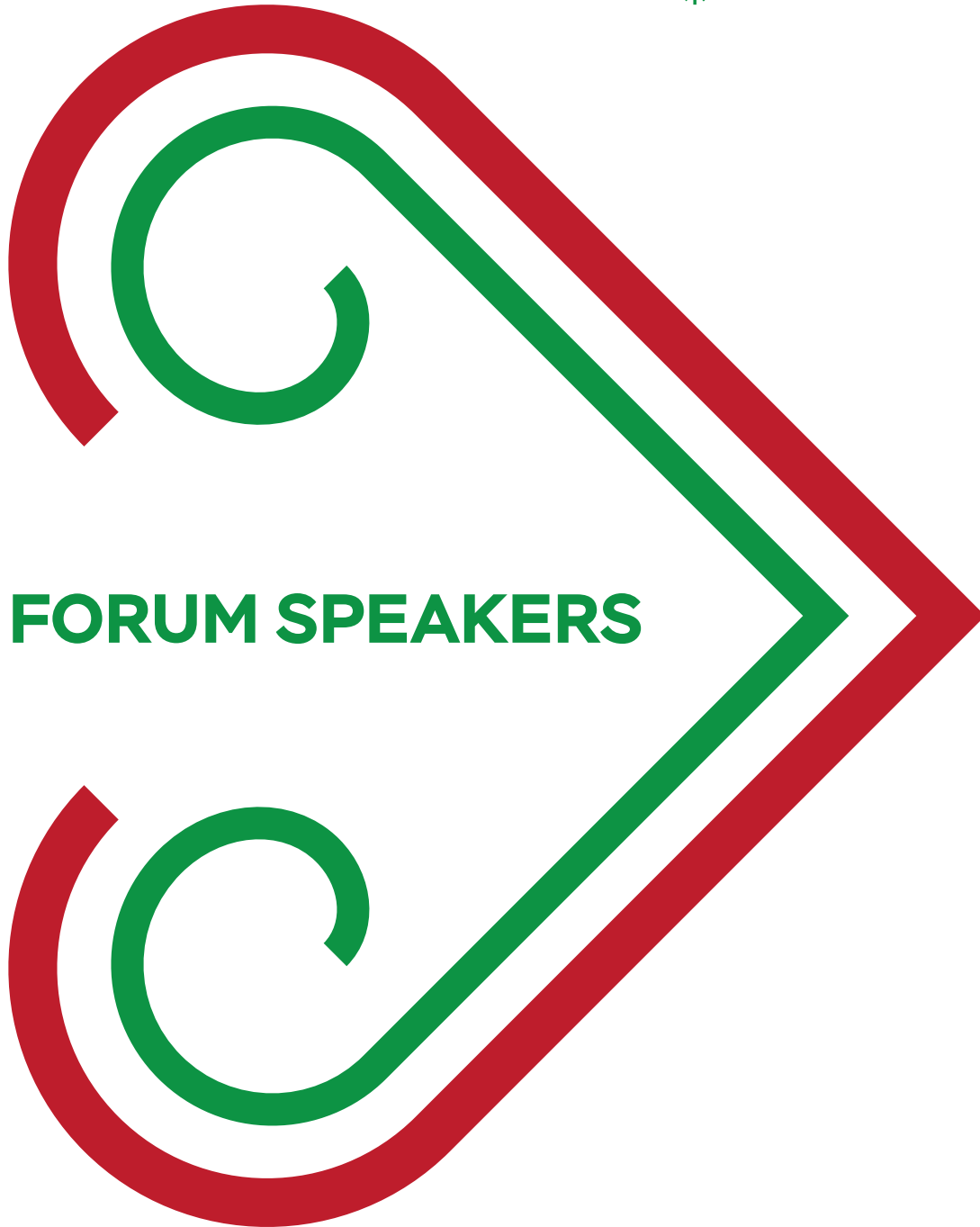




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Regional Forum 2017

Dushanbe



FORUM SPEAKERS



FORUM SPEAKERS



H.E. Davlatali Said

First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan

H.E. Davlatali Said has been First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan since November 2013. Previously, he was Chairman of the Committee on Investments and State Property Management as well as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan. Other previous positions include Chairman of the Committee on Youth Affairs, Sports and Tourism under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan in Japan, Deputy Head of the Department and Head of the Bureau on Examination, Securities and Investment Funds Securities issued by the State Committee on State Property Management and Specialist of Management Expertise for the State Committee for State Property Management. Mr. Said holds a degree in Economics from Tajik State University (1993).



