

24-03-22-SAMUEL-ELZINGA

United Nations Sustainable Development Class POLS3640-001



# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

HLPF 2018 – “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”



UIMF MEMBERS AT HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM,  
UN TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
JULY 18, 2018



Samuel Elzinga Speaks at High-Level Political Forum,  
July 18, 2018



# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## HLPF 2018 – “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”

### Mountain Targets Implementations Through Student Engaged Learning (Oral Statement to be heard at 2018 ECOSOC High-Level Segment)

We thank Russian Academy of Natural Sciences for allowing us to speak in support of mountain communities, who are among the poorest and most-neglected globally. Climate change and migration make their living conditions even worse. An estimated 39 percent of the mountain population in developing countries, are vulnerable to food insecurity, according to a recent study of the FAO-UN and the Mountain Partnership (MP) Secretariat. During 2000-2012, there was a 30-percent increase in the number of mountain people vulnerable to food insecurity, while their population increased by only 16 percent.

Two SDGs under the review of this forum contain three mountain targets and it has to address the challenges facing mountain communities: Target 6.6: by 2020, protect and restore water related ecosystems, including mountains, .....,; Target 15.1: by 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular ...mountains and drylands,....; Target 15.4: by 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

As one of the examples, since 2007, the Utah Valley University (UVU), with the support of the MP, involves students, including non-traditional ones, in the implementation of mountain targets. Members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a UVU student clubs coalition, through an engaged learning model, gain professional skills by addressing real-world problems of mountain communities with a faculty serving them as a mentor.

UIMF members advocated already for the mountain women during the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. They reported about jointly with the Kyrgyz peers hosting the International Women of the Mountains conferences as an implementation of the UN Resolution “International Year of Mountains, 2002.” The 2016 UN Secretary-General’s Report on Sustainable Mountain Development featured recommendations provided by UIMF in the latest conference document about the role women play in implementation of two mountain targets. Through the model students raised and contributed \$250,000 to the mountain targets adoption and implementation.

The model demonstrates that students are able and must play an active role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It can be used by universities in rural and mountainous states worldwide to provide similar benefits to students, and to transform mountain communities towards sustainable and resilient societies.

Thank you very much for your attention

Statement Copy



SAM ELZINGA SPEAKS AT HLPF

ONLY VALID WITH A UN ID



**High-Level Political Forum**

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**Balcony Trusteeship**

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**1500-1800hrs**

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DATE: **19-Jul-18**

Pass to the HLPF

September 4, 2018

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — Extensions of Remarks

E1189

Leonard Richardson of College Springs, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Sheryl and Leonard’s lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th anniversary, I hope it is filled with happy memories. May their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI  
OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be on the House floor for the first vote on July 23, 2018, because my flight from Oregon was delayed. If I had been present I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2345, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act. This bill seeks to improve access to emergency services for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis by requiring the Federal Communications Commission to study the feasibility of creating a three-digit dialing code for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system. I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make it easier for individuals to access medical care, including mental health care.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY  
OF LINNIE LEONA GATEWOOD  
GALLUPS

HON. MIKE ROGERS  
OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 100th birthday of Linnie Leona Gatewood Gallups.

Leona was born on October 2, 1918. On August 8, 1937, she married Samuel Matthew Gallups. Leona was a homemaker and cared for children, including her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, during the work day. She served as a foster parent and kept the nursery at Ladonia Baptist Church where she has been a member since 1961.

After her husband had a massive stroke, she took care of him for 15 years. Leona loves gardening, flowers and arts and crafts. She also loves to bake cakes for others. Leona is known around town for her crafts. She spends a lot of time watching Fox News and is very fond of President Trump.

Her friends and family are surprising her with a birthday party on Sunday, September 30th at her home in Phenix City, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Leona a very happy 100th birthday.

CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF  
ADIRONDACK HALL AT SUNY ADIRONDACK

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK  
OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize SUNY Adirondack on officially opening Adirondack Hall.

