



Press Release
For Immediate Release

Prime Minister visits UCA Campus in Naryn



Naryn, Kyrgyz Republic, 19 September 2017 - *“UCA is an example others should emulate”*, said the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, Sapar Isakov, during his visit to the University of Central Asia’s (UCA) campus in Naryn on 19 September 2017. He asked the journalists accompanying him to photograph the campus facilities and share with their readers as an example of what is possible in Kyrgyzstan.

The Prime Minister toured the campus, met with students and faculty in the classrooms, and even played a game of table tennis with a student. He was accompanied by the Governor of Naryn Oblast, the Mayor of Naryn, and senior government officials. Welcoming the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of UCA, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, conveyed congratulations to the youngest Prime Minister in the history of the Kyrgyz Republic, and asked if he would share with the students the secret of his success. *“Be yourself, and never compromise your principles,”* said the Prime Minister when responding to a similar question during the question and answer session which followed his speech.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister conveyed his appreciation of what had been accomplished at UCA, *“from the architecture to the artwork on the walls.”* He was particularly happy that His Highness the Aga Khan had established UCA in a mountainous rural setting, and not in a major city. *“The tranquility of the campus surrounded by mountains offers a perfect setting for study and contemplation. If my office had been nearby I would have used these facilities every day.”*

During the visit the Prime Minister also shared the goals and objectives of the Digital Transformation Programme *Taza Koom*, launched by the Kyrgyz Government. *“Over the next two years, we plan to ensure that every town and village in the country has access to affordable high-speed Internet.”* The objective of *Taza Koom* is to enhance the quality of life of people through technology.

“The Prime Minister’s visit has been a source of great encouragement and inspiration for the students, and we are delighted he could visit us today,” said Dr. Diana Pauna, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. UCA’s undergraduate classes of 2021 and 2022 include accomplished students from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Of the 68 students at the Naryn Campus, 56 percent are female, and 7 are from the Naryn area.

UCA’s five-year degree programme consists of an intensive preparatory programme, followed by a four-year liberal arts core curriculum, rooted in the issues of mountain communities in Central Asia. Students are currently pursuing specialisations in *Computer Science* or

Communications and Media at the Campus in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan, and *Economics or Earth and Environmental Science* at the Campus in Khorog, Tajikistan.

UCA was founded in 2000. The Presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan, signed the International Treaty and Charter establishing this secular, private, not for profit University, which was ratified by the respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Presidents are the Patrons of UCA and His Highness the Aga Khan is the Chancellor. UCA's mission is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain societies, by offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education, and helping the peoples of the region to preserve and draw upon their rich cultural traditions as assets for the future. UCA brings with it the commitment and partnership of the Aga Khan Development Network.

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