

## MGIMO Turns 75

### Vladimir Putin

“MGIMO has established a strong reputation as a leading global center for training professionals in international affairs”

**Presidents Ilham Aliyev  
and Kassym Tokayev  
congratulate  
alma mater**

## MGIMO Forum in Tashkent







“If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.”

Ernest Hemingway



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December 9<sup>th</sup>, the first foreign branch of the University, MGIMO-Tashkent, was officially inaugurated during a solemn ceremony

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Last May, the MGIMO Alumni Forum was held in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. It was attended by more than 450 MGIMO graduates from 32 countries



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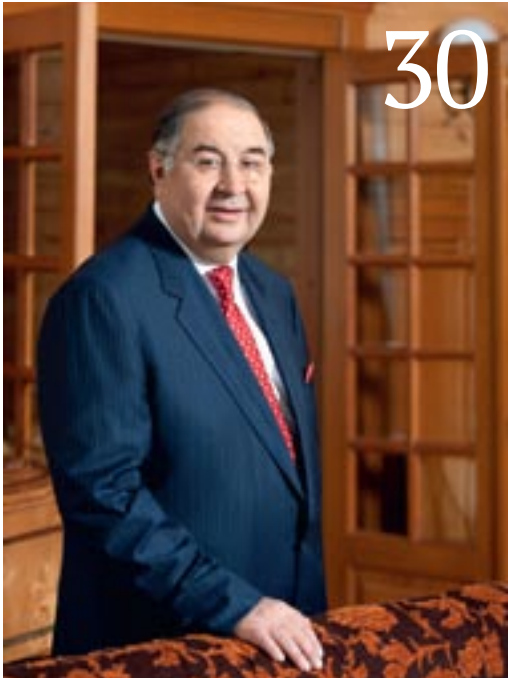
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initiated the rapprochement of the three existing dialogue mechanisms – French, German and Austrian – of Russia’s bilateral cooperation with Western countries. This initiative was called the Trilogy of Dialogues.

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A MGIMO delegation took part in the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, initiating the Trilogy of Dialogues



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For MGIMO, 2019 was an anniversary year. Seventy five year ago the war with the German Nazis was coming to an end. Realising the growing demand for diplomats, who would define a new world order, the Soviet government decided to establish a university for training experts in international relations – MGIMO.

The celebrations were held throughout the year as alumni forums were organized at a number of Russian cities and abroad. They culminated on October 23d with a Gala Evening in the Bolshoi Theater in the center of Moscow. For over 250 years great operas and ballets have been performed at the main Russian theater, and that evening its orchestra played the MGIMO anthem, written, by the way, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergei Lavrov, a 1972 graduate. Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, congratulated the audience from a huge screen: “Over the past 75 years, MGIMO has become a leading center for training professionals in international affairs. MGIMO alumni constitute the core personnel in the Russian diplomatic service. They demonstrate professionalism, patriotism and fidelity to duty while protecting our country’s foreign policy interests.”

Certainly, MGIMO is also a well-known center for expert training in foreign affairs. Hundreds of alumni from dozens of countries recall with warmth and gratitude their university years, being proud of acquiring a profession in demand as well as gaining invaluable experience and life-long friendship. Alumni also came to Moscow for the celebration.

2019 saw the continuation of the Trianon Dialogue, a joint initiative of Vladimir Putin and Emmanuel Macron, aimed at creating closer ties between Russian and French civil societies, under the auspices of MGIMO. Several events called “the Trianon week” were held on the sidelines of the Paris Peace Forum. Read the reports on these and other events in the new issue of MGIMO Journal.

Igor Drobyshev  
Editor-in-Chief



MJ

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### Dear Friends!

Warm congratulations on 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of MGIMO!

Over the past 75 years, MGIMO has established a strong reputation as a leading global center for training international affairs professionals. MGIMO alumni constitute the core framework of the personnel of the Russian diplomatic service. They demonstrate top professionalism, patriotism and fidelity to duty while protecting our country's foreign policy interests.

Those who graduated from this remarkable university to dedicate themselves to work at government agencies, public organizations, in research, business or journalism also excel in their professional qualities.

The analytical and expert work of the faculty and researchers at MGIMO deserves high praise. It is important that, in addition to the traditional areas of study and research, the university is actively developing new programs on public administration and corporate management, as well as information and financial technologies.

MGIMO is expanding its international links and cooperation with the world's leading universities, as well as with numerous associations of foreign alumni. This year, the first foreign branch of MGIMO opened in Tashkent. There is no doubt that all this testifies to the university's high standing and its educational and academic achievements.

I sincerely wish you success in all your future endeavors and all the best.

Vladimir Putin





# ILHAM ALIEV: “THE 75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF MGIMO IS A FESTIVE EVENT FOR OUR FAMILY, TOO”

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, a 1982 MGIMO graduate, and his daughter, Leila, are proud to be part of the MGIMO family.

**MJ: Dear Mr. President, this year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MGIMO. How do you feel about that?**

It goes without saying that MGIMO is and has been the best university in the world when it comes to training specialists in international affairs. MGIMO has produced a good many brilliant and outstanding public and political figures, journalists, lawyers, and businessmen. Years spent at MGIMO can be described as a happy period of youth in hopes, pursuits and discoveries. It is a time to build personality, to realize your ambitions, and to mature. The 15 years at my alma mater was not a thing of the past. Time has not erased my memories about studying at MGIMO. It gives me a great pleasure to remember every moment of being a student. Studying at MGIMO was the best period of my life: building a family, having our first child, being a student, post graduate studies, and teaching activity.

I take pride in having graduated from this renowned University. I am honored to have been taught by world famous professors. MGIMO is lucky to have Anatolii Torkunov as its Rector, who continues and multiplies the good traditions of the University. The life of my family happens to be very closely connected with MGIMO.