SUNY Adirondack is a regional leader in education. Since its founding in 1961, SUNY Adirondack has created opportunities for growth and excellence in the North Country. Through its community-oriented mission and emphasis on workforce development, the University paves the way for students to succeed while serving the unique needs of the Adirondack community.

In support of this mission, SUNY Adirondack constructed Adirondack Hall, a new building complex that will provide modernized spaces for students to innovate and thrive as they work toward their goals for the future. Adirondack Hall will feature Business Central and the Center for Entrepreneurship, the Office of Continuing Education, the Northwest Bay Conference Center, and state-of-the-art classrooms and labs in support of science and health careers.

On behalf of New York’s 21st District, I want to congratulate SUNY Adirondack on opening its new facilities. We are grateful to SUNY Adirondack for its commitment to educating the North Country community, and look forward to seeing students and faculty benefit from this new expansion for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING MEMBERS OF THE  
UTAH INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN  
FORUM

HON. JOHN R. CURTIS  
OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Samuel Elzinga, Damon Ashcraft, and Andrew Jensen, members of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University, on their recent success at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on July 19, 2018 in New York. During general debates at that global forum, they highlighted the importance of advocating for mountain communities, who are among the most impoverished and forgotten communities globally. They demonstrated student engaged learning, one of UVU’s core philosophies, by planning every aspect of the trip, while Dr. Baktybek Abdrisayev, a UVU faculty member, served them as a mentor to guide them through their endeavors. Through this engaged learning model, Samuel, Andrew, and Damon engaged also such non-governmental organization registered with the ECOSOC as the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, the Mountain Institute, and Utah China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands

Development and Cooperation. As a result, those NGOs provided them an opportunity to make an oral and written statement, highlighting the state of Utah as a model for sustainable mountain development. Utah is consistently ranked as one of the best states for doing business and has some of the fastest growing communities in the country. I am very proud they highlighted how students are able and have to be counted as contributors to sustainable development both in Utah and mountain communities worldwide. Below is their oral statement, which was presented during ECOSOC’s general debate on July 19, 2018:

#### MOUNTAIN TARGETS IMPLEMENTATIONS THROUGH STUDENT ENGAGED LEARNING

We thank the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences for allowing us to speak in support of mountain communities, who are among the poorest and most-neglected globally. Climate change and migration make their living conditions even worse. According to a recent study by the FAO-UN and the Mountain Partnership (MP) Secretariat, an estimated 39 percent of the mountain population in developing countries are vulnerable to food insecurity. From 2000 to 2012, there was a 30-percent increase in the number of mountain people vulnerable to food insecurity, with their population only increasing by 16 percent.

Two SDGs under the review of this forum contain three mountain targets and it must address the challenges facing mountain communities: Target 6.6: by 2020, protect and restore water related ecosystems, including mountains, .....,; Target 15.1: by 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular ...mountains and drylands,....; Target 15.4: by 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

Since 2007, Utah Valley University, with the support of the Mountain Partnership, involves students, including nontraditional ones, in the implementation of mountain targets. Members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU, gain professional skills through an engaged learning model by addressing real-world problems of mountain communities with a faculty serving them as a mentor.

UIMF members have already advocated for the mountain women during the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Students, jointly with their Kyrgyz peers, reported about hosting the International Women of the Mountains conferences as an implementation of the UN Resolution “International Year of Mountains, 2002.” The 2016 UN Secretary-General’s Report on Sustainable Mountain Development featured recommendations provided by UIMF in the latest conference document about the role women play in implementation of two mountain targets. Through the model students raised and contributed \$250,000 to the mountain targets adoption and implementation.