H.E. Sirojiddin Aslov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan

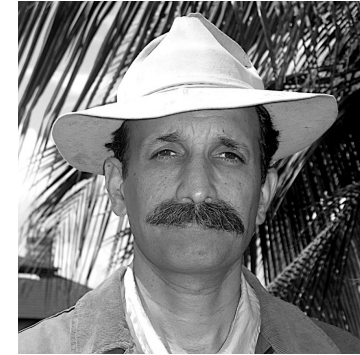
H.E. Sirojiddin Aslov is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan. Minister Aslov previously served as Non-Resident Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Cuba as well as a Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations. Other previous positions include First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, Chairman of the Executive Committee for Saving the Aral Sea and Head of Department in the Ministry of Environmental Protection, among many others. Minister Aslov graduated with a degree in 1986 from the Odessa Hydro-Meteorological Institute in Ukraine and received an additional degree in International Economic Relations from the Tashkent State University of Economics in Uzbekistan. He speaks Russian, English and Persian.





Hikmat Abdurahmanov
**Chairman of the Association for International
Business and Technologies of Uzbekistan**

Hikmat Abdurahmanov is the Chairman of the Association for International Business and Technologies of Uzbekistan. He is a serial entrepreneur with a global focus. He heads a commercial group of companies with a staff of 100 people involved in international business including trade, finance, business tourism, logistics and advisory services, and owns a business center with a co-working space, providing various B2B services with the overall mission of serving as a bridge between Uzbek Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and foreign companies. Since 2006 this commercial group has delivered products for over \$100 million to local SMEs that comprised over 1,000 executed contracts. Mr. Abdurahmanov is an active member in local and regional business communities, and is a public speaker and opinion leader with a personal mission of fostering a strong class of entrepreneurs in his country. Mr. Abdurahmanov holds an MA in International Business from the School of Management at St. Andrews, UK (2006), and an MA (2004) and BA (2001) in International Economic Relations from the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent.



Dr. Kaush Arha
**Vice Chairman & Strategic Advisor,
International Conservation Caucus Foundation**

Dr. Kaush Arha has served as a Senior Executive in both the federal and state governments of the United States as well as in the U.S. Senior Foreign Service. Dr. Arha has also served as Senior Advisor on Transition and as Senior Coordinator for Agriculture at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. In this position, he has advised Embassy leadership on transitions for Afghan leadership, U.S. strategies for economic development assistance to Afghanistan, and anti-corruption and governance efforts in Afghan institutions. Additionally, Dr. Arha has directed U.S. agricultural assistance to Afghanistan across civilian-military agencies to meet the goals of agricultural development, counter-insurgency and counter narcotics. He previously served as the Associate Solicitor General and the Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of the Interior. Prior to that, he worked for the state of Wyoming and was an attorney in a global law firm. Dr. Arha also serves as a strategic advisor to developing nations in trade, development and conservation governance and institutions. He received his PhD and MSc from the University of California-Berkeley; JD from Stanford University; MA from Boston University and BA with Honors from St. Stephen's College.





Nazira Beishenalieva

Chairperson of the Board of Directors of CJSC Bank of Asia

Nazira Beishenalieva is the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of CJSC Bank of Asia, a family-owned business, where she oversees the activities of the Board in the formation of bank policy and the execution of bank strategy. She is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Central Asia. Previously, Ms. Beishenalieva was the Chairperson of the Bishkek Business Club and President of the Rotary Club of Bishkek. For the last eight years, Ms. Beishenalieva has engaged in educational, cultural and social charity projects in Kyrgyzstan. Ms. Beishenalieva holds a Degree in Law from the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University (2005), a degree in Accounting, Analysis and Audit from the Moscow Institute of Entrepreneurship and Law, Bishkek Branch (2004), and a BA in Journalism and Public Relations from the American University of Central Asia (1998). She also graduated from the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School (2014).



Ilan Berman

Senior Vice President, American Foreign Policy Council

Ilan Berman is Vice President of the American Foreign Policy Council in Washington, D.C. An expert on regional security in the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Russian Federation, he has consulted for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and the U.S. Department of Defense, and provided assistance on foreign policy and national security issues to a range of governmental agencies and congressional offices. A frequent writer and commentator, Mr. Berman has written for the Wall Street Journal, Foreign Affairs, the New York Times, Foreign Policy, The Washington Post and USA Today, among many other publications. He is the author of four books: Tehran Rising: Iran's Challenge to the United States (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), Winning the Long War: Retaking the Offensive Against Radical Islam (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), Implosion: The End of Russia and What It Means for America (Regnery Publishing, 2013), and most recently, Iran's Deadly Ambition: The Islamic Republic's Quest for Global Power (Encounter Books, 2015).





