



# Salam Alum

OSCE Academy Alumni Magazine

ISSUE 5, FALL 2015

## SUCCESS STORY OF SELBI HANOVA

**"THE IMPORTANCE OF STRIVING HIGH BUT NOT TURNING INTO CYNICS, COMPETING BUT STAYING HUMANE, ACHIEVING AND STAYING HUMBLE ARE ALL ESSENTIAL TO BE REMINDED ALONG THAT ROAD!" — SELBI HANOVA (2008) (PG 8)**

OSCE  
ACADEMY  
IN BISHKEK

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 02 | Welcome Note                                    |
| 03 | OSCE Academy Updates                            |
| 04 | Welcoming New Deputy Director                   |
| 05 | Forth Alumni Conference/Alumna of the Year 2015 |
| 08 | Success Story of Selbi Hanova                   |
| 11 | OSCE Academy is a Door to Success               |
| 13 | Theres is Love at the OSCE Academy              |
| 14 | First studying, then lecturing                  |
| 15 | The Alumni Network is working                   |
| 16 | MAS at the Geneva Centre for Security Studies   |
| 16 | One-Year Stay at NUPI                           |
| 17 | Alumni Travel grants                            |
| 19 | Diplomatic Seminar of Young Experts in Moscow   |
| 20 | Active Citizen                                  |
| 21 | Alumni hobbies                                  |
|    | <b>Editor</b><br>Victoria Orazova               |
|    | <b>Designer</b><br>Emil Akhmatbekov             |



**Photo on the cover:**

Selbi Hanova' 08. During the visit to Glamis Castle in Scotland, October 2015 Photo credit goes to Elena Zhirukhina

# WELCOME

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fifth issue of the OSCE Academy's Alumni Magazine SalamAlum. This year, 2015 has been a rich year for the Alumni Network as well as OSCE Academy in general.

OSCE Academy was pleased to welcome our new Deputy Director, Dr Gulnura Toralieva. Dr Toralieva joined the team in August. And she shares her views, ideas, and plans in this issue.

Mr Shairbek Juraev the former Deputy Director is continuing his academic career at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. As he works toward his PhD, OSCE Academy is thankful for his dedication to the Academy's development during the past three years. We wish him all the very best as he moves on to a new stage of his life.

This past spring, chapter meetings were organized in Bishkek, Dushanbe, Astana, and Tashkent. The meetings provided our alumni the opportunity to engage with top level professionals and build a network with alumni across the different years in their home cities. In October, OSCE Academy held our Fourth Alumni Conference on Central Asia: Comprehensive Security and Sustainable Development. Bektour Iskender, Co-founder of the news portal Kloop.kg concluded the conference with a lecture on freedom of media in the region.

This autumn, **four alumni from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan** were selected for internships at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs as part of the Junior Public Officers' Programme. Two more alumni are doing fellowships at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) during the One-Year Stay at NUPI project. Another graduate received the European Scholarship for Central Asia 2015-2016 and is at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP).

NUPI has supported us with three more travel grants this year to Abid Ahmad (2011) for participation in the "Strategic HR Management Workshop" in Dubai on 11-13 May 2015; Leila Akhmetova (2012) to attend the "Transparency International School on Integrity 2015" in Vilnius on 5-13 July 2015; and Elnura Omurkulova-Ozierska (2011) to participate in the "Migration, Human Rights and Development," at the University of Palermo Summer School to present paper "Care Deficit: Labour Migrants of Kyrgyzstan and Children Left Behind" from 25 June -18 July 2015.

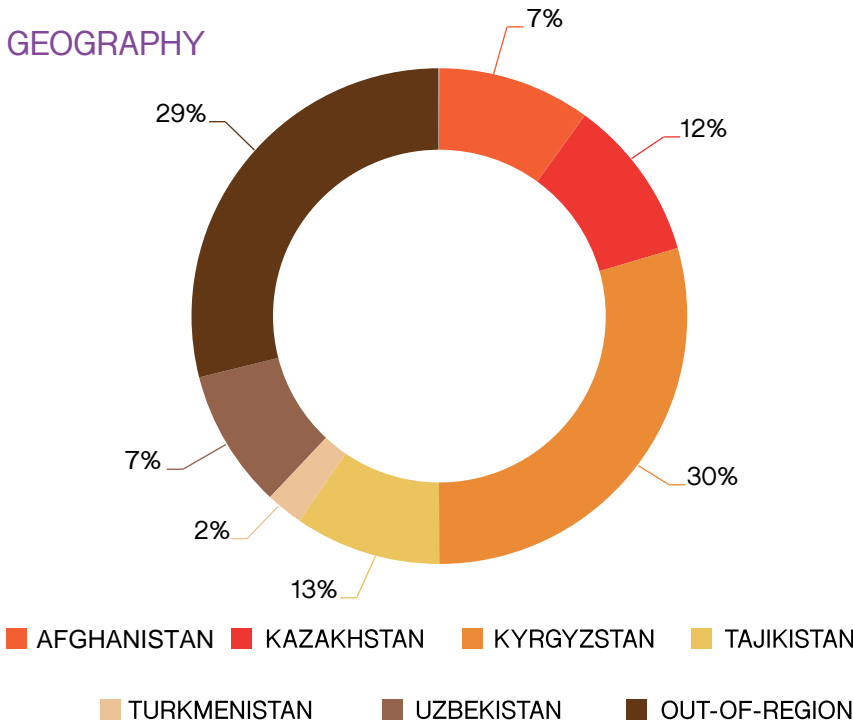
We are pleased to announce that this year's Alumna of the Year 2015 was awarded to Sakina Qasemi (2014) who is from Afghanistan. Her great professional achievements since the graduation from the OSCE Academy are impressive. Congratulations, Sakina!

With every new issue of SalamAlum, we are trying to improve the contents. We listen to alumni recommendations and suggestions. As a result for this issue we collected more interesting personal stories from alumni about their lives, professional growth and interests. We hope you will enjoy reading it!

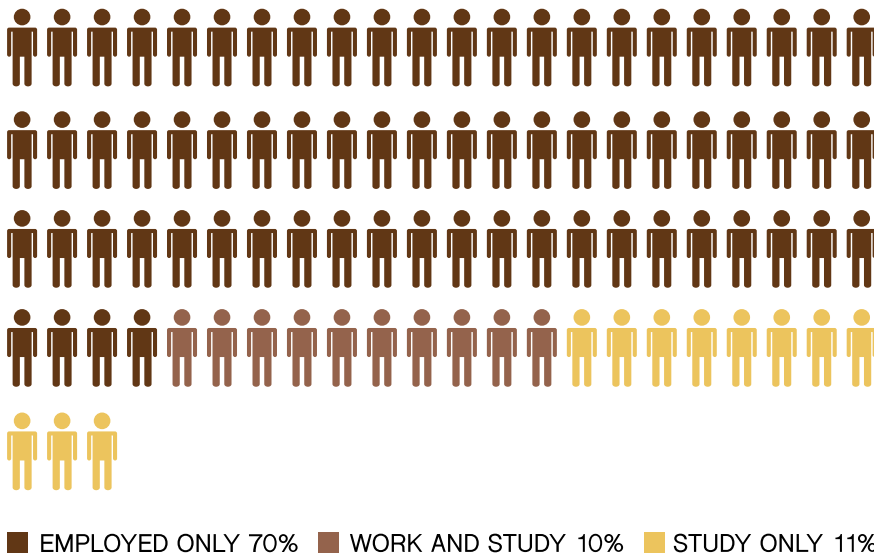
Our sincere gratitude goes to the OSCE, the OSCE participating states and especially to the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), which specifically funds the alumni activities of the OSCE Academy!

