

UIMF Hosts Ambassador of Tajikistan to the United Nations



Ambassador Mahmadaminov speaks before UVU audience

Due to the efforts of the UVU Foreign Affairs Club and Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU), students at UVU were privileged to host the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations, His Excellency Mahmadamin Mahmadaminov on 5 October 2018. Part of the mission of these clubs is to expand student engagement in world affairs, connect them with international contacts, bring mountainous communities together, and raise awareness about topics related to mountain and infrastructure sustainability and development.

On Friday all of these goals were met as many students came to listen to H.E. Mahmadaminov speak on Tajikistan's Sustainable Development Goals. H.E. Mahmadaminov has worked for many years to improve and evolve Tajikistan's infrastructure and ensure that water sources are sustainable and consistent. In his presentation he addressed the country's recent efforts to stabilize the country's economy through expansion of hydropower plants and projects and develop the country's ecotourism draw. Ambassador Mahmadaminov talked about how Tajikistan has

historically been a transit path country for Europe, Asia, and larger Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries. Part of the aim of their Sustainable Development Goals is to transform Tajikistan from this transit path country into a transit hub. One of the biggest motivating factors for Tajikistan to further develop its economy and infrastructure is to prevent Islamic fundamentalist radicalization and recruiting. As the economy and society improve, more jobs are created which leaves less room for discontent and extremism to breed.



UIMF Member Joseph Lloyd (L) and Ambassador Mahmadamin Mahmadaminov (R)

As the Director of Global Operations within the Foreign Affairs club, I was responsible for creating an information memo on Tajikistan and Mr. Mahmadaminov for UIMF and Foreign Affairs Club members in order to give all our members a general base of knowledge on our guest and country who represents. In preparing for the Ambassador's visit I did various behind the scenes work including spreading awareness of the event, liaising with UVU's international students, and making sure the club had a poster ready for Mr. Mahmadaminov to sign for UIMF's wall records and posterity. This whole experience followed UVU's model of engaged learning by giving me the opportunity to receive hands-on involvement and experience in engaging with a foreign

dignitary. I am a National Security Studies major, so it was very important for me to see a specific example of how what I am learning is applied in other countries.

Joseph Lloyd, Director of Global Operations, UIMF