Ronald Binkofski
General Manager, Microsoft CIS

Ronald Binkofski is General Manager of Microsoft CIS and a member of the Microsoft Central & Eastern Europe Board, overseeing all of Microsoft's business in Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. As General Manager of CIS, Mr. Binkofski engages with senior governmental officials, business leaders and members of the community. Previously, he was General Manager of Microsoft's Polish subsidiary, and during his tenure, he and his 400-person team concentrated on building the market for the next level of digital transformation by setting up an industry solutions practice on top of the mainstream business. He also developed Microsoft's consumer business in the country to meet international standards. Prior to that, Mr. Binkofski was General Manager of Microsoft Romania, and before that, was responsible for all operations at Microsoft's Polish subsidiary as Operational Director for Microsoft Poland. In addition, he has run his own consulting firm focused on IT and insurance ventures, and has held numerous positions with Software AG in Germany. Mr. Binkofski holds a degree in Mathematics from the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland and is a graduate of the INSEAD Advanced Management Program with almost 25 years of professional experience.



Zara Chatinyan
**Local Armenian Representative of German
Development Bank (KfW)**

Zara Chatinyan is the Local Representative of German Development Bank (KfW) in Armenia. KfW manages more than 600 million euro investment portfolios in Armenia's energy, drinking water and irrigation, banking and agriculture sectors. Ms. Chatinyan works closely with the governments of Armenia and Germany to identify sectors in need of reform and infrastructure projects; to facilitate intergovernmental negotiations; to participate in multi-million sovereign loan negotiations; to support the introduction of international standards in project management; and to facilitate cooperation with international financial institutions. Ms. Chatinyan has more than ten years of experience with USAID-financed projects in decentralization, policy and institutional development and strategic planning. Ms. Chatinyan holds a Certificate in Executive Management and Leadership from the Judge Institute of Management at the University of Cambridge (2003), an MPA from the University of Delaware as a Muskie Fellow (2000), and a BA in Philology from the Teachers' Training Institute in Armenia (1998).





Sarah Conant
Executive Director, Rumsfeld Foundation

Sarah Conant is the Executive Director of the Rumsfeld Foundation. In this capacity she manages the Foundation's programs including fellowships for U.S. graduate students interested in public service, fellowships for young leaders from Central Asia and the Caucasus, and grants to organizations supporting active duty troops, wounded military veterans, their families and the families of the fallen. In addition, she oversees the Foundation's events and conferences, including an annual Graduate Fellowship Conference and annual conferences held in the Greater Central Asia region. Prior to her work with the Rumsfeld Foundation, Ms. Conant held internship positions at various organizations including the Seeing Eye Foundation, McKinsey & Company, Feeding America, Coyne Public Relations, and the Office of former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Following her graduation from Northwestern University in 2009 with a BA in Political Science and International Studies, Ms. Conant returned to Donald Rumsfeld's staff full-time. After assisting with the Foundation's various programs and grant giving, in March 2011 she was appointed the Executive Director and now oversees all of the Rumsfeld Foundation's activities.



Ozodkhon Davlatshoev
Executive Director, Accelerate Prosperity, Tajikistan

Ozodkhon Davlatshoev is an entrepreneur and owns several businesses. For the past 20 years, he has led the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED)'s work in Central Asia. He began his career at AKFED's Enterprise Support Facility and later worked as Investment Officer in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, helping to launch and manage several companies in telecoms, energy and infrastructure. In 2004 he became AKFED's Deputy Director for Industrial Promotion Services in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and spearheaded investment development activities in Central Asia in renewable energy, mining, telecommunications, airport infrastructure and management, manufacturing and agro industry. Mr. Davlatshoev currently is the Executive Director of the new global initiative for Enterprise Development Platforms of AKDN and the Executive Director of Accelerate Prosperity. Mr. Davlatshoev holds an MBA with specialization in Strategic Planning and Strategic Risk Management from Edinburgh Business School, Herriot-Watt University, UK (2004), and a BA in Economics (1999) and BA in Middle-Eastern Studies (1997) from Khorog State University. He is the Honorary Consul of Sweden in Tajikistan.





Zafar Hashemi
**Senior Counselor, Embassy of Afghanistan
to the United States**

Zafar Hashemi is a Senior Counselor at the Embassy of Afghanistan in the United States. Previously he served as Deputy Spokesman for the President of Afghanistan – in this position, he managed and coordinated communications and messaging of the Presidential Palace across the Afghan government and society as well as the international community. Mr. Hashemi is an award-winning journalist, and from 2007-15 he worked for the Afghanistan Service of Voice of America, reporting on Afghan, American and world affairs for radio, television and web in both Farsi and English. From 2006-07, Mr. Hashemi managed public affairs and communications at the Afghanistan Stabilization Program (ASP). Also, from 2004-06 he managed a UNDP funded project to produce media content about democracy, elections and civic participation in post-9/11 Afghanistan. Mr. Hashemi holds an MA in Public Management from Johns Hopkins University (2015), and a BSc in Political Science and Journalism from the University of Maryland University College (UMUC, 2012).