# ALUMNI INFO 2015

## GEOGRAPHY



## EMPLOYMENT



## SECTORS OF EMPLOYMENT



## TOTAL NUMBER OF ALUMNI: 331

The provided data illustrates the general statistics, which is based on the results of the alumni survey 2015 and contains the information on 219 alumni.



### NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

In August 2015 OSCE Academy welcomed Dr Gulnura

Toralieva as a Deputy Director. Gulnura has more than ten years practical experience in media, governance and civil society development. Prior to joining the Academy, Gulnura led the media and communications team of the Prime Minister's office in the Kyrgyz Republic. Dr Toralieva taught journalism at American University of Central Asia for more than five years and served as programme manager and media advisor at BBC World Service Trust and USAID. She has a PhD from the Russian Academy of Sciences, and an MA in Science Journalism from City University in London. (read more on pg. 4)

### JUNIOR PUBLIC OFFICERS 2015-2016

OSCE Academy continues to provide our graduates with opportunities for internships in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of their respective countries. These are three months in length and part of the Junior Public Officers' Programme. This year finalists are:



Anna Savchenko (2015)  
Kazakhstan



Elvira Kalmurzaeva (2015)  
Kyrgyzstan



Sino Ruziev (2015)  
Tajikistan



Idrees Muhammad (2015)  
Afghanistan



# WELCOMING NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

*Left: Chinara Esengul, Deputy Director, National Institute for Strategic Studies. Center: Gulnura Toraliev, Deputy Director, OSCE Academy. Right: Zakir Chotaev, The Deputy Director of the State Commission for Religious Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic*

**OSCE ACADEMY IS A VERY UNIQUE PLACE. THERE ARE NO ANY ANALOGUES IN THE WORLD OF A PROJECT LIKE THIS ONE.**

**Q: Gulnura, what attracted you to the post of a Deputy Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek?**

A: I was looking for opportunities which allowed me to apply my diverse expertise as comprehensively as possible. I have had more than five years of academic experience, including administration and teaching. At the same time I have spent couple of years in the non-for-profit sector and have been involved in programmatic and fund raising processes. I have worked in the media and PR. The last two years I worked in the state service.

In brief, I believe that OSCE Academy is one of the few places in Kyrgyzstan where all of my skills fit the demand of the job. The other reason was that I like working in the academic environment. It is rewarding in many aspects. Here I will be able to immediately see results of hard work, communicate with highly intellectual people, and finally, I can constantly grow professionally.

**Q: You have a very rich experience in media and PR. How will it help you in your new position?**

A: OSCE Academy is a very unique place. There are no any analogues in the world of a project like this one. Central Asian people should be proud of having such an academic institution. However, it is not well known in the re-

gion. Most organizations benefit from visibility and promotion. For example, it can help students and faculty get more opportunities in research, internships, and different joint projects with other organizations and so on. I hope that my expertise will be helpful here, and I will contribute to new partnerships, collaborations, strengthening old ones. I would also be happy if can help faculty, students and alumni to collaborate more actively and effectively.

**Q: Do you foresee to make any changes/improvements at the OSCE Academy?**

A: First of all, I should say that Maxim, Pal, Shairbek and the rest staff have done tremendous work to make Academy an institution with a good reputation, strong academic tradition, and strong relations with the multiple stakeholders.

I'd like to continue their endeavors and will work on several main objectives based on my expertise. I will do my best to increase number of internships and research projects of the students and alumni, strengthen relations and build new ones with world leading academic and research institutions, improve opportunities for faculty's professional development, develop a new PR/communications strategy and improve visibility of the Academy.

**Q: Looking back at your experience and your current position, is it difficult to balance leading positions and personal life being a woman?**

A: It is difficult and at the same time very rewarding. I cannot say that I have found the right balance yet. But who can say this? I believe that everybody benefits at the end. I am benefiting realizing myself. My husband and kids have a self-sufficient and happy wife and mom. The Academy has a female leader with quite good understanding of the region, academic environment and management.

**Q: Do you build future plans? Where do you see yourself in 10 years?**

A: For sure, I just can say that I will be still mom but of grown kids, interested in every opportunity to grow professionally and applying those skills for the well-being of Kyrgyzstan and the region.

**Q: What would you wish or advice to our alumni?**

A: It is very hard to advice successful people. That is why I just want to remind them that life is so amazing and it is so easy to be happy.

# FORTH ALUMNI CONFERENCE

On 3 and 4 October thirty alumni from Central Asia and Afghanistan participated in the OSCE Academy's Fourth Alumni Conference "Central Asia: Comprehensive Security and Sustainable Development" in Bishkek. Fifteen alumni presented papers in the three OSCE dimension panels: politico-military, economic-environmental and human dimensions. Presenters focused on different issues of the foreign policy, religious radicalism, energy security, good governance of the mineral resources, foreign aid and corruption.

The conference was concluded with a guest lecture by Bektour Iskender, co-founder of the news portal Kloop.kg. His topic was freedom of media in the region. Bektour shared experiences on the media production and issues related to freedom of the media in the region.

At the end of the conference, best three participant papers were selected. These are to be published by OSCE Academy in the near future. Below are abstracts for the three papers.

## **"GOVERNANCE INNOVATIONS TO IMPROVE SECURITY OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN ENERGY SYSTEM?"**

by Dr Farkhod Aminjonov (2009), PhD, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Canada

The Central Asian Energy System (CAES), a complex network of pipelines and electric power grids, was designed irrespective of national borders. The resource sharing mechanism ensured security of the CAES – reliable and stable energy supplies to meet both population and economic needs. However, newly emerged geopolitical and economic challenges including monetization of the energy (oil products, gas and electricity) trade while preserving water sharing type interactions, increasing energy export capacity to external markets at the expense of domestic and intra-Central Asian consumption, shift from water to energy operation mode of the hydro-power sector started challenging the effectiveness of the mechanism. Central Asian states' isolationist energy policies, which promote full self-reliance and self-control, without the establishment of self-sustaining independent energy systems threaten the security of the CAES, in which everyone's energy security interests are supposed to be met simultaneously.

The paper analyses prospects offered by major regional energy governance innovations within such institutions/programs as: the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States – to improve security of the CAES and major obstacles preventing them from implementing regional-level energy projects. The paper concludes that the governance of the CAES that represents a unique case in which energy security once provided by highly authoritative supranational management system, which was later replaced by cooperative relationships based solely on trust now faces serious challenges despite the fact that a number of governance innovations were introduced to promote regional energy cooperation, with the expectation that they would contribute to improving the level of energy security in Central Asia. The paper highlights key factors negatively affecting regional governance mechanisms' capability to improve security of the CAES, including separated sub-regional energy systems, lack of enforcement mechanisms, limited financing, prevailing bilateral arrangements and absence of the united position over the energy security concept.



*Participants of the Forth Alumni Conference*



*Nargiza Zhakypova 2014 asks questions to presenters*



*Zamira Isakova 2013 is listening to the presentations*

### **"YOUTH'S CONTRIBUTION TO FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION"**

by Aziz Berdikulov (2013), Programme Assistant, OSCE Office in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

The paper analyses how the youth population of Tajikistan can be instrumental to curb corruption. As is typical for developing countries, youth in Tajikistan constitutes a large part of the overall population (people in age of 15–29 make up to 30% in the country). Young people usually stay open to

innovations, reforms, and changes and are not conservatively attached to existing political, economic, and social set-up in their countries. They can become a powerful tool if involved in anti-corruption initiatives.