I graduated from this University. So did my elder daughter Leila. Moreover, she heads the Azerbaijani Association of MGIMO Alumni. Which is why, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a big event in our family.

**MJ: You initiated holding MGIMO international forums. The first forum**

**T**he life of my family happens to be very closely connected with MGIMO. My elder daughter Leila and I graduated from this University. Which is why, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a big event in our family

**took place in Baku, 2013. Your idea was a success, and 2019 saw the fifth forum in Uzbekistan.**

The forum has become a tradition and has proved to be an effective discussion platform. On its sidelines the participants can consider and address a whole range of key issues from bringing together different civilizations and analyzing the international

security situation to environmental issues and ways to achieve sustainable development.

These forums contribute to the integration of MGIMO graduates from different years, resuming the old contacts and establishing new ones.

**MJ: You maintain wonderful personal contacts with Russian President Vladimir Putin. As is known, this is the key factor in developing international cooperation. Could you assess the current state of Russian-Azerbaijani relations?**

You are absolutely right. Contacts with presidents influence international cooperation greatly. Our regular meetings and talks help strengthen good neighborly relations between Russia and Azerbaijan. Thanks to close ties based on mutual respect and understanding, we managed to reach a strategic partnership in our cooperation.

Azerbaijan considers relations with Russia a key foreign policy avenue. We support each other in different international organizations. We have very good trade and economic ties. Turnover increases, joint transport and energy projects are implemented. We boast our humanitarian cooperation. There are







over 340 schools in Azerbaijan where teaching is conducted in the Russian language, with the number of such schools increasing annually. There is Slavic University in Baku, branches of Russia's leading universities – MSU, I. M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University. Work to open a MGIMO branch is underway.

**MJ: As a specialist in international relations, could you characterize Azerbaijan's foreign policy?**

**T**hanks to close ties between the presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan based on mutual respect and understanding, we managed to reach a strategic partnership in our cooperation

**How does it contribute to the development of the country?**  
If we take Azerbaijan as an example, I can definitely say that a well-thought domestic, as well as foreign policy which considers national interests and the current realities can be a crucial factor in ensuring stability, security and successful development. That helped us considerably reform the social and economic sphere, launch ambitious transport and energy projects, diversify the economy, improve infrastructure

and significantly increase living standards.  
After 2003 we implemented three state programs on social and economic regional development, and created a new, modern image of the country. It is noteworthy, the economy of Azerbaijan has grown by 3,4 times over the past 15 years, which is the best growth indicator in the world. Two social packages have been approved since the beginning of the year. They cover 4,2 mln citizens. Over \$3 bln

has been allocated for these ends. Preserving and promoting ethnic and religious diversity and multicultural traditions is the avenue Azerbaijan puts a premium on.  
Over the course of hundreds of years, the representatives of various religions and peoples have lived in Azerbaijan enjoying peace, mutual respect and trust, which made our country famous across the globe as an exemplary space of tolerance and a center of multiculturalism. The rich experience

**T**he MGIMO forum has become a tradition and proved an effective discussion platform to exchange views on the most burning and pressing issues

of Azerbaijan in this field shows that multiculturalism is the only way to strengthen solidarity, harmony and mutual understanding among people. I believe that we lead by example in achieving stability and sustainable development.  
To conclude, I would like to congratulate the faculty and students of MGIMO on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and wish all to be healthy, wealthy and achieve professional success. 🇦🇿







Interview by Igor Drobyshev  
Photos: President's Press Department

# KASSYM-JOMART TOKAYEV: “MGIMO FOSTERS TRUE STATESMEN”

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a MGIMO graduate of 1975, believes that if many of today's politicians had studied at MGIMO, they would be able “to cool down and act within the framework of unwritten rules of true diplomacy”.

**MJ: Mr. President, two years ago we met at the office of the President of the Senate at the time when Kazakhstan hosted the MGIMO Alumni Forum.** First of all, I would like to highlight that MGIMO Alumni Forum in the capital of Kazakhstan turned out to be quite representative and productive. Among our guests there were many prominent political leaders and public figures, diplomats, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov, journalists and businessmen, who

year you will celebrate 45 years since your graduation from the university and the beginning of the way that has led you to the top position in the state. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate our University on this glorious jubilee. MGIMO sets a benchmark of knowledge and skills, which allows every graduate to excel in their career. Lectures of outstanding diplomats and scholars in the field of international relations, internships at embassies abroad, involvement in research activities: all

this is a genuine school of professional excellence. MGIMO is a world class university, and it's an exclusive privilege to be its graduate. From the very first day at the alma mater I felt that it was a special academic institution with a rich history and unique academic environment. Everything served the purpose of formation of future specialists in international relations. Even formally there were major differences from other universities. MGIMO students were to wear formal suits and ties, which was an

**M** GIMO is second to none in terms of qualification of the faculty staff and providing opportunities for diplomatic practice

represented several generations of MGIMO graduates. Nowadays many of them are top public officials in their countries. The Forum in Astana, which is now officially called Nur-Sultan, gathered more than 400 MGIMO alumni from CIS states, Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia Pacific region. It became a renowned discussion platform for open exchange of opinions on the most complex issues that are at the top of the international agenda at present.

**MJ: This year we are celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MGIMO University. Next**





additional reminder of their special mission. However, the key point, no doubt, is knowledge and skills acquired at the university. This institution of higher learning is second to none in terms of qualification of the faculty staff and providing opportunities for diplomatic practice. The years of studying at MGIMO develop the ability to understand the problems of international politics from the perspective of genuine deep interests of one's state. Unfortunately, today's global politics lacks this very thing. All too often personal ambitions, emotions and fleeting sentiments come to the fore. I presume that studying at MGIMO would teach many of today's politicians to cool down



and act within the framework of unwritten rules of true diplomacy.