Ambassador John Herbst
**Director, Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center,
Atlantic Council of the United States**

Ambassador John Herbst is Director of the Atlantic Council's Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center. He served for thirty-one years as a Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. Department of State, and retired at the rank of Career-Minister. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan from 2000 to 2003, then served as U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine from 2003 to 2006. Additionally, Ambassador Herbst has served as U.S. Consul General in Jerusalem, Principal Deputy to the Ambassador-at-Large for the Newly Independent States and as Director of both the Office of Independent States and Commonwealth Affairs and of Regional Affairs in the Near East Bureau. He most recently served as Director of the Center for Complex Operations at the National Defense University. Ambassador Herbst's writings on stability operations, Central Asia, Ukraine and Russia are widely published. Awards received include two Presidential Distinguished Service Awards, the Secretary of State's Career Achievement Award, the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Distinguished Civilian Service Award.





Saule Imanova
Investment Officer, International Finance Corporation, Kazakhstan

Saule Imanova is an Investment Officer at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Almaty, where she is responsible for business development in Central Asia with a primary focus on the sectors of manufacturing, agribusiness and services. Her professional interests include private sector promotion, investment climate in transitional economies, corporate governance and civil society. Ms. Imanova has more than ten years of investment and project finance experience in the countries of Europe and Central Asia and, prior to joining the IFC in 2007, she worked at the Innovation Fund of Kazakhstan and Astana Finance Investment Company. Ms. Imanova holds a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in economic policy management from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, an MS in Development Finance from Reading University, UK (2001) and a BS in International Economic Relations from Karaganda State University in Kazakhstan (2000).



Fariz Ismailzade
Vice Rector for External, Government and Student Affairs, ADA University, Azerbaijan

Fariz Ismailzade has been Vice Rector for External, Government and Student Affairs at the ADA University since 2011. He joined ADA in 2006 and has worked both as Director of Executive Execution (2006-2010) and as Executive Dean (2010-2011). Mr. Ismailzade is currently pursuing his PhD at the Maastricht School of Management. He holds an Executive MBA from IE Business School (Spain), a Master's Degree in Social and Economic Development from Washington University (St. Louis), and a BA in Political Science from Western University in Baku with one-year interim studies at Wesleyan University (Connecticut). Mr. Ismailzade has done research at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. and at the Embassy of Azerbaijan in the U.S. In addition, he has presented papers at symposiums at The Heritage Foundation, MGIMO, Columbia University, Stanford University, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, UCLA, the Vienna Diplomatic Academy as well as at various international conferences. Mr. Ismailzade has regularly published with EurasiaNet, Jamestown's Eurasia Daily Monitor, the Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst and Freedom House. Most recently he co-edited the books: South Caucasus 2021: Oil, Democracy and Geopolitics (2011, Jamestown Foundation Press, 2012) and Azerbaijan in Global Politics: Crafting Foreign Policy (2009, ADA Press).





Ambassador Tedo Japaridze

Foreign Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister of Georgia

Ambassador Tedo Japaridze is Foreign Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister of Georgia. Prior to his current position, from 2012 to 2016 he was the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Georgian Parliament. Ambassador Japaridze is one of the most prominent foreign policy authorities in Georgia. After graduating from Tbilisi State University in 1971, he studied and worked in the Soviet Union Academy of Sciences. After returning to Georgia in 1991 he served as the First Deputy Foreign Minister (1991-1992), National Security Adviser to the President (1992-1994), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the USA, Canada and Mexico (1994-2002), Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council (2002-2003) and as Foreign Minister (2003-2004). Ambassador Japaridze has also served as President of the Energy Security Center of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (2011), Alternate Director General of the International Center for Black Sea Studies in Athens (ICBSS, 2008-2011), and as Secretary General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC, 2006-2008) in Istanbul. In addition, he served as President of the U.S.-Caucasus Institute in Tbilisi (2005-2006) and as a Woodrow Wilson Public Policy Scholar (2006-2007) in Washington, D.C. Ambassador Japaridze speaks fluent English, Russian and Spanish.



Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan

Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore

Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan is currently Ambassador-at-Large in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore. Prior to this he was the Permanent Secretary of MFA from 2010 to 2013, and Second Permanent Secretary from 2001 to 2010. His service also includes a variety of appointments in the Ministry and abroad, including as Singapore's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and as Ambassador to the Russian Federation. Mr. Kausikan has been awarded the Public Administration Medal (Gold) and the Pingat Jasa Gemilang (Meritorious Service Medal) by the government of Singapore. He has also been awarded the "Order of Bernardo O'Higgins" with the rank of "Gran Cruz" by the President of the Republic of Chile, and the Oman Civil Merit Order by the Sultan of Oman.





