

## CAMCA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

### Spring 2024 Fellows

**Mr. Abaceen Nasimi**

**Afghanistan**



**Mr. Abaceen Nasimi, 41**, is an accomplished independent media consultant and the Founder and Executive Director of Duran Research and Analysis, a research and political risk analysis firm headquartered in Kabul. With over 15 years of experience in freedom of expression advocacy in Afghanistan, Mr. Nasimi has spearheaded numerous country-wide projects focused on media research and development. Recognized for fostering a safer environment for journalists and human rights defenders in Afghanistan, Mr. Nasimi served as an advisor for the Afghanistan Program at the International Media Support (IMS) from 2019-2022, coordinating the international community's support for Afghan media workers. Simultaneously, from 2021-2022, Mr. Nasimi was Executive Director at the Afghan Journalists Safety

Committee, an organization dedicated to equipping journalists with essential safety tools and advocating for press freedoms. Under his leadership, the organization provided critical assistance to hundreds of journalists and media workers across Afghanistan, amplifying their voices on the global stage. From 2018-2019, Mr. Nasimi served as the Editor-in-Chief of Hasht-e-Subh (8 AM) daily, a prominent newspaper in Afghanistan. Mr. Nasimi holds an MA in Law & Diplomacy with a specialization in international security studies from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University (2013), completed the Adaptive Leadership Program at the Center for Public Leadership in the Harvard Kennedy School of Government (2013) and received an MD in General Medicine from Kabul Medical University (2007).

**Ms. Metra Mehran**

**Afghanistan**



**Ms. Metra Mehran, 32**, is a Gender and Policy Advisor for the Strategic Litigation Project at the Atlantic Council. She is a gender equity and human rights activist and practitioner with a decade of work experience focused on international development, peace and gender equality. Throughout her career, Ms. Mehran has played a pivotal role in providing strategic counsel, leading impactful programs and conducting research for organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development, New York University and USAID. Ms. Mehran also co-founded the Feminine Perspectives Movement, offering a platform for women across Afghanistan to advocate for their fundamental rights during the intra-Afghan peace negotiations. Following the Taliban takeover in

August 2021, Ms. Mehran has monitored Taliban efforts curtailing women's rights while mobilizing

international action and participating in legal advocacy initiatives. Ms. Mehran's impact extends beyond advocacy efforts, and she has written for international outlets such as CNN, The New Yorker, The New York Times, Al Jazeera, and BBC. In recognition of her human rights work, Ms. Mehran was named a finalist for the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2021. In February 2024, Ms. Mehran participated in the UN-convened meeting of Special Envoys and Special Representatives on Afghanistan in Doha. Ms. Mehran holds a Master of Public Policy Analysis from Texas A&M University (2018).

## Mr. Karlen Aslanyan

Armenia



**Mr. Karlen Aslanyan, 37**, is a senior multimedia journalist and broadcaster at the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Armenian Service. With a career spanning over two decades, he has provided comprehensive coverage of significant political events both within Armenia and abroad. Mr. Aslanyan's groundbreaking reporting during the Armenian Velvet Revolution in 2018 elevated his profile as one of the most widely watched journalists during that period. Presently, he serves as the host of "Interview with Karlen Aslanyan," one of Armenia's premier political TV programs. The show features discussions with senior government officials, representatives of the parliamentary opposition, leaders of parliamentary factions, regional and international experts, as well as human rights activists and diplomats.

Since 2012, Mr. Aslanyan taught journalism at Yerevan State University, imparting valuable insights into journalism while fostering a deep understanding of Armenia's political, social, and cultural landscape among his students. He is also a frequent participant in international conferences and workshops organized by institutions such as the OSCE, Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the University of Oslo. Mr. Aslanyan holds a PhD in Philology and an MA (2009) and BA (2007) in Journalism, all from Yerevan State University.

## Ms. Zhala Azizova

Azerbaijan



**Ms. Zhala Azizova, 40**, is the Head of Corporate Communications and PR at Veyseloglu Group of Companies, a prominent entity within Azerbaijan's fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, boasting two of the largest retail chains in the country with over 1,500 grocery shops. In this capacity, Ms. Azizova oversees stakeholder management, including investors, partners, media relations, and the development and execution of sustainable development projects. Previously from 2014-2021, Ms. Azizova served as an Internal Communications Manager at Nar Mobile and Azerconnect, two major telecommunications operators in Azerbaijan. From 2010-2014, Ms. Azizova managed stakeholder relationships within the Social Protection Development Project, a collaborative initiative administered by the

International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Azerbaijan. Ms. Azizova is passionate about sharing her expertise in communications and frequently conducts masterclasses for university graduates entering the field. Ms. Azizova holds an MA in Project Management from The George Washington University School of Business (2012), an MA in Linguistics from Baku Slavic University (2011) and a BA in Philology from Baku State University (2005).