**MJ: The MGIMO Alumni Association can boast of two presidents already among its members – you and the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. Indeed, MGIMO Corporation is gaining heft! In what way, do you think, could this unique administrative resource be used?** MGIMO has always cultivated its special esprit de corps, which unites the diplomatic community, graduates of several generations. Despite the fact that they graduated at different times and represent a wide variety of states, there are

**My formula of state power is as follows: “A strong President, a powerful Parliament, an accountable Government.” Development of civil society is of utmost importance for implementation of my concept of “the state that hears”.**

common traits uniting them all. I would like to emphasize that such characteristics as allegiance to the chosen path, intellectual component and, surely, deep understanding of national interests of one's own state combined with respect for the interests of partners are typical of MGIMO graduates. The university, as I see it, fosters true statesmen. Going back to your question about the administrative resource of MGIMO alumni, I should say that it's rather difficult to answer. Despite the fact that many of the graduates hold senior positions in their respective states, taken together they form a resource united by shared values,

professionalism, determination, close friendship and mutual respect rather than an administrative one. This is definitely much more important.

**MJ: You have become head of state. Please accept our heartfelt congratulations on this occasion. Does holding this post present a major challenge?** Indeed, being a president is a serious challenge and a great responsibility, but at the same time it's a tremendous honor for me. I will do my best to meet the expectations of the people of Kazakhstan and Nursultan Nazarbayev himself. He has always adhered to a systemic, evolutionary approach, in which every new step lays a solid foundation for future progress. I am a strong advocate of this principle. To assure the continuity of strategic development course of Kazakhstan is one of my priorities as President. However, at the same time we are to keep abreast of the latest trends and follow the spirit of the times. As Mahatma Gandhi put it: “You must be the change you want to see in the world.”

My formula of state power is as follows: “A strong President, a powerful Parliament, an accountable Government.” With this in mind, I will also pay close attention to the development of civil society, which is of utmost importance for implementation of my concept of “the state that hears.” In Kazakhstan, as well as, in any other rapidly developing states, there are a lot of pressing problems requiring timely solutions. Currently the issue of improving the quality of life of the people of Kazakhstan is the focus of our attention. Social security system, available medicine, clean water and high-quality roads are the issues we concentrate our efforts on. Besides, we pay increased attention to modernizing educational sphere and carrying out a reform of law enforcement agencies. Moreover, we are to do a lot in the sphere of industrialization and diversification, and application of new technologies, inter alia, the digital ones. We need to increase export potential. One more important



task consists in the development of our transport and transit capacities.

**MJ: What's your assessment of the place of Kazakhstan in the international arena? Is any readjustment likely to take place?** In its foreign policy Kazakhstan is trying not to be limited by narrow geographical confines, but to think big and to act big, as it becomes a large regional state. Our priority is to make a significant contribution to promoting global and regional stability and increased cooperation within the framework of the world economy. At the same time, we are witnessing a growing imbalance in global socio-economic development. Such factors as international agenda that is hard to predict, a growing number of trade and sanction wars and new polarization of the world pose risks for global development. All

**Allegiance to the chosen path, intellectual component and, surely, deep understanding of national interests of one's own state combined with respect for the interests of partners are typical characteristics of MGIMO graduates**

this is happening against the background of a high level of terrorist threat, the presence of outdated ethnic and religious contradictions, emergence of new

social cataclysms and lack of progress in solving long-standing regional military conflicts. Taken together, these factors make promotion of security and ensuring fundamental national interests the most pressing issues for Kazakhstan. Our strategy remains unchanged: comprehensive modernization and greater international cooperation in line with current global and regional tendencies. Kazakhstan considers building a balanced model of socio-economic development in close cooperation with its international partners to be its top priority. Our goal is to establish a “smart”, innovation-driven economy, to ensure sustainable development, to diversify industrial production, to increase efficiency of agriculture, and to attract investment and technologies from developed states. Our foreign policy is targeted at achieving these goals; it will continue the course for confidence building, de-escalation of international tensions, promotion of global, as well as, regional security and cooperation mechanisms. As for our relations with Russia, they are a truly successful example of strategic partnership and alliance of the two countries. Historical, cultural, geo-economic and geopolitical factors lie at the heart of these relations and contribute to such a high level of our cooperation. Kazakhstan and Russia effectively collaborate on the broadest range of international issues. We also support each other when it comes to acting in multilateral formats. Harsh realities of the modern world make a reliable companionship an even more valuable asset. There is no forgetting of the fact that it was due to the close cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia that a new integration association, namely, the Eurasian Economic Union, emerged on the territory of CIS. A large-scale bilateral cooperation with Russia, as well as, cooperation within the framework of international organizations is a long-term priority of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. As the president of the state I will do everything I can to ensure that we strengthen and promote cooperation with Russia: our natural ally. ☐





# MGIMO TURNS 75

The Gala Evening dedicated to the anniversary of MGIMO University was held on October 23rd in the center of Moscow, on the Historic Stage of the Bolshoi Theater. Fifteen hundred professors, veterans, famous graduates, including foreign ones, gathered in the main Russian theater.