Tamar Kekenadze
**Secretary General and Member of the Board of
the Free Democrats Political Party, Georgia**

Tamar Kekenadze is the Secretary General and Member of the Board of the Free Democrats Political Party. Before joining the party in February 2015, she was a Civilian Representative of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia to NATO and the EU. Previously, she served as Head of the Euro-Atlantic Integration Division at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Prior to that, Ms. Kekenadze worked for five years in civil society organizations on national and international levels. In 2008, she was awarded the “Young European of the Year” Prize for outstanding commitment to fostering international understanding and the union of Europe. In 2009, she was privileged as a non-EU member country representative to intern in the Cabinet of the President of the European Parliament. Ms. Kekenadze is currently pursuing her PhD in Economics, and holds an MA in Computer Engineering, Information Science and Control Systems (2006) as well as a BA in Computer Systems and Networks (2003), all from Georgian Technical University.



Khudoberdi Kholiqnazar
**Director, Center for Strategic Studies under the
President of the Republic of Tajikistan**

Khudoberdi Kholiqnazar is the Director of the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Prior to this he served as the First Deputy Director for the Center for Strategic Studies. Other previous positions include Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan. He has also served as a lecturer and teacher at a number of institutes and universities, including the Tajik Institute of Physical Culture. Mr. Kholiqnazar’s research interests include foreign policy and building the development of China. He is the author of more than 100 scientific publications in Tajikistan and abroad. He has also published two collections of scientific papers as well as two research monographs. Mr. Kholiqnazar received his PhD in 1988 from Tajik State University.





Ali Koichumanov

CIS Regional Director, Fircroft Engineering Services Limited

Ali Koichumanov, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), is Regional Director for CIS at Fircroft. He holds an MSc in Accounting from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and an MBA and BSc from KIMEP University in Almaty. Mr. Koichumanov started his career at AES Kazakhstan, a global energy company, then transitioned to its location in Arlington, Virginia. After working at AES, he served as Financial Project Manager and later as Deputy Regional Financial Controller at AES Europe in its Middle East & Africa regional office located in London, UK. His responsibilities there were to oversee and manage projects in Spain, Turkey, and the Netherlands. Later, he worked at Cameron Financial managing the company's projects in Kenya, Libya, Poland and Turkmenistan as Financial Project Controller. Mr. Koichumanov is active in sports and considers himself a fearless explorer, loving to discover new places and horizons.



Abdullo Kurbanov

Co-Founder and Chairman of the Board, Alif Capital, Tajikistan

Abdullo Kurbanov is a Co-Founder and Chairman of the Board of Alif Capital, a microcredit organization based in Tajikistan. Previously, he served as Deputy Chairman of the Board of Orientbank, one of the largest commercial banks in Tajikistan. Prior to joining Orientbank in July 2012, Mr. Kurbanov was Vice-President for Mining Investments at Origo Partners PLC, a private equity company with investments primarily in Mongolia and China. He was based in Ulaanbaatar and was in charge of Mongolia investments, managing the portfolio of existing assets (copper, coal, moly projects) and developing new deals. Earlier, Mr. Kurbanov was based in London working as an analyst in the Metals & Mining team of UBS Investment Bank, a Swiss global investment bank. He also worked for Oliver Wyman (Financial Consulting) out of London and Moscow. Mr. Kurbanov holds an MS in Finance from the London School of Economics, UK (2009) and a BA in Management from Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey (2008).





Samiullah Mahdi

Associate Director, TOLONews, Afghanistan

Samiullah Mahdi is an Associate Director of TOLONews, where he began his career as a journalist in 2007 hosting a weekly show, “Hardtalk.” He also teaches Public Administration at Kabul University. Previously, Mr. Mahdi worked as CEO of Khurshid TV from 2013 to 2014, and as Director of News and Current Affairs at 1TV from 2009 to 2012. At 1TV, Mr. Mahdi produced and hosted internationally acclaimed programs such as, “Kabul Debate Live,” “The Mask,” “Amaj” and others. He has also been an op-ed contributor to major Afghan newspapers and magazines. In 2012, Mr. Mahdi was awarded the prestigious Knight International Journalism Award from the International Center for Journalism for his excellent and courageous reporting. Mr. Mahdi holds an MA in International Relations from the University of Massachusetts Boston as a Fulbright Scholar (2016) and a BA from the School of Law and Political Science at Kabul University (2009).



Ambassador Elisabeth Millard

U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan

Ambassador Elisabeth Millard presented her credentials to President Rahmon on March 12, 2016. She most recently served in Washington on Secretary of State John Kerry’s staff. Earlier in her career, she was Deputy Chief of Mission in Astana, Kazakhstan, and Principal Officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Casablanca, Morocco. She was responsible for South and Central Asia at the National Security Council at the White House and served in Nepal, India, Denmark and the Czech Republic. Before joining the Foreign Service, she worked in different capacities in the private and public sector. The daughter of a World Health Organization official, Ms. Millard grew up overseas and attended schools in Denmark, Sweden and Tunisia. She studied at the University of Geneva and graduated from the London School of Economics and Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Ms. Millard and her late husband have five grown children and six grandchildren. In her spare time, she loves to cook, exercise, read and listen to music.