International best practices have demonstrated that youth's involvement in anti-corruption reforms and activities can be fruitful and drive a change. As researched by the Transparency International, global good practices of youth taking part in tackling corruption showed a positive result. This is due to several factors.

First, young people are keen to learn if they are told about positive outcomes of this learning. Thus, organizing trainings, summer camps or incorporating anti-corruption courses into educational curricula not only raises awareness, but coaches youth future leaders on how to use this knowledge in daily interactions and when doing things like looking for a job.

Second, education of youth on anti-corruption matters can take diverse forms. This may vary from classical instructor-student learning process to interactive informal discussions, debates, mobile theaters, social network groups, flash-mobs and many others. Bringing many young people together and uniting them under the topic of fighting against corruption can become a very popular subject. It must be designed in a format that attracts and is clear for them.

Third, young people often have an established network of people they communicate with. They share the same interests, hobbies, and spent together their leisure times. If address a certain part of young population that have gone through some selection procedures according to pre-defined criteria, one can reach a bigger final target group. For this, of course one needs to think of ownership trans-

fer and methods to disseminate information further, and if it is done properly, covered audience can be much wider.

Lastly, young people tend to be proactive, mobile, and easy-learning. If engage them efficiently, they can become a powerful semi-institutionalized group able to speak at one voice and address serious problems. They can become available not only to take part in public discourses, but actually implement reforms directly and start acting as role models. With this paper I also planned to show how youth can become mobilized for anti-corruption fight in Tajikistan and overall in the region, as its realities often coincide.

### **"KYRGYZSTAN VS. THE ISLAMIC STATE: THE CAPACITY OF THE NEW CONCEPT OF STATE POLICY IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGION TO CURB THE THREAT OF RELIGIOUS RADICALISM"**

by Nurbek Bekmurzaev (2014), Independent Researcher, Kyrgyzstan

Religion, politics and public life are heavily intertwined in Kyrgyzstan. The country has been experiencing religious renaissance since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The USSR exerted its atheistic rule for almost seventy years. However, a series of armed conflicts in Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the 1990s, in which Islamic religious radicals played a key rôle, have demonstrated to the governments of Central Asia the hazards in a lack of regulation in the sphere of religion might bring to national security. The authorities in Kyrgyzstan have attempted to regulate Islamic religious extremism with a varying degree of success. Neither a lenient and liberal state policy towards religion during Kyrgyzstan's first president Askar Akayev's rule, nor the heavy handed religious policy under Kurmanbek Bakiyev's (second president) reign bore desired results in combating religious extremism. Adoption of the new Concept of State Policy in the Sphere of Religion (the Concept) heralded an important change in the government's attitude towards handling religious extremism.

Authorities adopted a multi-faceted approach to religion and the challenges it poses to the state. The Concept provides a framework for adequate and effective cooperation between the state and religion and



*Elnura Omurkulova-Ozierska 2011 is commenting on the presentations*



*Bektour Iskender is delivering his presentation*



*Fatema Kashefi 2014 is presenting her paper*

places the country on a course for healthy relations and offers long-term benefits. The comprehensive way in which religious radicalism is to be tackled by the government transforms the Concept into a valuable document capable for making a significant contribution to the security and development of Kyrgyzstan. The Concept is aimed

at preventing religious radicalism instead of dealing with its outcomes such as fighting Islamic militants. Furthermore, its emphasis on educating clergy and standardizing, controlling, and licensing religious education in the country promises to be a successful strategy in the struggle against religious radicalism.

### ALUMNA OF THE YEAR 2015



OSCE Academy's Alumni Network is continuing our tradition of selecting an Alumna/a of the Year and this time we congratulate Sakina Qasemi. She graduated in 2014, MA in Economic Governance and Development Programme. After graduating, Sakina worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan

through the Junior Public Officers' Programme (JPO) of the OSCE Academy. After successfully completing JPO programme, she shifted to Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education (GIHE) in Kabul and worked as researcher and a lecturer. Sakina conducted Project Management special training and training on strategic planning for top employees of GIHE.

She competed against a number of NGOs and received a project from UN Women, total budget of 110,000 USD. Finally she is now Dean of Economics and Management faculty and now leads more than forty lecturers and controls 1000 students.

"I have always believed that perseverance and right decision are keys to success and I am very happy that I decided to join OSCE Academy in 2013,"- Sakina says. "My education at the OSCE Academy has given me the ability and courage to work for education in my country. The supports that I received from my fellows to be the "Alumna of the Year 2015" have made me even more positive about my activities and I will leave no stone un-turned to keep them proud of myself."

A portrait of Selbi Hanova, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling slightly. She is wearing a dark, textured top. The background is a blue wall with a decorative light fixture and a small floral ornament.

# SUCCESS STORY OF SELBI HANOVA

After graduating from American University of Central Asia in 2007 with a bachelor's degree (American Studies), my only thought was going to the West for further studies. I thought that this was the only destination for a proper graduate education. Perhaps it is still common to think this way by new university graduates. Yet the OSCE Academy became one of the options, while looking for some "Western options".

I am now glad that it was the OSCE Academy that admitted me that year for many reasons. Please bear with me while we will walk through my journey after the Academy. It is the purpose of this exercise.

The OSCE Academy is Central Asian. Yes, it is funded by an international organization, but it is in Bishkek and it is run partly by and fully for Central Asians. I began preferring the term Central Asian following my year of study in Bishkek with MA in Politics and Security. It was there that I learned the value of being from the region and for the region where on a people-to-people level we do not have any issues and can easily study and celebrate together.

The larger realities of Central Asia in 2015 have opened the door to questioning the area's region-ness. I believe the value of the institutions like the OSCE

Academy is even more apparent. In the classrooms of about twenty participants, we analysed Central Asia thematically and comparatively. It was a year of discovering the complexities of our geographical location, our domestic politics, our international standing and many potential ways to move forward. All of this could only be possible through a group composed of a management and of instructors and lecturers, both academics and practitioners, who all together made it an informative and substantially enriching academic year of the graduate studies level, all of which I erroneously thought was not possible in the realm of Central Asia. So in terms of teaching the Academy is





# ГЕОРГИЯ

*During Annual Reception of the OSCE Mission to Serbia Photo credit: OSCE/Milan Obradovic*

a great place that makes the best use of what is available regionally and through its network.

The Academy is well linked not just to the OSCE, but also other institutions, which makes it an appealing place for internships and networking. Natural link to the OSCE and hence the possibility of interning at the OSCE Secretariat was one of the luring aspects of my decision to apply to the Academy. And it happened! I spent three months in the Unit for External Co-operation of the Office of the Secretary General at the OSCE Secretariat in summer of 2008, which were extremely insightful in both the internal work of the organization and the

ways in which it responded to those events between Georgia and Russia that year, which one calls a war or an armed conflict, depending on where one stands. Perhaps, this is where my interest in OSCE grew further.