For over 250 years great operas and ballets have been performed at the Bolshoi Theatre, and now its orchestra played the MGIMO anthem, written by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergei Lavrov, a 1972 graduate. Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, congratulated the audience from a huge screen. “Over the past 75 years, MGIMO has established a strong reputation as a leading global center for training professionals in international affairs. MGIMO alumni constitute the core personnel of the Russian

diplomatic service. They demonstrate top professionalism, patriotism and fidelity to duty while protecting our country’s foreign policy interests. MGIMO is also a well-known center for such training. Alumni from many countries recall with warmth and gratitude their university years, being proud of acquiring a profession in demand as well as receiving invaluable experience and assistance. I am glad that MGIMO is developing dynamically today, while its faculty, graduate and undergraduate students have a bright and eventful life. I am sure that the university’s faculty will do their best to ensure that MGIMO remains



**V**ladimir Putin: “Over the past 75 years, MGIMO has established a strong reputation as a leading global center for training professionals in international affairs

a leader and its diploma is a sign of the high quality of Russian higher education.” Then a trailer of the film about MGIMO was shown to the audience. It was

broadcasted a few hours later on Channel One Russia. The film includes memories of famous MGIMO alumni: Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan; Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of Kazakhstan; Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister; Alisher Usmanov, Vladimir Potanin and Patokh Chodiev, prominent businessmen and philanthropists, and founders of the MGIMO Endowment; Alexey Ostrovsky, Governor of Smolensk Region; Vladimir Medinsky, Russian Minister of Culture; Miroslav Lajčák, OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Foreign Minister of Slovakia; Sergey Mikhailov, Director General of one of the world’s largest news agencies TASS; Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, President of FIDE (1995–2018); and others.







The trailer was followed by Anatoly Torkunov’s address. The MGIMO Rector thanked the Russian President for his appreciation of the work of the professors and lecturers who were awarded state decorations the day before. Anatoly Torkunov said: “I am not going to present you a progress report, but I should say that we thank everybody, who has been involved in creating our University, even

**F**or over 250 years great operas and ballets have been performed at the Bolshoi Theatre, and now its orchestra played the MGIMO anthem

those who worked in the precursor of MGIMO – the Lazarev Institute of Oriental languages, established in 1815 and whose 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrated three years ago. We also should thank Moscow University where the School of International Relations was created and developed into an independent institute. We also should thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which initiated the



creation of our university and throughout our history has been supporting us. I am sure that MGIMO brand will always be synonymous with a reliable and famous institution, which is attractive for many people. A university, which turns 75, is a child or an adolescent. But today we have a celebration, just a celebration. We are not here to present review or reports. We are here to just to enjoy our get-together.”


**A**natoly Torkunov: “We thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which initiated the creation of our university and throughout our history has been supporting us”







The Rector invited graduates and guests to enjoy the “Raymonda” ballet performed by the Bolshoi Theatre artists, which was a “wonderful gift for everyone”

The Rector invited the audience to enjoy the “Raymonda” ballet performed by the Bolshoi Theatre, which was a “gift for everyone”. In the intermission, the MGIMO alumni and friends of the University, chatted, savoring delicious refreshments. 





# MGIMO IS IN TASHKENT FOR A REASON!

It wasn't a quick decision to open a MGIMO branch in Tashkent. The idea developed over time from a patchwork of traditional relations, long-standing friendship, new contacts and a number of agreements.

Students from Uzbekistan have always flocked to MGIMO, both in the Soviet period and later on. The first five students from the republic were enrolled in a course at MGIMO University as early as 1945. And several years ago the first collective efforts started to be made to create a full-fledged MGIMO Alumni Association in Uzbekistan. It's important that the idea belonged to young alumni, graduates of the last years, who realized that relationships between MGIMO alumni living in different states might open up opportunities not only for informal contacts, but also for serious professional and business relations. The first meetings of this kind yielded the idea of MGIMO Global Alumni Forum in Uzbekistan. Senior colleagues helped this dream of the younger generation come true.

When President Shavkat Mirziyoyev came to power, Russian-Uzbek relations soared. Our distinguished alumni, the members of MGIMO Board of Trustees, Alihser Usmanov and Patokh Chodiev, seem to have played a major role in the formation of a highly favorable attitude of the new leadership of Uzbekistan to MGIMO.

Since autumn 2017, MGIMO relations with universities and research institutions of Uzbekistan have strengthened, and the influx of Uzbek students has skyrocketed. Currently there are more than 100 students from Uzbekistan enrolled in different degree

courses at the university – Bachelor's, Master's, PhD and MBA. For a relatively small educational institution with the toughest competition for admission in the country and rather high tuition fees, it's quite a lot! MGIMO Association of Students from Uzbekistan has been among the top three for a long time.

**UWED is “our guide in Uzbek realities”, and MGIMO is gradually creating its full-fledged educational and research unit in Uzbekistan**

MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov visited Tashkent October 2, 2017 to meet the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov.

The same day an official ceremony was held to award the rector the title of Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan. After the ceremony Anatoly Torkunov delivered a lecture to university students, faculty members and the activist group of MGIMO Alumni Association in Uzbekistan. Step by step



the idea of a MGIMO branch on the basis of UWED became more defined.

A visit by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin to Tashkent on 19 October 2018 was the turning point for the future of our University in Uzbekistan; it was on the sidelines of that meeting that the intergovernmental Agreement on Creation and Functioning of Branches of Higher Education Institutions of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Uzbekistan was signed.

In turn, MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov and State Advisor of the President of Uzbekistan, UWED Rector Abdujabar Abduvakhitov, in the presence of heads of both states, signed an agreement between UWED and MGIMO on the creation of a MGIMO branch in the Republic of Uzbekistan. UWED, as the Rector of MGIMO pointed out, is “our guide in Uzbek realities”, and MGIMO is gradually creating its full-fledged educational and research unit in Uzbekistan. Our efforts follow the overall trend towards Russian educational institutions of higher learning coming to Uzbekistan (MSU, MISIS, Dmitry Mendeleev University of Chemical Technology of Russia, MEPhI, Gubkin University, among them). They promote the endeavors of the



friendly nation's leadership to become a “university hub” for Central Asia and cross-border regions.