Dr. Farida Muminova

Deputy Director, Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Dr. Farida Muminova is the Deputy Director of the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Prior to this she served as the Head of Macroeconomic Research at the Center for Strategic Studies. Other previous positions include Senior Lecturer and Deputy Dean of the International Faculty of the Technological University of Tajikistan and Assistant Senior Lecturer in the Department of National Economy of the Tajik National University. Her research interests include macroeconomics, national economy, regional economy and management, international economic relations, economic security and econometrics. Dr. Muminova is the author of more than 70 monographs, scientific articles and books, including “Regional Economy and Management,” “Regions of Tajikistan: Theory and Methodology of Analysis,” “Social Sector in the Context of Human Development” and “Budget Travel Guide to Tajikistan.” She received the State Award for Excellence in Education from the Republic of Tajikistan. Dr. Muminova received a degree in Economics from the Moscow Institute of National Economy.



Mirsuljan Namazaliev

Founder and Managing Director of the CAFMI Research Center, Kyrgyzstan

Mirsuljan Namazaliev has been the Founder and Managing Director of the CAFMI Research Center since 2009. Previously, from 2014 to 2016, he was a Director General of K-News Information Agency, one of the leading online news sources in Kyrgyzstan, and from 2006 to 2014, was a country representative in Kyrgyzstan of Neweurasia, a Zurich-based Citizen Media Company. He is also a founding curator at the Global Shapers Hub in Bishkek, the World Economic Forum initiative. In the past, Mr. Namazaliev founded and led various civic movements and organizations promoting democratic changes in the country. He firmly stands for the rule of law, economic freedom and minimal governance. Mr. Namazaliev holds a BA in Political Science from Bishkek Humanities University (2009).





Rakhim Oshakbayev
Director of the Center of Applied
Research “TALAP,” Kazakhstan

Rakhim Oshakbayev is the Director of the Center of Applied Research “TALAP;” a think-tank focused on macroeconomic research and economic policy. Before joining “TALAP,” from 2015 to March 2016, Mr. Oshakbayev served as a Vice-Minister for Investments and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where he was responsible for the development and implementation of investment policy and international cooperation in this area. Prior to joining the Ministry of Investment and Development, from 2011 to 2015, Mr. Oshakbayev served as a First Deputy Chairman of the Board of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan “Atameken.” Mr. Oshakbayev also has substantial experience working in senior management positions in different state-owned and private companies in Kazakhstan. Mr. Oshakbayev holds a BS in Economics from Lomonosov Moscow State University (1999).



Zuhursho Rahmatulloev
Co-Founder and CEO, Alif Capital, Tajikistan

Zuhursho Rahmatulloev is Co-Founder and CEO of Alif Capital, a micro-credit and deposit organization. Currently he is working on two projects in the fields of mobile payments and outbound tourism. Prior to joining Alif Capital, from 2011-12, Mr. Rahmatulloev served as CEO at BDO Tajikistan, one of the leading audit firms in the country. Previously he also co-founded a number of start-ups in real estate and tourism. In addition, he co-founded a Public Organization, “Peshraft,” which supports young Tajik leaders through various stipend programs as well as different charity events. Mr. Rahmatulloev holds an MA in International Political Economy with merit from the University of Warwick, UK (2010) and a BA in Business Administration with merit from London South Bank University (2009). He also holds a Chartered Islamic Finance Professional degree from the International Centre for Education in Islamic Finance (INCEIF) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2013), a leading educational institution in the field.





Dr. Theresa Sabonis-Helf

Professor of National Security Strategy, National War College, National Defense University

Dr. Theresa Sabonis-Helf is Professor of National Security Strategy at the National War College/National Defense University. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an Adjunct Professor in the Science, Technology and International Affairs program at Georgetown University, and is currently on sabbatical researching electricity politics in Central Asia and the Caucasus with the support of a Minerva research grant. She previously served as a Visiting Fellow at the U.S. Agency for International Development, as an Energy and Environment Policy Advisor for the Harvard Institute for International Development, and as a Policy Analyst for think tanks in the United States and Russia. She has lived and worked in seven countries of the former USSR, and assisted two nations with the development of their first National Security Strategies. Additionally, she has served on the NATO Defense College's Academic Advisory Board, and on Admiral Stavridis' European Command Advisory Panel during his tenure as Supreme Allied Commander. Dr. Sabonis-Helf has co-edited two volumes on Central Asia's political and economic transition, and published and lectured extensively on climate change policies, post-Soviet energy and Russian energy behavior, regional and international energy trade and the politics of electricity.



