering ally of the U.S." - Gerel, Mongolia

"The CAMCA Fellowship is one of the most phenomenal programs I have ever participated in, particularly in terms of connecting professionals from east to west across our region. It is one of a kind!"  
- Helal, Afghanistan

"The CAMCA Fellowship Program truly exceeded my expectations when it came to the depth of topics covered and the caliber of the Fellows with which I had the pleasure of sharing this incredible experience. My participation in the program has been the most memorable time in my life, both in terms of experience, learning and knowledge sharing. The exposure to world-class politicians, business leaders and my Fellow-friends has sharpened my intellect and spirit of collaboration, helping me to think beyond certain boundaries that had been limiting my perception of how global politics and business work. It was surreal to find myself among such a diverse group of leaders and in a prestigious program in D.C. that not only helps to nurture leaders but creates an environment where you feel part of a family." - Fayoz, Tajikistan



## ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

The CAMCA Fellowship aims to encourage intraregional cooperation among the program countries as well as to foster stronger relations between the U.S. and the CAMCA region, and serves as a starting point for continued collaboration among the innovative regional leaders that comprise its alumni network.

Since its establishment in 2008, the Fellowship Program has hosted over 250 rising leaders from the region through 25 Fellowship sessions.