The President of the state Shavkat Mirziyoyev in his Decree of 11 February 2019 set the task to the branch to begin its activities immediately. By September 2019 the building chosen for the branch was refurbished and fully equipped, the required number of students was enrolled and lecturers hired to establish three programs: a bachelor's program “Analysis and Modeling of Socio-Economic Processes” and two master's programs “International Private, Financial and Commercial Law” and “System Analysis in International Business”.

MGIMO considers them to be the programs of a new type – they are interdisciplinary, oriented towards economic development and support for external economic relations, and include a strong digital back-up.

**MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov and Advisor of the President of Uzbekistan, UWED Rector Abdujabar Abduvakhitov in the presence of Presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan signed an Agreement on creation of a MGIMO branch in Tashkent.**

The programs taught at UWED follow the modular principle, which in part results from the need to invite MGIMO

lecturers to Tashkent for periods of two-three weeks. Language classes will be given by the faculty staff consisting of tutors from Moscow, local language instructors and native speakers. The MGIMO requirement for teaching two foreign languages on a compulsory basis remains. Students from Uzbekistan will also study in Russia; their courses involve several semesters spent in Moscow (three semesters at the undergraduate level (beginning from the 2nd year of studies) and one semester (the 3rd one, namely) at the graduate level).

The fifth MGIMO Global Alumni Forum in Uzbekistan held in May served not only as a place for friendly encounters, but also as a platform where MGIMO programs in Tashkent were presented, the future of the project discussed and understanding of the place of the branch in MGIMO Development Strategy reached. ■





# OPEN DAY OF MGIMO-TASHKENT

Two days before the official opening ceremony, over 300 teachers and prospective students gathered in the new building, which is a unique blend of classical architecture and modern infrastructure.

**M**GIMO's Vice-Rector A. Malgin described the different training programs offered at undergraduate and graduate levels. During the academic year 2020-2021 students at MGIMO-Tashkent will study within two BA and four MA programs, specializing in "Law", "Business Informatics", "Management" and "Linguistics". All the programs offer students the opportunity to follow "Moscow" modules, which are taught

**A. Torkunov: "Let us express our sincere gratitude to the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev, who initiated this project, and to the Russian President Vladimir Putin, who supported it from the start"**

at MGIMO's Russian campuses. Grants will be provided to undergraduate students. The Vice-Rector for Educational Affairs of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UMED) M. Bakoev remarked that some MGIMO programs have no equivalents in Uzbekistan.

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December 9th, the first foreign branch of the University, MGIMO-Tashkent, was officially inaugurated.

Students of Bachelor, Master and Lyceum programs, faculty members, employees, and other guests gathered on the premises of the new building, built in record time with the help of the leadership of Uzbekistan. A photo exhibition devoted to the history of MGIMO "From the Lazarev Institute to Nowadays" was presented on the walls of the building. The branch was officially opened by A. Abduvakhitov, the State Advisor to the President of Uzbekistan, also Rector of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, A. Kamilov, the Foreign



noted that it would certainly contribute to strengthening bilateral ties in the training of highly qualified professionals. «The path to creating MGIMO-Tashkent was a natural and logical one. Let us express our sincere gratitude to the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who initiated this project, and to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, who supported it from the very beginning. Even in Soviet times, during MGIMO's first years, the University counted many students from Uzbekistan. Our graduates went back to the Republic and became brilliant experts in all spheres, joining the ranks of the foreign ministry, becoming civil servants, businesspeople, famous journalists and skilled translators. When considering the active ambassadors

Minister of Uzbekistan and A.Torkunov, the Rector of MGIMO. A. Abduvakhitov reminded the audience that MGIMO foreign Campus was being opened based on an Agreement signed the previous year in the presence of the Presidents of the two countries. "It is a pleasure to say that the project has worked out. We are interested in the cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan being productive in the sphere of diplomacy and leading to the development of education in Uzbekistan," remarked A. Abduvakhitov. A. Kamilov expressed enthusiasm at the MGIMO branch opening in short time and







**A. Abduvakhitov:**  
“It is a pleasure to say that the project has worked out. We are interested in the cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan being productive in the sphere of diplomacy and leading to the development of education in Uzbekistan

of Russia and Uzbekistan, dozens of them originate from Uzbekistan and are MGIMO graduates. Among the representatives of the business community of both countries, we can mention the co-founders of the MGIMO

Endowment Alisher Usmanov and Patokh Chodiev,” remarked A.Torkunov. On the occasion of the inauguration of MGIMO-Tashkent and in the context of the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of MGIMO, A.Torkunov

awarded A.Abduvakhitov, A.Kamilov and the Vice-Rector of UWED M.Bakoev MGIMO’s Order of Merit. Concluding his speech, the Rector introduced to the guests the Director of the Branch, Bakhtiyor Islamov, the Ambassador of

**A**lmost a dozen of ambassadors of Russia and Uzbekistan, who originate from Uzbekistan, are MGIMO graduates. Among the representatives of the business community of both countries, are the co-founders of the MGIMO Endowment A. Usmanov and P. Chodiev



Uzbekistan to Russia from 2003 to 2008 and a MGIMO graduate (1977). The Russian Ambassador to Uzbekistan Vladimir Tyurdenev and members of the staff of the Presidential Administration of Russia were among the prominent guests of the event.