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# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## Meetings with Central Asian Officials during High- Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development



Meeting with PRs of Kyrgyzstan to the UN, Tajikistan to the UN and Kazakhstan to the UN



Meeting with PR of Tajikistan to the UN,  
Ambassador Mahmaminov



Meeting with PR of Uzbekistan to the UN,  
Ambassador Ibragimov



Meeting with PR of Kyrgyzstan to the UN,  
Ambassador Moldoisaeva



Meeting with PR of Kazakhstan to the UN,  
Ambassador Umarov



**AGENDA SIDE-EVENT**  
**"Tackling Climate Change and Building Resilience for Mountain and Rural Communities"**

**1:15 – 1:30 pm – OPENING SEGMENT**

**H.E. Ms Carla Mucavi**

Director of FAO Liaison Office in New York - **Moderator of the side-event.**

**H.E. Ms Mirgul Moldoisaeva**, Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the UN.

**H.E. Mr Jan Kickert**, Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN

**H.E. Mr. Joan J.López** Deputy Permanent Representative of the Principality of Andorra to the UN.

**1:30 – 2.10 pm – PANEL DISCUSSION**

**Mr Landry Riba**, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Sustainability, Government of Andorra.

Presentation: *Adapting agriculture and livestock sectors to climate change impacts in mountain areas: Case study of Andorra*

**Mr Benjamin S. Orlove**, Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University

Presentation: *"Responding to Climate Change in Mountain Communities"*

**Mr Giorgio Grussu**, Project Coordinator, FAO - Mountain Partnership Secretariat

Presentation: *Mountains Matter*

**Ms Yoko Watanabe**, Global Manager, GEF Small Grants Programme, UNDP

Presentation: *UNDP's experience in protecting livelihoods and biodiversity in mountain ecosystems*

**Mr Andrew Jensen**, President of the UN Model, Utah International Mountain Forum and

**Mr Samuel Elzinga**, Vice-President of the UN Model, Utah International Mountain Forum.

Presentation: *Utah as a model: Tackling climate change and building sustainable and resilient communities in mountainous and rural regions.*

**2:10 – 2:30 pm – INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION**

**CLOSING REMARKS**

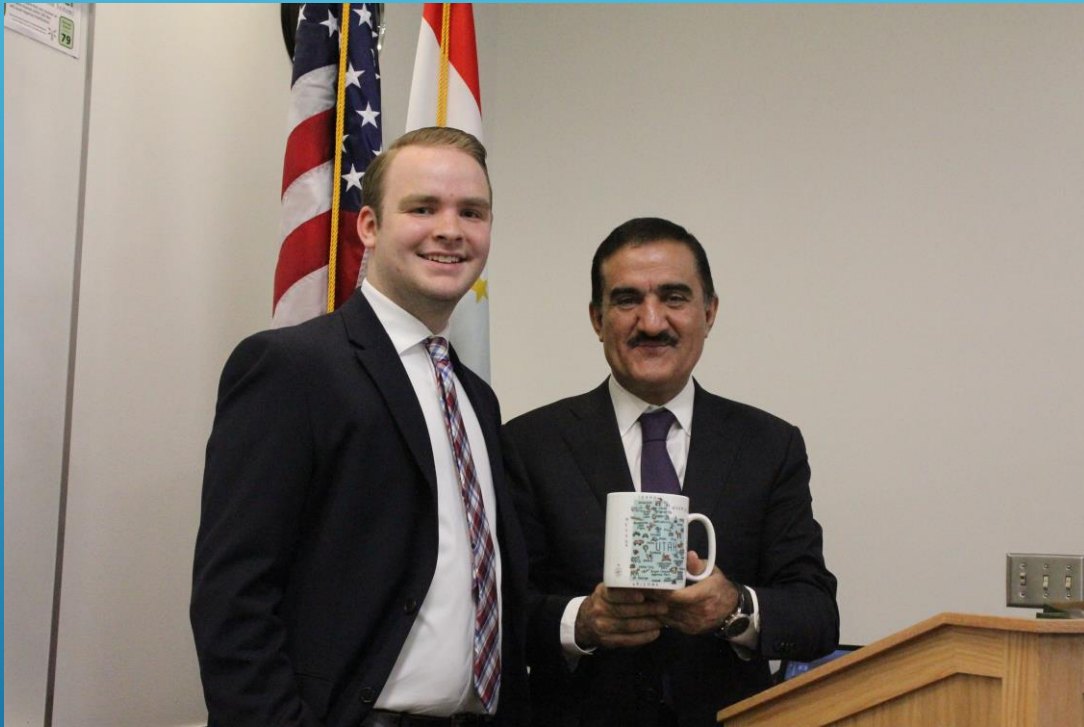
**H.E. Ms. Louise Blais**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN

# OBSERVING INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY 2018 AT THE UNITED NATIONS



(R to L) UIMF leaders: Samuel Elzinga, Andrew Jensen and Yoko Watanabe the Global Manager of GEF Small Grants Programme for the United Nations Development Program during IMD panel discussion at the United Nations, December 11, 2018

# HOSTING UNITED NATIONS DIGNITARIES AT UVU



Samuel Elzinga presents gift to PR of Tajikistan to the UN, Ambassador Mahmaminov, October 05, 2019



Samuel Elzinga during UIMF members meeting with PR of Austria to the UN, Ambassador Jan Kickert, January 19, 2019

# PARTICIPATION AT THE UN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK.



**Samuel Elzinga (Center) with other youth committee members from Utah on the floor of the UN Security Council during the conference, March 20, 2019**



**Visit to Brighton Beach**



**This is Central Asian dish - lagman**

# DELIVERING COATS TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WITH ROTARIANS



*Coats being sorted before delivery*



*Sam Elzinga ( second from the right) with Orem Rotary members with UVU Rotaractors present coats to the principal of the Westmore Elementary School in Orem, December 6, 2020*



# OBSERVING INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY 2019 AT THE UNITED NATIONS



Attendees of the International Mountain Day observation at the United Nations headquarters



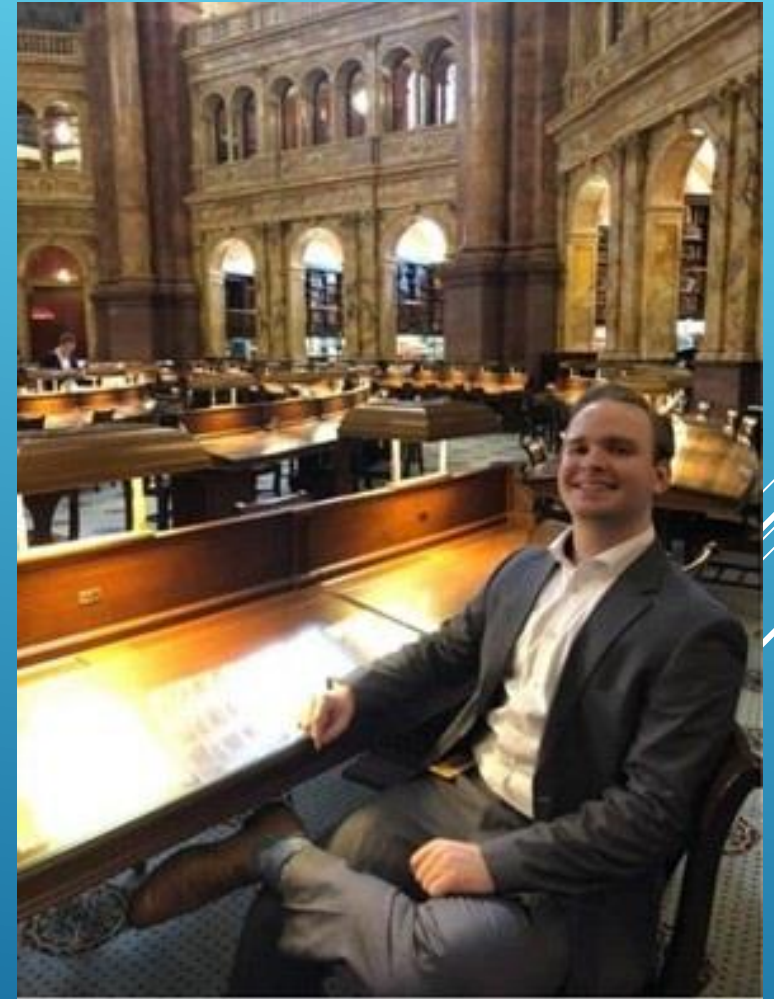
Sam Elzinga speaks during the International Mountain Day observation at the UN headquarters