**Ms. Maia Omiadze, 40**, has been the Head of the Georgian National Tourism Administration since 2022, leading initiatives aimed at enhancing Georgia's standing as a premier tourist destination. Under Ms. Omiadze's leadership, the Georgian National Tourism Administration has embarked on a series of innovative campaigns and strategic partnerships with stakeholders to showcase Georgia's natural and cultural wonders. Her vision is rooted in both attracting visitors and driving growth in the tourism industry while safeguarding the integrity of Georgia's heritage through sustainable and responsible tourism management. Before assuming her current role, from 2010 to 2022, Ms. Omiadze held strategic communications and public relations leadership positions across key Georgian government ministries, including the

Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs. In these capacities, Ms. Omiadze contributed to the formulation of strategies fostering sustainable economic growth, preserving cultural heritage, and enhancing opportunities for youth engagement and social welfare. Ms. Omiadze holds an MA in Communication from the Georgian University of Public Affairs (2016) and a BA in Journalism from the Cinema and Theatre University of Georgia (2005).



**Mr. Sanzhar Zhamalov, 38**, is the Head of the representative office of ING Bank N.V. in Kazakhstan, overseeing the bank's operations in Kazakhstan and the broader Central Asian region. His expertise spans banking, financial services, and the technology, media and telecom (TMT) sector, where he has contributed significantly to enhancing corporate governance standards in Kazakhstan. Mr. Zhamalov serves as the Chairman of the Board of the state-owned asset management company Bolashaq Investments Ltd. Additionally, he holds positions as an Independent Non-Executive Director on the boards of four prominent Kazakhstani institutions: Otbasay Bank JSC and First Heartland Jusan Bank JSC, among the country's top-tier commercial banks; Kcell JSC, the leading mobile operator in Kazakhstan; and Jusan

Invest JSC, the nation's premier investment bank, which commands over 60% of the mortgage market share. Mr. Zhamalov's contributions extend beyond the financial sector. He has previously served as a Board member of National Information Technology JSC, responsible for managing e-government information, and National Company "KazSatNet" JSC, overseeing communication infrastructure. Mr. Zhamalov holds an Executive MBA from Judge Business School, University of Cambridge (2022), an MSc in International Financial Analysis from Newcastle University (2010), and a BSc in Financial Mathematics from Charles University in Prague (2007). He also holds the prestigious CFA Charter from the CFA Institute, London, and a Certificate in Company Direction from the Institute of Directors, London.



**Mr. Tilek Toktogaziev, 33**, is a social entrepreneur and the Chairman of the Association of Berry Growers of the Kyrgyz Republic. He is also a member of the Political Council of the Ata Meken political party and a member of the Kyrgyz-German Business Council. In 2021, Mr. Toktogaziev founded Nomading, an engineering company specializing in the construction of agricultural hangars and multifunctional structures in the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan. Before his entrepreneurial ventures, Mr. Toktogaziev served as the Minister of Agriculture, Food Industry, and Land Reclamation of the Kyrgyz Republic from 2020 to 2021. As Minister, he spearheaded the approval of key strategic documents for agricultural development and oversaw the adoption of laws and regulations facilitating the

growth of fish farming, poultry farming, and crop production. During his tenure, the ministry implemented an electronic document management system and launched digital products aimed at enhancing transparency in the Ministry as well as greater communications with the agricultural industry. Before his government service, from 2012 to 2014, Mr. Toktogaziev initiated a transformative social project promoting greenhouse business development among low-income families in rural locations. He founded the Jashyl Charba company, managing greenhouses in the Chui region. In 2017, he developed a unique greenhouse model, “Nomad Greenhouse,” renowned for its high energy efficiency, significantly reducing heating costs compared to other models. From 2017-2020, he served as the Chairman of the Association of Greenhouses of the Kyrgyz Republic. Mr. Toktogaziev holds an MA in International Relations from the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University (2013).