Before the ceremony, the guests had the opportunity to visit the new building and the Library, which are a unique blend of classical architecture and modern infrastructure. They could also converse with the first students having already begun their studies

at MGIMO-Tashkent in BA and MA programs and with students of the Lyceum programs. To mark the official opening, students had prepared a video in which they disclosed their first impressions about their studies at MGIMO-Tashkent. [📺](#)





# ALISHER USMANOV: “MGIMO COULD PLAY A VERY POSITIVE ROLE IN UZBEKISTAN”

A graduate from the MGIMO International Law School in 1976, Alisher Usmanov is currently ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the Russian Forbes Rich list. He is one of the founding fathers of the MGIMO Endowment Fund, the biggest university based fund in Russia. In May 2019, Alisher Usmanov sponsored the MGIMO Graduates' Forum that took place in Uzbekistan, his home country.

Lately, he has been less and less involved in managing his business instead concentrating on his duties as President of the International Fencing Federation and philanthropy. Alisher Usmanov, however, thinks it is not charity that he is doing.

**MJ: So, what do you prefer to call it?**

I call it project financing out of my own pocket. I have a slightly different opinion about those forms of philanthropy that are popular today, all the crowdfunding, fundraising, and charitable activities... I believe that it would be better if every person who has the means to do so would implement specific charity projects. That kind of work would have a stronger impact, because that person would be personally involved in the whole process. Usually, I do not take part in any major charity projects, I prefer to run projects with my own small fund. And so far, the results have been quite good. Again, I don't think that this is charity. It's one duty that we all have, to share with people. Islam, for example, teaches that, even though it limits giving such help to relatives and friends. And then, there is society, people who give you the opportunity to fulfill your purpose in life.

**MJ: Several years ago, you and your fund helped to return Frans Hals' painting St. Mark to the Pushkin State Museum. Back in the day, Katherine the Great bought this work, but then it was lost and eventually ended up leaving Russia. As for you, you are known for handing all such acquisitions you make over to the state.**

Well, why would I need all that? What

would I do with them? My family has everything they need, my wife is well-provided for, and I spent money as I deem necessary: on my friends, on things I love, and the rest I give back to people. This is only natural, I think. I regret nothing, any fortune is diminished in three generations because it may become obsolete morally or in the physical form.

**E**ducation system in Uzbekistan is about to start a revolutionary comeback. And a MGIMO campus could undoubtedly play a very positive role in that

**MJ: In MGIMO, there have always been many Uzbeks. What makes them different?**

Plov! It was plov that united all of us in the dormitory. And when we were preparing it, the smell was far better than that of the herring our Vietnamese friends liked to make. We would share plov with everyone on our floor, and they all loved us for that. So, our Uzbek community, or diaspora as

we called it, was very positive and lively, we were extremely optimistic about our future!

**MJ: And would you cook plov?**

I did that only once in my life. To become a man, you need to cook it just one time. After you do it two times, you practically become a chef.

**MJ: Last year, a historical decision was made to open a MGIMO campus in Tashkent. Soon, Uzbekistan will have its very own MGIMO alumni.**

My congratulations to MGIMO! It should be pointed out that the education system in Uzbekistan is about to start a revolutionary comeback to what it was used to be. And MGIMO could undoubtedly play a very positive role in that.

**MJ: In the last two and a half years, we've been witnessing an unprecedented improvement of Russia-Uzbekistan relations. What do you think about the prospects of these relations?**

Any kind of cooperation, and relations between states even more so, should benefit both actors. For Russia, allied relations with Uzbekistan mean the restoration of the old ties with a country that was once part of a greater state – the Soviet Union. That's first. Second, these ties have declined significantly over time but still haven't





Only the naïve or uneducated try to predict future

withered away and now the leaders of our two countries have that political will to rebuild them. First and foremost, the foundation for that is economic benefits, cultural and ethnic affinity. In Uzbekistan, many people speak Russian, and the Russians love at least Uzbek culture and cuisine. However, the most important factor here is the economic benefits that two countries can gain thanks to cooperation. For Uzbekistan, Russia is a huge market to sell its goods and meet the consumer demand, that may be both agricultural produce and manufactured goods. While for Russia, there is a lot of good opportunities in Uzbekistan, particularly for technological

and defense cooperation. The key issue here is the soft and vulnerable underbelly of the whole region, as some people call it, and that is Afghanistan. That country has been destabilized for decades now. Any way you look at it, Russia can nothing but benefit from peace and sound economic development of Afghanistan.

**MJ: MGIMO eagerly participates in a number of international projects, such as, the Trianon Dialogue initiated by the Russian President Vladimir Putin and the French President Emmanuel Macron. The idea behind it is to bring closer the civil societies in Russia and**

**France. Anatoly Torkunov, MGIMO's rector, co-chairs the Coordinating Council of the Trianon Dialogue. Back in the day, you were an athlete, you did saber fencing. Now, you are president of the International Fencing Federation, and the French nobility are especially good at that sport. Do you think your federation could possibly come up with some initiative to forge better relationship between Russian and French fencers?**

In May 2018, we organized a friendly saber fencing competition for Russian and French national women's teams as part of the St. Petersburg Economic Forum's sporting

program. For me, it was a great pleasure to see that tournament take place in Russia. This is one of the examples that surely proves that sports are not only about rivalry and competition but friendship too. I was really glad to know that France, with whom Russia has a strong long-standing relations, supported the initiative. Today, the Russian and French women's teams are two main contestants for gold in saber fencing. They practically take turns winning and losing.