But returning to the partner organizations of the Academy let me draw your attention to the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, which has generously offered its first Central Asia scholarship in 2009. To date, I am privileged to have been chosen its first recipient. I could endlessly list all those advantages of having been part of the International Training Course on International and European Security, but I would rather prefer to

quote myself when asked back in 2011 for its newsletter what GCSP meant for my professional growth, "a GCSP Faculty Member once remarked at the very beginning of the 23rd International Training Course in Security Policy (ITC, 2008–2009) that the forthcoming year in Geneva would become a "life-changing experience". He was right in many ways since both the knowledge acquired and the friendships made at the GCSP left notable marks in our professional lives. The remarkable success stories of ITC alumni attest to the quality of training even more than the information one finds in promotional materials." This remains true today, I still meet my course mates either through work or

through my travels and it's always a mutually beneficial exchange of ideas.

My path from the GCSP brought me back to the OSCE as a Junior Professional Officer to later become an OSCE Mission member in Serbia. Serving as a JPO in the Secretariat and in the OSCE Mission to Serbia and later as an Executive Officer in the same Mission was first real work experience that broadened my horizon on so many aspects of the work of the organization at its headquarters and on the ground. Today, when OSCE is in the spotlight of the media with events in Ukraine, we are yet again reminded of the existence of the organization, though its work in most of the areas "east of Vienna" never actually ceased since 1991. Balkans for what we know as children born in 1980s in Central Asia appears as a distant region associated with wars of Yugoslav succession. Serbia of 2010-2012, when I worked there, has left somewhat optimistic picture of a country that is facing its political choices on its move to Europe. This time again I was privileged to have served in the Head of Mission's Office where I had the grasp of all on-going projects including those that dealt with law enforcement, rule of law, democratization and media. I remain grateful to my peers and colleagues there who have been kind to have let me be part of their team and for some, hopefully beneficial, contributions that I tried to make while there!

My quest for new professional experiences has brought me home after Serbia to further unveil the work of international organizations on the ground. This time it was the UNDP. I began as a Deputy Project Manager for EU-UNDP funded Border Management in Central Asia Program, commonly known as BOMCA, in Ashgabat to later serve as its Acting Project Manager. It was a bold move for someone who has never dealt with law enforcement agencies directly before and for someone who works on a project fostering a form of regional cooperation. Thankfully, the skills I had from those experiences at the Academy, GCSP and OSCE have helped me through the science of project management and the



*Awarding Almadan Orozbekova a certificate for being a Top GPA student*

daily liaising with local law enforcement representatives. At that stage, the seeds for future PhD research were laid since I started wondering further on why regional cooperation is still a priority in policies of external actors and development organizations and why things on the ground are turning out differently. This is how another, but this time academic quest has started...


I am now in my third year of the PhD within Marie Curie Fellowship on Post-Soviet Tensions in the University of St. Andrews. I am looking at issues pertaining to state identification and how those processes are influencing regional cooperation in Central Asia. Long road that is challenging, creative and educating in perseverance so far.

Returning to the OSCE Academy in September 2014 to make a speech to the graduating class and later to stay as a research fellow for the field work of my PhD was all together very enriching! Passing on the knowledge, that was hopefully useful, to the class of graduates of the Master in Politics and Security was another first hands-on experience in teaching and I thank this class for their patience and attention while I was trying to explain the complexities of positivism, constructivism and other -isms as we were also navigating our ways through reflexivity

and positionality in research.... All of this was only possible thanks to Dr. Pal Dunay and Shairbek Juraev, who have kindly admitted me into the Academy that academic year!

Now all of these things would not have been possible if I had not met some incredible people along this path. I remain thankful to Dr. Tim Epkenhans, Dr. Pal Dunay, Dr. Graeme Herd, Dr. Rick Fawn, and Dr. Sally Cummings for all those OSCE Academy, GCSP and University of St. Andrews events and the encouragement! I am thankful to my colleagues at the OSCE Mission to Serbia, UNDP Country Office in Turkmenistan for having made all those experiences educational and collegial. Apologies must be offered for the name-dropping. This is not meant to impress. It is meant to show how educationally enhancing (both professionally and personally) a journey can be for a graduate of the OSCE Academy. However, just as I addressed the graduating class of 2014, the importance of striving high but not turning into cynics, competing but staying humane, achieving and staying humble are all essential to be reminded along that road! And just as any presentation should end, as we were duly trained at the Academy, I thank you for your attention!

By Selbi Hanova (2008)



# OSCE ACADEMY IS A DOOR TO SUCCESS

*Uguloy Mukhtorova (2013) with OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier*

Life is unpredictable. Sometimes it works like a lottery and no one knows when someone might catch a “golden fish.” Three years ago I felt the need for a life change, so I applied for and was granted the MA Scholarship at the Academy, a turning point of my life. But I could never imagine that knowledge, skills, and Degree obtained at the Academy would sharply alter my career path and give the privilege of being a member of the OSCE community.

Recently I returned from Bosnia and Herzegovina. There I was worked as a Junior Professional Officer for OSCE Mission. The Junior Professional Officers programme is designed for young professionals from the OSCE participating States to offer a unique opportunity to work at field operations, and institutions of the OSCE. The programme usually commences at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna. In my case I began at Transnational Threats Department, Action against Terrorism Unit.

It was really great experience. It was there I learned how the OSCE decision making system works in practice and how realpolitik

is used in reality thus recalling the international relations classes at Academy. I actively attended the Security Council, Permanent Councils meetings and was a witness of hot, diplomatic debates on Ukraine crisis. Coming to the headquarters with a working experience in field Mission, you can easily notice the difference in working approach. I learned in depth about OSCE’s anti-terrorism mechanisms and project development. I strengthened my diplomacy skills as well.

After this wonderful experience, I moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). BiH is a country of diversity and contradictions and rightly named as “a land of blood and honey.” The capital is Sarajevo, where according anecdotal facts the WWI started. The city is very small and famous for its traditional cultural and religious diversity. It has adherents of Islam, Orthodox, Judaism and Catholicism coexisting. In spite of the horrible memories of the 1990s, people are trying to live together. However, the politicians are not working in ways that help the ordinary people.

I never imagined that I will live in the heart of Balkan region, 4,200 km away from my home.

It was an amazingly remarkable half year of my life. I fell in love with this country and it will remain in my heart forever, such special memories. Yes, the JPO Programme was a unique opportunity for me. I was able to work in two countries and visit more than ten countries in all.

My work at the OSCE Mission in BiH was luckily the logical continuance of my gained experience at the Secretariat and OSCE Office in Tajikistan. I joined the Mission at a time when it was developing a project on countering violent extremism. They were working on security sector reform. OSCE is an active and one of the well-known organizations there. Unlike to other OSCE field operations, the OSCE Mission to BiH doesn’t operate through three dimensions (only the Human dimension and Head of Mission) due to its mandate and needs of the country.

I didn’t miss any opportunity to participate in seminars, conferenc-



*Participants of the Global Security Young Leaders' Forum in Bratislava*

es and field trip thus to increase my knowledge on country's development. I was invited to attend and present a paper on terrorism, violent extremism at the Global Security (GLOBSEC)-Young Leaders' Forum in Bratislava. The GLOBSEC gathered the presidents, prominent politicians, and practitioners of the world to discuss, debate on security challenges which the Europe is facing, including Ukraine crisis, the Middle East perils, Russia's antagonistic policies.

There was an opportunity to meet and ask questions to President of Estonia Thomas Hendrik, the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition against ISIL, General John Allen, Secretary General of OSCE, Lamberto Zannier, the NATO deputy Secretary General Alexander Vesrhbow, an American Senator John McCain and others. I took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions on Central Asia and the vision the group had about the region. I was only participant from a non-NATO country and learned a lot on Western politics.