**Ms. Byambakhand Luguusharav, 39**, is the Policy Director of EuroChamber Mongolia, a collaborative endeavor between leading European and Mongolian companies dedicated to fostering business growth between Europe and Mongolia. She is also a co-founder of the NGO “Consilium Libratum” Institute, an organization advancing strategic studies in Mongolia. Ms. Luguusharav is a part-time lecturer on the History of International Relations at the National University of Mongolia. Ms. Luguusharav previously served as a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Strategic Studies under the National Security Council Mongolia from 2019-2023, and as a Section Chief at the Institute of International Studies at the Academy of Sciences of Mongolia from 2011-2019. Her research primarily centers on U.S. foreign policy,

Mongolia-U.S. relations, and Mongolia-NATO relations. She has authored and published over 30 articles and frequently provides commentary on various international issues in Mongolian media. Ms. Luguusharav is also a co-founder and a member of the Board of the Alumni Association of the School of Foreign Service at the National University of Mongolia, where she plays a pivotal role in fostering connections and supporting alumni endeavors. Ms. Luguusharav holds an MBA from the University of Finance and Economics of Mongolia (2019), an MA in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary (2011) and a BA in International Relations from the School of Foreign Service at the National University of Mongolia (2007). She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Humanities of Mongolia.



**Dr. Mohbonu Nakhatzoda, 39**, is a National Coordinator at the Erasmus+ Office in Tajikistan, where she provides support to the Higher Education Reform Expert team. From 2022-2024, Dr. Nakhatzoda served as the CEO of MDO “Payvand Group” LLC, a microdeposit organization, concurrently contributing as a national consultant at the International Organization for Migration Tajikistan Office. From 2020-2022, Dr. Nakhatzoda served as the Deputy Chairman of the National (Central) Bank of Tajikistan. In this capacity, Ms. Nakhatzoda contributed to the development of the 2022-2026 National Financial Inclusion Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan. During her tenure at the National Bank, Dr. Nakhatzoda served as a member of the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia Regional Capacity Development Center (CCAMTAC) Steering Committee. Additionally, she chaired the Women's Council under the National Bank of Tajikistan and served as the Chairperson of the Editorial Board of Banking Statistics Bulletin of the Republic of Tajikistan. From 2016 to 2020, Dr. Nakhatzoda served as the Director of the Scientific Research Institute under the National Bank of Tajikistan. Dr. Nakhatzoda holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain (2016), as well as PhD in World Economy & International Economic Relations (2012), an MA in International Trade (2005) and a BA in International Economics (2004), all from the Tajik State University of Commerce. She also completed certificate courses at institutions such as the IMF, JIMS, GRIPS, Vienna Joint Institute, and the University of Oxford Said Business School.



**Ms. Diana Charyyeva, 34**, is a Project Manager at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Turkmenistan. Collaborating closely with governmental bodies and key stakeholders, Ms. Charyyeva spearheads initiatives aimed at highlighting migration as a catalyst for positive development, growth and diversity. Her responsibilities include overseeing regional and national projects on Immigration and Border Governance, Migration and Health, Migration and Climate Change, as well as managing programs addressing counter-trafficking, human mobility, migration and development, return and reintegration assistance to migrants, and labor migration. Her professional background spans across various sectors, including extensive experience with USAID country programs, U.S. diplomatic missions, UNHQ, international organizations, and private financial institutions. Ms. Charyyeva holds an MA in Human Rights and Cultural Diversity from the University of Essex, UK (2015) and a BA in Business Administration and Management from the American University of Bulgaria (2012). She has also obtained diplomas in European Studies from the American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan; Cultural Diversity and Orientation Program from the Carls Duisberg Education Center in Cologne, Germany; and Mathematics and Physics from the Polytechnic College of Kyrgyzstan.



**Mr. Azizbek Kurbonov, 28**, is an entrepreneur and the co-founder and co-CEO of Sugʻurta Bozor, a leading insurTech company based in Uzbekistan. Sugʻurta Bozor specializes in digitalizing motor insurance across CIS countries through innovative technology, enabling insurance companies to develop cutting-edge motor insurance products. With over seven years of experience, Mr. Kurbonov is well-versed in various facets of business management, including sales, marketing, business development, account management and strategy development. Prior to launching the insurTech project, from 2019-2021, he served as a Marketer & Project Manager at the American communication agency FCB, where he played a pivotal role in crafting communication strategies for leading banks and fintech organizations in Uzbekistan.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Mr. Kurbonov actively contributes to the local startup ecosystem by mentoring and delivering lectures across Uzbekistan for emerging startup projects. He also serves as a guest lecturer at Techstars Startup Weekend and IT Park Uzbekistan. In recognition of his achievements, Mr. Kurbonov was honored with the prestigious Study UK Alumni Award and emerged as the winner of the TikTok Startup Academy Pitch Competition in 2023. Mr. Kurbonov holds a BSc in Economics from Westminster International University in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (2018).