

## **UIMF discusses Sustainable Development Goals with Ambassador Mahmaminov**

As a part of continued efforts to raise an awareness on the mountain sustainable development issues, members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) hosted the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Mahmamin Mahmadaminov on UVU campus on October 5, 2018. The meeting was divided into two parts.



*Viktoria Bahrii with Ambassador Mahmaminov*

During the first part, UIMF members (encouraged to participate as a part of the engaged learning initiative) presented to the Ambassador the key goals and achievements of UIMF within Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and mountain targets in particular, as well as shared experiences of collaboration with different field experts and organizations in that area. My personal experience of presentation was very insightful, as I've got a chance to talk about the UIMF partnership with NGOs, and interactions with Permanent Missions to the United Nations to advocate the implementation of mountain targets. Most recently, through the cooperation with Permanent Missions of Uzbekistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women UIMF members were able to advocate for mountain women

by hosting a side event. I reminded distinguished guest that during 2013-2015 UIMF hosted 18 Permanent Representatives of different nations (in particular of Kenya, Hungary and Austria) as advocacy campaign to adopt three mountain targets among 17 UN SDGs. Also, this talk provided me with the experience of public performance and helped to understand how to deliver the points on the subject in the approachable manner.

After the end of the first half of the session, I've got a chance to individually talk with Permanent Representative of Tajikistan in Russian (the native language for both of us), when we discussed our geographic backgrounds, and after which I expressed my appreciation for the Mr. Mahmaminov activities, gratitude for his visit, and my personal fascination with the state of Tajikistan (which I did research project on last year). Permanent Representative of Tajikistan was very supportive of my interest in the study of his country, shared his business information and even invited me to visit Tajik Permanent Mission, if I ever happened to be in New York. For me, as the person who have a passion for the study of counter-terrorism and its connection with sustainable development issues, it was very exciting to get to know the public figure who works in this field.



*UVU students listening to Ambassador Mahmaminov insights*

More students came to attend the second part of the session, so that the PR of Tajikistan had a bigger audience to talk about the issues and achievements in the sustainable development of Tajikistan. Ambassador Mahmaminov started on by providing the general information on the country, such as the mountain geography and climate of the country, as well as the trends in

economy, and national security. PR of Tajikistan emphasized the importance of education (with Tajikistan having 97% of literacy rate) and family values promotion, which consequently impacts such issues as hunger, healthcare and gender equality. Later on, Ambassador Mahmaminov talked about the efforts of Tajikistan's government in terrorism prevention, including the special programs targeted at youth (which makes up 54% of country's population and is at-risk group for radicalism involvement), budget spending on border protection (and UN assistance and US financial support for this issue) and counter-narcotics program - important not only due to the economic and security reasons, but also aimed at protection of youth health worldwide.

When it comes to the performance, Mr. Mahmaminov described the experience of the state's participation in multiple organization, such as the UN (including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and Status of Women), CIS, EAEC, OIC, SCO, IDB, ECO, IMF, WHO, within which Tajikistan promotes the sustainability goal of "water for life". The PR of Tajikistan explained that the topic of clean water and sanitation through its importance for well-being of communities, disease prevention, and performance of the industries (including electricity generation). In addition, Ambassador Mahmaminov talked about how the topic became vital for Tajikistan's cooperation with Canada, Qatar, United Emirates, China, etc., who focus on water concern and aim at the engagement of the international community. Then, the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan elaborated on the successful partnership with new President of Uzbekistan on opening access to the interstate roads and borders, as well as the active economic cooperation. Lastly, he explained that the key to fighting the terrorism in the region lies in the help of international community in the economic and social development of Afghanistan, including delivery of electricity (which then affects the work of the hospitals and schools), counternarcotic programs and the assistance in irrigation maintenance for local agriculture (area of contribution of Tajik engineers).

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