Almaz Saifutdinov

Economic/Commercial Advisor at the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan

Almaz Saifutdinov is an Economic/Commercial Advisor at the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan, where he is responsible for promoting U.S. commercial interests in the region. He also serves as the Chairman of the Board at the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation in Tajikistan. Mr. Saifutdinov is also a Founder of the Economic News Tajikistan Facebook group. With over 10,000 members, including economists, business leaders and government officials, the group serves as a primary source of information and a discussion platform. Prior to joining the U.S. Embassy in 2003, Mr. Saifutdinov worked as the Deputy Manager at the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development in Tajikistan. Mr. Saifutdinov holds a Master of Development Administration from Western Michigan University (2002) and a BA in English and French languages from Dushanbe State Pedagogical University (1997). He is the author of numerous analytical articles on economic and commercial issues.





Amrullah Saleh
Chairperson of Afghanistan Green Trend

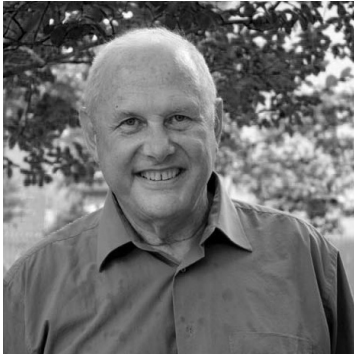
Amrullah Saleh is former State Minister for Security Reforms of Afghanistan, the post from which he resigned in June 2017. Previously he served as Head of the National Security Directorate (NDS) of Afghanistan, where in 2004 at the age of 32 he became the youngest head of NDS. Prior to that he worked in various capacities under the leadership of the Northern Alliance Leader Ahmad Shah Massoud, and by early 2000, Mr. Saleh was managing some of the intelligence affairs of the Northern Alliance. After his appointment as head of NDS in 2004, Mr. Saleh helped rebuild the Afghan intelligence service and was considered as someone in the Afghan government with a clear understanding of the security challenges facing the country. In addition, the United States has considered him one of the most effective ministers in Post-Taliban Afghanistan. Also, Mr. Saleh is the leader of Afghanistan Green Trend— a grass-roots, decentralized movement. The aim of the movement, which has received tremendous support from across Afghanistan, is to give a voice to those who oppose the appeasement policy of Mr. Karzai. Mr. Saleh has participated in over 30 international conferences and has been the keynote speaker for at least 20 of them.



Major General BK Sharma,
(AVSM, SM (Ret.))**
Deputy Director of Research and Head of the
Center for Strategic Studies and Simulation,
United Service Institution of India

Major General BK Sharma is the Deputy Director and Head of the Center for Strategic Studies and Simulation at the United Service Institution of India. He specializes in Strategic Net Assessments, Scenario Building and Strategic Gaming. He is a graduate of the Defense Services Staff College, the Higher Command Course and the National Defense College. He now conducts strategic games for the National Defense College, New Delhi, and Higher Command Courses for the Army, Navy, Airforce and Academy of the Indian Foreign Service. In his military career, Major Sharma participated in counter-terrorism operations in the Indian states of J&K, Punjab and the Northeast. His foreign assignments have included working as the Defense Attaché for the Embassy of India in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. He also participated in the demobilization and disarming of Contras guerillas in Nicaragua in Central America in 1990 as part of a UN Peacekeeping Mission. Major Sharma regularly writes for Indian and foreign journals, and participates in TV panel discussions for Indian, Russian and Chinese television. Additionally, he has received the national awards of AVSM and SM from the President of India for rendering distinguished national service and display of courage and bravery.





Dr. S. Frederick Starr
Chairman, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute

Dr. S. Frederick Starr joined the American Foreign Policy Council as Distinguished Fellow for Eurasia in January 2017. He also serves as the Founding Chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. Additionally, he is a Research Professor at Johns Hopkins University-SAIS in Washington, D.C., and Head of the Advisory Council for the Institute for Security and Development Policy in Stockholm, Sweden. Dr. Starr has focused on the challenge of reopening continental-wide transport passing through Central Asia and Afghanistan. He is a frequent commentator on the affairs of the region, and has been published in *Foreign Affairs*, *The National Review* and the *Far East Economic Review*. His most recent book, *Lost Enlightenment: Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab Conquest to Tamerlane*, has been widely acclaimed. He is Founding Chairman of the Kennan Institute in Washington, D.C., and was closely involved in plans for the University of Central Asia and the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy. He also is a Trustee of the Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan and is Founder of the Greater New Orleans Foundation. Dr. Starr earned his PhD in History at Princeton, MA at King's College, Cambridge, and his BA at Yale, and holds five honorary degrees.