Discussing the world politics at Academy classes I would never have imagined the opportunity to participate in such a large event in heart of Europe with world decision-makers and practitioners.

The established network and friendship with Young Leaders gathered from various countries were the best achievement of the Forum. Thus, I concluded a

productive and intensive year of life, but shall I say how everything started?

Everything was started in the Botanichesky pereulok, in a small and imperceptible building of the Academy, which was and is the starting point of a bright future, and big career of the many alumni who are successful at their careers and lives. To study at the Academy was not an easy job for me, but together with our group-mates we all successfully graduated and we even used to have fun after the deadline and sleepless nights by going to cinema in Kosmopark and karaoke and still repeat the same during our visits to Bishkek.

The Academy is a second home, where I met the best friends from Central Asia and Afghanistan and with whom I shared my happiness and grief. "Hard times will reveal true fiends" and I dare to say they proved to be such good friends in the hardest period of my life. By their moral support I stayed strong and didn't give up and taking this opportunity I would like to thank all of them and certainly the OSCE Academy's staff.

#### **IT IS TIME TO INVEST IN THE ACADEMY**

The OSCE Academy invested in us and opened the door for opportunities to reach success. The Academy served, for me, as a path to possible achievements which I have now and turned to the realities of my bravest dreams.

Now I am the confident, competent professional demanded by the 'job market' and for this will always be grateful to OSCE Academy.

The Academy still invests in us through its programmes. The OSCE Academy's students privileged to get the internships abroad, the Junior Public Officers Programme, the GCSP Scholarship, NUPI Fellowship and some of us were lucky to use these given opportunities. The Academy organizes the annual alumni conferences, where we-graduates can share our efforts, analysis with our peers and also offers us the grant to participate in the international conferences or seminars. The reunion for all graduates is organized in every three years and during the Reunion in 2013 my American teacher said: "Look, the renowned universities of the world asks its graduates to donate for university, while OSCE Academy makes reunion meeting for its students and sponsors their travels. It is a paradox". What do you think, isn't a time to invest to Academy?

The OSCE Academy is growing and in the last years it gained more credits and considered one of the best academic institutions in Central Asia and beyond. I am proud to be the alumna of this institution.

So, did I catch a "golden fish" by the end? Yes I caught it three years ago.

By Uguloy Mukhtorova (2013)

# THERE IS A LOVE AT THE OSCE ACADEMY



IT'S BECOMING A VERY POSITIVE TREND THAT CUPID SHOOTS ARROWS OF LOVE INTO OUR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI. THIS FALL ONE MORE HAPPY FAMILY WAS CREATED IN TASHKENT, UNITING HEARTS OF DILFUZA KUROLOVA (2015) AND SHERZOD MUKHAMADIEV (2009). WE WARMHEARTEDLY CONGRATULATE DILFUZA AND SHERZOD AND COULD NOT MISS THE CHANCE TO ASK THEM SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR STORY OF LOVE.

**Q: How did you meet each other?**

In spring 2014, OSCE Academy alumna Dina Iglíkova (2007) came to Tashkent and gave a speech at Café Scientifique on March 25, where we both were invited. After the speech we went to have some drinks. But actually started to communicate later when Dina wrote a post on Facebook.

Dilfuza: To be honest, at first sight I

didn't like him, because I thought he is strange person. But as long as we started to talk our relations were growing and we started to date, and I felt in love with him (crazily). And after couple of month, he proposed me in my car with written proposal on a paper. He was shaking, and it was so sweet that I couldn't say anything except "YES."

**Q: What do you appreciate most in each other?**

Dilfuza: His love, understanding, support and readiness to talk and discuss every single thing what goes between us and around our life.

Sherzod: Dilfuza is a fabulous person. She has lots of precious qualities I like but honesty and devotion are the ones I value immensely in her. On top that, I love her silliness and simplicity because true happiness is not always in something big and shiny things but rather in simple and sometimes unnoticeable things. Additionally, I adore how she speaks her mind pretty straightforward and her passion to change the "world" around her.

**Q: What are your plans (professionally or academically) for a coming year?**

Dilfuza: Finally being together after so long apart, individually, I will start my

work at the University and work on my PhD application. Also, want to continue my legal practice.

Sherzod: I always find such question quite difficult because one never knows what awaits one ahead. I rarely plan my day and my life as such because sun rises every day and new day brings new ideas as well as challenges to cope with.

**Q: Dilfuza was away for a year for studies at the OSCE Academy. How did you survive it?**

People can wait as long as possible. They only have to know that their efforts are not for nothing. Besides, absence is a real test of love.

**Q: What would be your wishes to our alumni?**

Dilfuza: I wish love, happiness, understanding and passion to your future plans. I wish to everyone our wishes match to our opportunities. I believe there is a LOVE at the OSCE Academy ;)))))

Sherzod: It has been said that the darkest hour is just before the dawn. So stay positive and full of hope because sun rises equally for everyone.

On 28–30 January 2015 Ms Marhabo Yodalieva (2010) together with Dr Barbara Janusz-Pawletta, from the German-Kazakh University in Almaty, delivered lectures on Water Governance in Central Asia to the MA in Politics and Security students. These sessions were part of the module on Peace and Security Challenges in Central Asia. The lectures and presentations focused on water and water management issues in Central Asia, starting with an overview of the historical development of water management in CA and regional water management practices before and after independence. Of special importance were the discussions of the trans-boundary water governance based on institutional and political cooperation in the areas of a) water energy nexus in CA, b) water – agriculture nexus in CA and c) water – environment nexus in CA.

Marhabo is pursuing her PhD degree at the Free University of Berlin on Integrated Water Resources Management. Currently she is also teaching at the German-Kazakh University.

## COMING BACK TO ACADEMY GAVE ME A SENSE OF FULFILLMENT AND HAPPINESS TO PASS ON THE MAINTAINED AND GAINED KNOWLEDGE

**Q: Marhabo, what it means for you to return to your Alma Mater as an Instructor?**

A: It was a great honor for me to be back as an Instructor. During my studies at the Academy, I was thinking of this possibility and with my motto of “Positive thinking”, the opportunity crossed my way, though it was for a short period of time. Academy was the place, where I set most of my long-term defining goals. Coming back to

# FIRST STUDYING, THEN LECTURING



Academy gave me a sense of fulfillment and happiness to pass on the maintained and gained knowledge both at the academy and beyond it.

**Q: Your research is on water management issues. How did you end up in this sphere of research?**

A: Frankly speaking, it was during my study at the OSCE Academy, when I got insight into water management issues in Central Asia and had already developed mainstream toward the issue before applying for my PhD. Again, even in this decision of mine the Academy made its contribution. I am not saying this to advertise the Academy, but to show how lucky I was to study there and how much it gave to me. This is the last year of my PhD and I hope I will finish it successfully.

**Q: What do you plan to do after you receive your degree?**

A: In the framework of my PhD program I do my fellowship at the Kazakh-German University in Almaty, where I assist in developing the MA Program on Integrated Water Resources Management. The program has started since the beginning of my PhD in 2012 and I was involved in almost all aspect of its successful development. As a result, I was offered a job at the Kazakh-German University, which I most probably will accept.

**Q: What would you wish or advice to alumni who hesitate about doing PhD?**

A: If you think doing science is your call, go for it! A large aspect of it is a hard work, diligence and persistence but it will be fully worth all the time and effort invested, because it is an incredibly enjoyable and satisfying journey. Not only that you will quench your thirst for knowledge, but you will meet smart people, make good and long-term connections-friendships, get a chance to travel the world and broaden your horizons, as well as make contribution within the whole period of your PhD program, while undergoing your fellowship and hopefully beyond the program.