# SUMMER 2019 INTERNSHIP IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



*Samuel Elzinga (L) with Congresswoman Debbie Lesko (R) at an intern appreciation event*



*Samuel in the Library of Congress,*

- ▶ Singlehandedly one of the most impactful experiences I had in college.
- ▶ Taught me about front of house and back of house diplomacy
- ▶ The journey is where the magic happens, not the end destination
- ▶ **I still get asked about my experiences at UIMF!**

MAIN TAKEAWAYS FROM UIMF

A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted upwards from left to right, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

## Colorado

Interviewing in Denver, CO - Wednesday, March  
11, 2020

### Delaney Deskin

University of Colorado

### Samuel Elzinga

Utah Valley University

### Kelsey Grant

University of Colorado

### Sarah Greichen

Colorado State University

### Kiana Harkema

University of Colorado

### Margot Lurie

Amherst College

- ▶ I was UVU's first Truman Scholar finalist in over 30 years.
- ▶ Huge personal and institutional achievement
- ▶ My policy proposal, a core component of the application, was directly related to helping women and girls in mountainous Central Asia find microloan programs to start sustainable businesses.
- ▶ Didn't get the scholarship but was honored to go that far!



# FRUITS OF THE LABOR PT 1



- ▶ Was awarded the Atlas Award at UVU as a result of my work with UIMF.
- ▶ This was 4 years of work recognized – one of the most satisfying experiences of my undergraduate career.

FRUITS OF THE  
LABOR PT 2



## The Central Asian Regional Security Complex Revisited: Understanding the Implications of the US Retreat From Afghanistan

Samuel Elzinga

Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs, Washington, United States

On February 29, 2020, President Donald Trump announced the United States signed a peace agreement with the Taliban, signifying the United States' intention of leaving Afghanistan in the near future. Though the global pandemic has altered US withdrawal plans, the question still remains: What will become of the Central Asian regional security complex following America's exit? Buffered by the presence of the United States since 2001, the Central Asian republics now once again find themselves at a crossroads to either rely on individual defense services or to develop increased military cooperation with interested states. Recognizing Central Asia's history of collaboration among its regional and near-regional countries, I argue that the Central Asian Republics of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan will seek to develop stronger security ties with neighboring regional security complexes (RSCs), namely the South Asian, Russian, and Chinese RSCs. With decreased American influence, each of the states in these RSCs is rushing to fill the void of influence in order to capitalize on Central Asia's geostrategic position in Eurasia as well as secure itself from the threat of non-state actors still prevalent in the region. I further argue that the states in the Central Asian RSC additionally seek these same benefits and security, but receive them to a much lesser extent than their more powerful regional neighbors. Understanding how the American withdrawal from Afghanistan will impact Central Asian RSC relations can provide insight into how great power vacuums are filled both by great powers and regional powers alike.

*Keywords:* Central Asia, regionalism, Afghanistan, constructivism, security, Regional Security Theory (RSCT), terrorism, conflict

- ▶ I published my senior thesis, which drew largely on my experiences advocating for SMD with UIMF.
- ▶ Largely focused on security issues, but as you all know, conflict and peace in the mountains are a huge component to SMD!
- ▶ This is one of ten academic publications I participated in while at UVU and president of UIMF.

# CULMINATION

- ▶ Graduate school? (on pause now due to health issues, likely transferring to KU this fall)
- ▶ Data Analyst at Domani Preneed
- ▶ Data Manager for Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs – working on mountain issues and data collection specifically
- ▶ I run my own consulting firm focused on economic development in rural areas – looking to expand into Utah/mountainous regions!
  - ▶ Using SEL as my development plan includes hiring local interns to help with these issues
- ▶ **UIMF has made most of these opportunities possible.**

## WHAT AM I UP TO NOW?