Talant Sultanov
Coordinator of the Working Group on the Digital Transformation Program "Taza Koom," Kyrgyzstan

Talant Sultanov is the Coordinator of the Working Group on the Digital Transformation Program "Taza Koom" in Kyrgyzstan. He is also the Director of the Silk Road Studies Center and Chair of the Internet Society-Kyrgyz Chapter. Additionally, Mr. Sultanov is a member of the Supervisory Board of the National TV and Radio Corporation, the Board of Directors of the Bank of Asia in Kyrgyzstan, the Council on Business and Entrepreneurship under the Speaker of the Parliament, and the Advisory Council of the Minister of Economy. Previously he served as the Director of the National Institute for Strategic Studies and as the CFO of the American University of Central Asia. Mr. Sultanov holds an MA in International Finance from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (2006) and a BA in International Relations from San Francisco State University (1999), where he graduated as the top student in his program. He has also received executive education at the Harvard Kennedy School.





Emin Valiyev
Co-founder, Keepface, Azerbaijan

Emin Valiyev is a marketing professional and entrepreneur with 13 years of experience in the Central Asia and Caucasus regions. In 2010, he founded Uptime Marketing Agency with operations in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. He is also a Co-Founder of Keepface, an influencer-marketing platform operating in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Iran. Prior to entrepreneurship, Mr. Valiyev worked in marketing management units at Colgate-Palmolive Kazakhstan and Danone Kazakhstan. Mr. Valiyev began his career in 2004 at Colgate-Palmolive Azerbaijan as the Assistant Brand Manager. Soon after, he was promoted to the regional role in the CIS Countries Head Office in Istanbul, later moving to Kazakhstan in 2007. Mr. Valiyev holds a BA in International Economic Relations from Azerbaijan State Economic University in Baku (2004). He has also attended numerous seminars, trainings and summer schools on management, marketing and negotiations in different countries throughout Europe and Asia.



Ambassador Wahidullah Waissi
Ambassador of Afghanistan to Australia

Ambassador Wahidullah Waissi is the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Australia. Previously he served as the Director-General for Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, where he oversaw multilateral development and regional economic cooperation and coordinated regional connectivity projects. Mr. Waissi has initiated and was chief negotiator for the Chabahar Transit and Transport Corridor Agreement among Afghanistan, Iran and India, as well as for the Lapis Lazuli Transit and Transport Corridor connecting Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. In the past, he also served as a Senior Adviser to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance, and as the Director and Formulation Manager of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy and Millennium Development Goals. Mr. Waissi is a Co-Founder and Chair of the Green Club. Mr. Waissi holds an MA in Development Economics from Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts (2005).





Dr. Cheng Yang
Professor of International Relations, Shanghai International Studies University

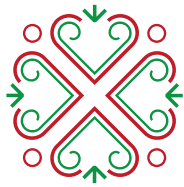
Dr. Cheng Yang is a Professor of International Relations at the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Shanghai International Studies University, China. In addition, he is an Editorial Board Member for the journal, *Russian Studies*, of Seoul National University and the *Journal of Siberian and Far Eastern Studies*, Hallym University, South Korea. For the 2014-19 time-period, he serves as a Guest Chief Research Fellow for the Institute of World Economy and International Relations at the Russian Academy of Sciences. Before moving into academic life, he served seven years as a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the P.R.C. and the Chinese Embassy in Moscow. Professor Yang has also been a Guest Professor at the University of Cergy-Pontoise (France); Visiting Research Fellow for the Slavic Research Centre at Hokkaido University (Japan); Visiting International Fellow of the University of Exeter and Visiting Scholar at the University of Cambridge (UK). Professor Yang's current research concerns contemporary Russia-China relations and foreign policy of the small states in Central Eurasia. He has published several books and many articles on these topics, and has won 6 Excellent Paper Prizes in the highly prestigious Shanghai Philosophy and Social Sciences outstanding achievement award.



Basir Yosufi
General Director for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan

Basir Yosufi is the General Director for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOI) of Afghanistan, where he previously worked as a Senior Policy Advisor beginning in 2010, and has significantly contributed to most of the MOI's strategic documents. Before joining the government, he worked in private and non-governmental organizations. Mr. Yosufi holds a Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in European and International Security from the University of Geneva and Geneva Center for Security Policy (2016), a Master of Science in Foreign Service in International Relations and Security from Georgetown University (2010), and a BA in Political Science from Delhi University (2006). Mr. Yosufi is a Fulbright alumnus and has received several awards including SFS Dean's Award for Academic Excellence and the University of Geneva award for the MAS Most Outstanding Research Paper. His research interests are security issues in Central and South Asia, counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency and security sector reform.





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