## THE ALUMNI NETWORK IS WORKING

The main goal of the OSCE Academy's Alumni Network is to maintain connections and close ties between the alumni and the Academy and amongst the alumni themselves. Our highest hopes are for those ties to help solve the regional problems within ten to fifteen years. Nevertheless, already now we see how our alumni are using our network to help each other and the future students.

## ALUMNI TO ALUMNI



OSCE Academy's Alumni Office often receives requests from different organizations and institutions to either disseminate the vacancy announcement among our graduates or suggest someone for a particular posi-

tion. Since 2005, when the first group graduated, our alumni have earned recognition in the region as well-educated and qualified professionals.

Alumni from Dushanbe: Camilla Mamadnazarova (2007), Nazarbakht Davlatbekova (2010) and Rustam Samadov (2014) are shining examples. In 2013 Camilla was hired as a Gender Coordinator to the Danish Refugee Council. A year later she was looking for an assistant and saw Nazarbakht's CV, who applied for a position of Gender Assistant. Knowing that she also graduated her Alma mater, after all the selection procedures, Camilla recommended her to the selection committee and Nazarbakht got a job. A year later, Danish Refugee Council was looking for a Protection Assistant. This time it was Rustam Samadov (2014) who applied and excellently presented himself at all stages of the selection process. Having two bright examples of OSCE Academy's alumni working in their office and again, recommended by Camilla, Danish Refugee Council employed Rustam as a Protection Assistant. Later both of them were promoted.

## ALUMNI TO FUTURE STUDENTS



Our graduates play an active role in promoting the OSCE Academy's Masters Programmes, by sharing their experience and talking to prospective students. They also stay very welcoming and open to newly accepted candidates. Moreover, alumni tend to help new students to escape the difficulties in studies that they had. This year, our graduate from the Economic Governance and Development Programme, Sayed Masood Sadat (2014) contacted the Academy with an offer to invite newly accepted students from Afghanistan to the Data analysis course that they organize at the Asia Foundation in Kabul. "Now that I am here, I realized that these courses could prove extremely useful for Academy's EGD students who do

not have adequate background in statistics and econometrics. This was the case for many students in our class of 2013-14," wrote Masood. Eventually, several of our Afghan students participated in this twelve day training before their departure to Bishkek.

**THE OSCE ACADEMY IS VERY GRATEFUL TO ITS ALUMNI FOR THEIR COMMITMENTS TO EACH OTHER AND THE ACADEMY!**

# MAS AT THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR SECURITY POLICY

EVERY YEAR ONE OF THE GRADUATES OF THE OSCE ACADEMY RECEIVES A EUROPEAN SCHOLARSHIP FOR CENTRAL ASIA TO STUDY AT THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR SECURITY POLICY (GCSP) AND THE GLOBAL STUDIES INSTITUTE (GSI) OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA. SCHOLARSHIP OF 2014-2015 WAS RECEIVED BY ALMAKAN OROZBEKOVA (2014)

After graduating from the OSCE Academy, I was honored to continue my studies at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the University of Geneva (UNIGE). I participated in the Twenty-Ninth International Training Course in Security Policy



and simultaneously doing a MAS in International and European Security.

The attendees were given the opportunity to learn new ideas and concepts related to security issues in a global context. There was the opportunity to enhance skills in areas relevant to security policy making and network with international practitioners.

The GCSP/UNIGE experience was a perfect environment to improve both theoretical and practical skills while becoming a part of a diverse participant group representing a variety of state institutions and international organizations. The faculty were impressive because of their

high-level expertise on security policy issues.

It was an intensive year of study, and working hard the only 'recipe' for success but I made it. During the graduation ceremony, I had the privilege to deliver a speech in front of my colleagues, faculty and honored guests and was awarded the "Most Outstanding Research Paper Award." This was in recognition of the highest grade received for my research paper titled Mobilization and Recruitment of Foreign Fighters: the Case of the Islamic State 2012-2014. It was a great pleasure to study in such a unique international environment, and work with the professionals open to learning and share of knowledge and practical skills.

The GCSP is indeed a place "where knowledge meets experience." I would like to express my deepest gratitude to OSCE Academy for the opportunity to study at the GCSP/UNIGE. And I want to thank to all my professors, faculties of the institutions, colleagues, group-mates, and family for their support, encouragement and believing in me. By Almakan Orozbekova (2014)

European Scholarship for Central Asia 2015-2016 was received by Rashid Gabdulhakov (2013). We wish him a productive and successful academic year!

## ONE-YEAR STAY AT NUPI

*Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) is one of the biggest donors and partners of the OSCE Academy for many years. From year to year NUPI initiates new joint projects to support Academy's alumni interested in academia and research. Since 2012 two alumni per year receive a chance to become NUPI research fellows for one year. This year it is Tatyana Djiganshina (2014) from Turkmenistan and Vassiliy Lakhonin (2014) from Kazakhstan. Here Tatyana and Vassiliy share about their experience at NUPI.*

### TATYANA DJIGANSHINA (2014)

I learned about NUPI at the very beginning of my studies at the OSCE Academy. Since then I knew that I wanted to do my internship with this organization. And I made a strong effort to get a high GPA and a write good MA thesis topic in order to be accepted to NUPI as an intern. (Just now I decided to find and read the email that says about my acceptance for an internship at NUPI. I still can feel this thrill and happiness while reading it, but there is also a sense of fear from realizing how different my life would be without this three-sentence email.)

The internship at NUPI was a breakthrough in my profession-



al development because there I gained confidence in my knowledge and abilities. Apart from gaining practical experience, I



received very good help with MA thesis.

Today I have the opportunity to further advance my knowledge and skills being a visiting researcher at NUPI for one year. And this year has been the most challenging and, at the same time, the most rewarding. My main achievement is my article that is going to be published in April 2016 in the International Journal of Environmental Studies. It wouldn't be possible without the support and guidance from the members of our research group.

I also got a chance to work with professional researchers, develop a network and be involved in various projects. I have met a lot of people from different countries with different backgrounds and views, and every time I learned something new from them.

One more important thing that NUPI has given me is one more friend, who has been very supportive and helpful. Vassiliy Lakhonin, thank you for being able to put up with me during a whole year and never have an argument.

A final word of thanks to the

members of our research group for their help. Special thanks to Professor Indra Øverland for his encouragement and support in my professional development.

### VASSILIY LAKHONIN (2014)

What makes NUPI special I find NUPI a very dynamic, transparent and integrative research institute, where Visiting Fellows have an opportunity to be of value. My one-year stay with the Research group on Russia, Eurasia and the Arctic awarded me with the unique international experience of research assistance and project coordination.

Research projects that I contributed to:

- "Research Beyond the Ivory Tower: Policy and Communications Training for University Teams";
- "Cooperation between NUPI and the Moscow School of Civic Education";
- "Central Asia Data-Gathering and Analysis Team (CAD-GAT)";
- "Dialogue and learning across divides in North Caucasus".



### NUPI AS A PLACE FOR PERSONAL ACADEMIC INSPIRATIONS

NUPI's staff inspired me to publish an academic article on Kyrgyzstan and present it at a conference at Vilnius University, Lithuania. I also began working on a PhD proposal and to look for PhD opportunities.