**MJ: When we met with you in 2007, the relations between Russia and the West were problem-free, later on the two even announced the famous**

**reset of relations, namely with the US. However, the subsequent events caused a dramatic decline. The whole system of international law has been destroyed. You are a very well informed and wise person, and, after all, you majored in international law. So, could you please share your forecast concerning the future of the world and Russia's future too?**

Only the naïve or uneducated try to predict future. Today, everything is happening at 5G speeds and there is almost no way to guess what the reaction of a certain politician to such changes will be. In my opinion, Russia is clearly regaining its economic power, it's now the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> economy in the world. This has triggered more competition with countries which are still considered as leading global economies. Economic competition is now acquiring a political dimension to it. Nowadays, foreign policies are formulated in such a way as to also yield certain economic benefits. Naturally, the key players today are the countries with the deepest pockets. As simple as that. China has an extremely pragmatic foreign policy and its interests today overlap with those of the main economic players. I think that with time China's presence will be getting

is that the multipolar world order is back. The US, however, thinks it should carry on with its old habit of policing everyone with a baton in the form of all sorts of economic measures. That's the source of contradictions and antagonism. Russia's foreign policy is not flawless, there have been tactical and, let's say, forced mistakes and unwanted actions, but it is still very well thought through. Russia's main goal is to maintain economic growth despite all the political pressure. In my opinion, the decisions President Putin has been making so far allows Russia to carry on with minimal damage.

What will happen next? I think compromises have always been the bricks that helped to build international relations. When the time is right and the benefit for everyone involved is clear, that's when a compromise can be reached. As soon as all the pieces fit in, something will certainly happen like it already happened before. This is how the anti-Hitler coalition was born, together with détente and the so-called nuclear parity that came later.

**MJ: It was peaceful coexistence.** Peaceful coexistence in the Cold War, that's what it was called. It is important



stronger practically everywhere. The reason is pretty simple, China's economic power is growing. India is close on its heels, but it still not strong enough to drive domestic consumption up. The second and the main consideration is that the US is unable to objectively perceive the reality of today, and the fact

that global leaders realize that their role will be declining due to the rise of new technologies, especially in the field of cybersecurity. They should come together and sign a comprehensive peace treaty on how to live in this new world, the Internet. That's when a compromise would be possible, I think. ☐



# PATOKH CHODIEV: “WE ARE CARRIED BY MGIMO SPIRIT!”

Patokh Chodiev, a well-known businessman and benefactor, one of the founding fathers of the MGIMO Endowment Fund, proudly calls himself the one who promotes the MGIMO style of education. That is why, the 1976 MGIMO graduate welcomes the inauguration of the University branch in Tashkent, which was the key event in celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alma Mater.

Above all, Chodiev believes that this event is a great achievement for Uzbekistan, which expressed a strong desire to have MGIMO in Tashkent: “You just fancy young people graduating from MGIMO in Tashkent! I will do all I can to encourage young Uzbek people to study at MGIMO in Tashkent as well as in Moscow. This is huge progress in improving good neighborly relations between our countries and in promoting Russian culture in Uzbekistan.

Now MGIMO in Tashkent has its own home. Uzbek youth have always dreamt of studying at MGIMO. That was not possible 20 years ago as the old regime disapproved of young Uzbek people receiving education in Russia. They had to choose other institutions, which was not good. MGIMO will support Uzbekistan as we produce very well-educated specialists. I am more than sure that many Uzbek people will seize the opportunity to receive a good education in Russia. Furthermore, the opening of the MGIMO branch in Tashkent paves the way for the Uzbek youth learning the Russian culture, and obtaining the knowledge and values Russia has accumulated throughout its history.

I believe, you know that Uzbekistan introduced the Latin script, which deprived our kids of educational opportunities afterwards. What could be read in the Latin script? Pushkin? Dostoevsky? These authors are impossible to read in the Latin script! That is why, three generations of the Uzbek young people do not know the Russian language, which is detrimental to national education.

President Mirziyoyev is very sensitive towards these trends. His great achievement is his true understanding of the importance of Russian-Uzbek friendship. Uzbekistan still remembers and appreciates the support rendered by the Soviet peoples in the 1966 earthquake in Tashkent. We combined our efforts to quickly restore the city.

In 1971 I went to Moscow to enter MGIMO. There were only four Uzbek school-leavers who managed to enter MGIMO that year. Among them were Alisher Usmanov, Abdusamat Khaydarov, Mukhtar Gulyamov, and me. We felt excited! We knew that MGIMO is the one of the best universities,

**I call myself the one who promotes the MGIMO style of education. That is why, I welcome the inauguration of the University branch in Tashkent. Now, MGIMO has its own Home!**

which pushed and motivated us to study only there and meet the status of MGIMO. We were obsessed about studying. I remember studying very hard in the first three years as we learnt Oriental languages, which required a lot of work and commitment. However, many specialists who mastered the difficult language made use of it as a first language neither at work nor in life. Take Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who studied

Sinhalese but is working with the English language. But that is not the point! It is about feeling excitement while at university, which MGIMO instills in you! The point is to love the university and its traditions. MGIMO has become an invaluable and genuine source of knowledge for us. That may be the key reason why we achieved something in this life.

Alisher Usmanov is an outstanding person. Just look at his accomplishments! He is one of the greatest businessmen and industrialists of Russia. I truly believe that

**We have been driven by the MGIMO fervor, love of the University and its traditions all our life. That may be the key reason why we did achieve something in this life**

our sincere commendation should first and foremost go to MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov. It was he who put his heart and soul into our common cause. For some three decades Anatoly Torkunov, as Rector, has contributed greatly to preserving the high status of MGIMO and its unique features. He managed to strengthen the capacities of the University, and now MGIMO is among Russia’s five best universities and ranks internationally. I am proud of my Alma Mater and our Rector!”







# MGIMO IN TASHKENT

The V International Forum of MGIMO-University Graduates was held in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan May 17-19. It was attended by more than 450 graduates from 32 countries.





The first evening of the guests' stay in Tashkent was remarked by the visit to the exhibition in the Karakalpakstan State Museum of Art named after I. V. Savitsky in the Gallery of Fine Arts. MGIMO University rector, Anatoly Torkunov together with the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Ilkhomzhon Neymatov and Adviser to the President of Uzbekistan, rector of University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Abduzhabar Abduvahitov, have participated the press conference.

