

Learning about foreign policy priorities of Uzbekistan



Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Bakhtiyor Ibragimov addresses audience at Utah Valley University

Have you ever wanted to know more about foreign policy in different countries around the world? What about in hostile areas such as the Middle East, or Central Asia. There are many areas of the world that struggle to produce a prosperous economy and foreign policy. This is exactly what Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Bakhtiyor Ibragimov was able to address. On Monday, February 5th, I was able to attend a short seminar with Ambassador Bakhtiyor Ibragimov and learn more about the foreign policy decisions and resolutions that are occurring in Central Asia.

His Excellency Bakhtiyor Ibragimov is the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations and has been able to obtain a vast array of political experiences. He also speaks English

very well. The first thing Mr. Ibragimov was able to address was the importance of education. He told us in summary, “You should appreciate every moment of your stay here at UVU and immerse yourself in the wealth of knowledge. There is always room for improvement and education is a never-ending process.” I really appreciated this coming from a man with so much experience in politics. If we will really open our eyes and begin to immerse ourselves in all the experiences that we are given, we will walk away knowing that we are better people and also more educated. With these experiences, we will be able to contribute to society in a productive way.

Ambassador Ibragimov was able to address two different topics. He focused mainly on neighboring countries of Uzbekistan and also gave a lot of attention to Afghanistan. He also made it very clear in his speech that the country of Uzbekistan was willing and able to face any issue with any neighboring country and also come to reasonable resolutions to any issues that they are facing together. Ibragimov argued that it is a crucial time to improve economic development and also being to resolve the situation in Afghanistan. Clearly this is an important issue to resolve because this war in Afghanistan has been going on for almost forty years now. Ibragimov said that it is important to strengthen relationships with neighboring countries so they can, together resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. He said in summary, “Without quilting a strong foundation with neighboring countries, it is hard to promote peace and cooperation.” He discussed and also brought up that there are many successes in Afghanistan, as there have recently been the opening and restarting of flights. There are now 4 flights a week in the country and this is seen as great progress. A negative issue that he brought up about Afghanistan is that the Taliban and the government of Afghanistan have yet to make any formal negotiations or contact with one another. This is inevitable if there should be a solution to this constant war-torn country. He said that if peace is achieved in Afghanistan, it will benefit all of the countries located in Central Asia. This was a very interesting seminar given by Ambassador Bakhtiyor Ibragimov. It is clear that the government of Uzbekistan has plans and they are doing everything in their power to promote peace in Central Asia. I understand the importance of having good relationships with all our neighboring countries, for without this it is almost impossible to solve problems and achieve peace.

In the short Q and A that followed Ambassador Ibragimov’s speech, he addressed their trade relations. He said that their largest trade partner is Russia and they do their best to export raw

materials to Russia and neighboring countries. Overall, I believe that this was a very interesting speech. I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the conflict in Afghanistan and how it is affecting neighboring countries. It will be very interesting to see how the future plays out in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

Nathan Erickson, UVU student