### GOING ABROAD

As a part of the project on North Caucasus, I got a chance to travel to Russia, discover Pyatigorsk and meet young scholars on North Caucasus across Russia.



## ALUMNI TRAVEL GRANTS

The OSCE Academy Alumni Network, with support of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) offers several Travel Grants a year to its alumni. Those grants are provided to qualified OSCE Academy alumni to support their professional and academic development.

### ABID AHMAD (2011)

received first Alumni Travel Grant of 2015 for participation in a Strategic HR Management Workshop in Dubai on 11-13 May 2015.

"OSCE Academy in Bishkek provided me the opportunity to participate in the Strategic HR Management Workshop in Dubai from 11 May to 13 May 2015. The workshop provided me with an understanding of the larger picture of critical strategic issues. The importance cannot be overstated because the issues affecting organizations and their HR policies from a tactical point of view are needed to strengthen a company strategic HR competencies.

Additionally, they help organizations become more effective strategic planners as-well-as business partners. Upper management's understanding of these

issue is a key factor in success. The workshop provided informational tools for determining the right organization structure and right number of personnel required for an organization. The workshop offered great ideas and theories to the participants supported by discussion, group work, exercises and feedback.

Participants shared their personal experience with international organizations about HR procedures, policies and management in their various countries.

In continuation of the lessons learned at the workshop I have studied the following content:

- Concept of strategic management
- Setting HR strategic and operational goals & objectives
- Conducting HR related internal and external situation analysis;

- Pinpointing HR related key success factors
- Conducting HR related SWOT analysis
- Crafting of HR strategies, plans & programs
- How to develop the desired organization culture
- How to determine the right organization structure
- How to determine the right number of the personnel required
- Developing fitting HR policies, systems & procedures
- How to develop the required job descriptions, job performance standards and job competency profile
- How to determine the right job grades and salary structures
- Preparation of HR strategic and annual operational plans & budgets
- Development of HR performance measurement, monitoring & control systems

My past experiences had me involved in the implementation of International Organization projects in Afghanistan since 2004, therefore, this workshop helped me to learn the implementation of donor agencies procedures in much better direction. I appreciate OSCE Academy for providing a travel grant for this memorable workshop."

## LEILA AKHMETOVA (2012)

received a second Travel grant to attend the "Transparency International School on Integrity 2015" in Vilnius on 5-13 July 2015

«If not you, then who» Sounds interesting, doesn't it? That was the slogan for the Transparency International Summer School on Integrity, which took place in Vilnius (Lithuania) from 6-12 July in 2015. I was privileged to attend this summer school and had not only an unforgettable experience acquiring knowledge on anti-corruption, learning techniques and methods how to fight corruption, but meeting new people from

around sixties countries!

### What is the school About?

The Transparency International Summer School on Integrity is an annual event organized by the Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter in the beautiful Lithuanian capital, Vilnius. Every year the school welcomes a large number of participants including university seniors, graduates and young professionals from the public and private sectors, non-government organizations (NGOs), and academia from Europe, Asia, Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas. Diversity of background and experience of the participants offers a diversified and holistic approach to the issue of anti-corruption and transparency.

The main objective of the school is to engage future leaders in discussions and debates on taking a stand against corruption and achieving greater transparency in their home countries' societies. Participants learned about the causes of corruption and practical ways for societies to become more transparent and accountable. The school is a seven-day format, which offers a powerful mixture of an intensive academic schedule, a "un-conference-like" atmosphere, and continuous peer-to-peer interactions, and these entire activities make the school a remarkable one-week-long adventure! In addition, the school includes in the programme meetings with high-level officials of Lithuania, including the President of the country and the mayor of Vilnius city.

### Why did I attend the School?

The issue corruption is not a distant topic for my society. On the contrary, it is primary on the agenda and a burning issue, agitating passionate discussions in Kazakhstan. One of the spheres where corruption is thriving well is public procurement. Currently, I am involved in a project on public procurement where I look at possible solutions and practical ways on how to eliminate the embezzlement of public funds, and make the process of public procurement more transparent and accountable.

The project is challenging because it falls into one of the five Presidential reforms declared during the



Presidential campaign, and is also a part of an ambitious Kazakhstani strategy to enter the top thirty competitive countries of the world by 2050.

### What did I Learn at the School?

The school became an opportunity to learn best practices that really work in other countries and bring essential results on the ground. The school creates a friendly atmosphere for talking and presenting your ideas but also allows you to get advice and recommendations from your peers.

The school has inspired me to continue my work in the project and equipped me with new, fresh, and innovative ideas in finding solutions for an acute problem of public procurement. It is important to add that the school has become an excellent networking platform. It has established a bridge of professional contacts and friendships across the globe!

Living in Kazakhstan, I did not imagine that I would develop friendships with young people from Brazil, the Philippines, Nigeria, and other distant places. So, I would like to thank the two organizations that made my unforgettable trip happen; the OSCE Academy and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). It is an honour to be a recipient of the travel grant, which provided me with this wonderful opportunity to attend the school. Once again, I like to express my gratitude for being awarded an OSCE Travel Grant, which has made these friendships possible and, undoubtedly, long lasting! I would like to recommend the school to all alumni of the OSCE Academy to apply and embark on this amazing journey of participating in the summer school.



# DIPLOMATIC SEMINAR OF YOUNG EXPERTS IN MOSCOW

OSCE Academy's Alumni do not stop being eager for knowledge upon the graduation from the Masters Programmes, they have many different interests and attend many various trainings, workshops, summer schools and seminars. Irina Malyuchenko (2013) tells about her participation in the Seventh Diplomatic Seminar of Young Experts in Moscow.

"I had a pleasure to attend the Seventh Diplomatic Seminar of Young Experts in Moscow on May 5-9 2015. It was hosted by Public Diplomacy Fund named after Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov (Russia). This educational program is considered as a youth platform for an open dialog on the most important issues of the international relations, public diplomacy and history.

The participants were all young professionals from fourteen countries of Central Asia and Eastern Europe. They were Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Ukraine, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia.

Lectures were given by prominent Russian scientists, politicians, representatives of governmental bodies, and international organizations. The program also included visiting the CSTO Secretariat and meeting with the General Secretary Nikolay Bordyuzha.

During a visit to the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly the Seminar's participants met the

Chairman of the Upper House Committee on Foreign Affairs Konstantin Kosachev. Curiously this meeting was broadcasted live through one of the Russian TV Channels. The last day of the Seminar was marked by visiting State Duma of the Federal Assembly and meeting with the most flamboyant and colorful Russian politician, leader of the LDPR party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

In addition to that, the Executive Director of the National Energy Security Fund, Konstantin Simonov gave a lecture on the construction of the new gas pipelines in Central Asia and "Blue Stream" pipeline from Russia to Turkey. Director of the Center for Partnership of Civilizations, Ambassador Veniamin Popov made a speech on the new emerging powers in international relation.

A round table discussion in the Ministry of Education and Science featured the representatives of Russkiy Mir Foundation, Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Cooperation, Rossotrudnichestvo, Fund for Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad, Russia Council on Foreign Affairs, AEESEC and Youth Time organizations who presented their program to Seminar's participants.

Those five days full of impressions have completed by the Evening of Memories where participants could share a story about their family members or relatives who participated in the Great Patriotic War. I had an honor to tell a story about my great grandfather who was

awarded with Medal for Courage for bravery in battle.

After completing the main program, the participants had an opportunity to take part in the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War.

The Diplomatic Seminar in Moscow gave me the opportunity to develop vocational skills, to extend professional network with colleagues from different countries of Eurasia, to make a close study of the official position of Russia and to exchange personal opinions on the ongoing world political processes. It should be noted also that it was my second time in Moscow after the internship in PIR Center (Russian Center for Policy Studies) that was provided by OSCE Academy.

I would like to express sincere gratitude to OSCE Academy, Bishkek for providing students the opportunity to expand their knowledge and experience, have internships in famous institutions abroad, and meet talented, open, interesting people. Some of these people form friendships as I did. During my staying in Moscow I accidentally met OSCE Academy Alumna and my close friend Dinara Zhaksylyk whom I love and respect infinitely.

Dear alumni, always stay in contact, meet each other and don't forget those happy moments that we shared together in this beautiful warm city – Bishkek".

By Irina Malyuchenko (2013)



# ACTIVE CITIZEN

MEDERBEK YRSALIEV WAS A GRADUATE OF THE FIRST COHORT OF THE MA IN ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF 2013. MEDERBEK IS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY GAZPROMNEFT ASIA AS A SALES FORECAST ANALYST. HOLDING THIS IMPORTANT POSITION DOES NOT PREVENT MEDERBEK FROM BEING AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN HIS COUNTRY KYRGYZSTAN, RESPONDING TO POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS BY DIFFERENT MEANS.

**“I DECIDED TO TAKE ACTIVE ROLE IN BUILDING COUNTRY I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE IN”**

**Q: Mederbek, when did you start paying attention to political and social problems and developments in your country?**

Mederbek: When I was studying in high school in 2005. It was the year of the first “revolution” of Kyrgyzstan. Back then, I started thinking of participating in socio political life of my country, because I did not like changes happening in my country. I decided to take active role in building country I would like to live in. I didn’t know how, though.

**Q: Why, do you think the civil society is important?**

Mederbek: “My boy, do not trust those who promise to make you rich overnight. They are usually either mad or charlatans,” Said the Cricket from Pinocchio. Civil society is that talking cricket who must be controlling government and telling what it should not be doing, at least. Since it is not quiz question, I would like to have my answer short. I just know that government should always be under control and the only formation that can control it and keep it accountable is civil society.

**Q: You participate in press-conferences, you sing rap (like [www.facebook.com/rapview4u](http://www.facebook.com/rapview4u)) on very important and sensitive issues, etc. How do you select the way to express your opinion? Do you plan ahead or more often it is an impromptu?**

Mederbek: I would like to give

public speeches, but no one would listen to me. So what I do is I participate in debates, press-conferences, and now perform rap. I love rap music (not anything like Wiz Khalifa, but N.W.A, KRS One, 2Pac). And I love sharing my thoughts, so I combined them together and created this product. And looks like it worked out – our third video was viewed more than 5 thousand times (which is not much of course, but more than any speech from public activist would get)

**Q: Did your studies at the OSCE Academy anyhow changed or influenced your perceptions on current developments?**

Mederbek: Sure. Academy greatly changed the way I think. In fact it improved my critical skills a lot (at least I hope so :-)) I started seeing any issue from different perspectives and analysing any proposal or policy in perspective far more than first round effect. In addition, academy helped to prioritize developmental steps our country should take. In fact, right now I am working on a project that must help our country change for good. Therefore, who knows, maybe someday I will be Alumnus of the year.

**Q: Do you have any plans for future in you civil activists’ life?**

Mederbek: Definitely. But I cannot share them now; the time has not come yet.



Rustam Niyazov with his family

OSCE ACADEMY'S ALUMNI ARE NOT ONLY TALENTED IN ACADEMIC STUDIES, BUT ALSO IN OTHER AREAS AS WELL. RUSTAM NIYAZOV (2007) HAS A HOBBY, CREATIVE WRITING. RUSTAM WROTE THE POEM "DEAR PROFESSOR" ESPECIALLY FOR SALAMALUM.

## DEAR PROFESSOR

I don't like to explain things.  
This is an exception.

You hear optimism  
In my voice?

It's not exactly  
Up to me, though.

But seriously –  
What did you expect?

Next time you ask me to  
Write something, you

Better be ready to wait a long,  
Very long time.

I like to procrastinate.  
(Who is going to notice that?)

And how do you spell  
P-r-o-c-r-a-s-t-i-n-a-t-e?

Okay. I start typing ABC...  
...Please don't interrupt.  
Interruption is a habit I don't like. \

And, yes! Using abbreviations  
Is a habit I don't like –  
OSCE...UNDP...HIPC...OMG!

Hmm...  
I like to abbreviate.

...Oh, yes, dear Professor!  
There is something wrong with the world.

Totally – systematically – fantastically wrong.  
I can explain that later.

Tet-a-tet?  
No, better on Twitter.

I mean I'm just like other academy students  
Masterfully avoiding unnecessary meetings.

Papers. Power-point presentations.  
Questions. Questions. Questions?

Do you think it's windy outside?  
I'm glad it isn't cause I have to go –  
Ping-pong workshops.

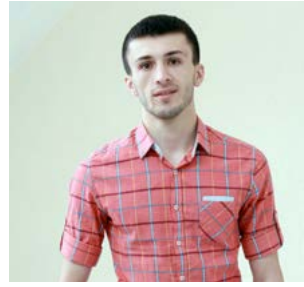
# MA IN ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015



Aidjan Jeenbaeva  
Kyrgyzstan



Begimay Abdraeva  
Kyrgyzstan



Firdavs Nazaraliev  
Tajikistan



Muhammad Idrees  
Afghanistan



Aigul Abduvalieva  
Kyrgyzstan



Daler Khamidov  
Tajikistan



Kamshat Zhumagulova  
Kazakhstan



Nazgul Osmonalieva  
Kyrgyzstan



Aikerim Motukeeva  
Kyrgyzstan



Davlatmoh Bakhromova  
Tajikistan



Meerim Topchubaeva  
Kyrgyzstan



Nelli Stytsenko  
Kyrgyzstan



Saule Aripova  
Kyrgyzstan



Suray Rejepova  
Turkmenistan



Takhmina Lolakova  
Tajikistan



Viktoriia Petrova  
Kyrgyzstan

# MA IN POLITICS AND SECURITY PROGRAMME 2015



Ahmad Jawaid  
Sarhal  
Afghanistan



Ammar Rezaie  
Afghanistan



Atabek Abdullaev  
Kyrgyzstan



Dilfuza Kurolova  
Uzbekistan



Yermek Abilgazyev  
Kazakhstan



Ahmad Zaffar  
Shakibi  
Afghanistan



Anna Savchenko  
Kazakhstan



Behruz Gulnigori  
Tajikistan



Elvina Bulatova  
Kazakhstan



Shaymardanova  
Zarema  
Uzbekistan



Aizada Kadyrova  
Kyrgyzstan



Artykova Aziza  
Kyrgyzstan



Berikbol Dukeyev  
Kazakhstan



Elvira Kalmurzaeva  
Kyrgyzstan



Sino Ruziev  
Tajikistan



Albina Yun  
Uzbekistan



Arzu Sheranova  
Kyrgyzstan



Bert Cramer  
USA



Faruh Kuziev  
Tajikistan



Madina Muratova  
Tajikistan



Makhina  
Sherbadalova  
Tajikistan



Mavlyuda  
Mamadakarova  
Tajikistan



Raushan Kerimalieva  
Kyrgyzstan