MGIMO University's Rector, Anatoly Torkunov, has noted that many countries applied to host the V International Forum of MGIMO-University Graduates, but preference was given to the capital of Uzbekistan. "Many of our graduates, who were studied at the University in the Soviet era, as well as, those who studied after Uzbekistan gained independence, work here," the Rector explained, "Now they are successfully working in many spheres, i.e. in the foreign policy field, in business, in the spheres of culture and education."

The Rector noted that this year MGIMO University, established in 1944, is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In 2010, MGIMO University was listed in the Book of Records as a University where the largest number of state foreign languages is taught. Nowadays the University students are taught 53 foreign languages.

Anatoly Torkunov also stressed that a branch of MGIMO University would open in the Republic of Uzbekistan next academic year. "We have foreign platforms for work and cooperation in Spain and Switzerland," the Rector said, "But it will be a legally registered branch, an educational institution. Of course, we are not going to copy our Moscow experience. We are going to teach specialists in those areas that are in high demand in Uzbekistan today."

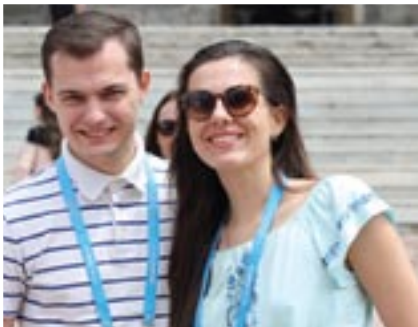
The Rector particularly noted the support of the Deputy Chairman of the MGIMO-University Board of Trustees, founder of USM Holding, Alisher Usmanov, thanks to whom the forum was organized at a high level.



Anatoly Torkunov: "Our meetings are becoming regular, and it is a real pleasure for us. We are thinking about the developing of MGIMO-University and about ways to make its work even more fruitful"

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The Palace of Symposiums in Alisher Navoi National Library of the Republic of Uzbekistan held the official opening of the Forum May 19. The Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Abdullah Aripov announced a greeting sent to the participants of the forum by the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Congratulating MGIMO University on





# ABDUJABAR ABDUVAKHITOV: “MGIMO BRANCH CAMPUS WILL PROVIDE US WITH QUALIFIED PERSONNEL”

The opening of a MGIMO branch campus in Tashkent is not only an important event in Uzbekistan’s education. “The establishment of a MGIMO branch campus as well as dozens of other Russian university branch campuses reflect the needs of our economy”, says Abdujabar Abduvakhitov, Advisor to the President of Uzbekistan and Rector of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED). “It also reflects the need to become more modern by applying new technology, raising investment and diversifying our economy. And, of course, through education. We need qualified personnel – engineers, experts on nuclear technology, energy, medicine, agriculture...”

**MJ:** By the way, MGIMO has just launched a training program called “agricultural attaché”. This is exactly what we need! Later we can launch it in the MGIMO branch campus, too. Your university doesn’t have any limits on the range of educational programs.

**MJ:** That’s true, we even have a slogan: “MGIMO Goes Beyond Diplomacy”. This is important for us as we have faced several challenges. For instance, there has been no special training for translators for many years. Students were taught foreign languages, but not translation, let alone highly-qualified simultaneous interpretation. I know it from my personal experience, as I started my career as a translator from Arabic. You see, we need

highly literate, well-educated people who have broad horizons and are able to think freely. Behind that is a very simple need to give people an opportunity to have a stable and decent life.



**We hope MGIMO branch campus will train for us qualified personnel**

**MJ:** Naturally, an educated person is a stable person. Exactly! Several years ago it was not common to say that a person should earn good money or be rich. In the East a simple idea is widespread: one rich person feeds a hundred poor people, creating a stable environment. For many years I have been doing research on the

cause-effect mechanism of emerging radical and extremist groups and their transformation into terrorist ones. Certainly, it’s the result of a combination of factors, but one of them creates the environment for recruiting future radicals, and this factor is poor living standards. Provide people with stability, create a humanitarian space where everybody would have an opportunity for self-expression, and they would find an occupation. With the help of education, we will be able to minimize the influence of radicalism.

**MJ:** Don’t you think that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan would prefer graduates from the MGIMO branch campus to the UWED graduates? Aren’t you afraid of the competition?

No, we are not afraid. On the contrary, we are interested in creating a competitive environment in general and in education in particular. What’s more, it’s the political will of our president who would like to see the competition in all areas as it is the driver of development which makes us work on ourselves. A situation where there would be too many graduates of MGIMO and UWED simply will not arise. The demand for qualified personnel is rising, and, consequently, the demand for new universities. Just imagine: there are more than 600,000 children born each year in Uzbekistan. It’s quite a few by our standards and a lot by Russian standards. There is a need to give these people an education and a profession, an opportunity to earn money, and multiply the wealth of our country. This is, as I have already mentioned, the key to stability. 🇺🇵







**S**havkat Mirziyoyev: “MGIMO-University is a global brand that confirms the traditionally high quality of Russian higher education”

its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the President said, “MGIMO-University is a global brand that confirms the traditionally high quality of Russian higher education. Its graduates represent different countries. They are true open-minded professionals with deep, fundamental knowledge. During many years MGIMO-University has contributed to the higher education of specialists in International Diplomacy, Law and Economics for Uzbekistan,” he noted. “More than four hundred of our compatriots have graduated from this



world-known respected higher education institution.”

The President noted that a branch of MGIMO-University was to be opened in Tashkent and expressed hope that it would become an integral part of higher education in Uzbekistan and a regional educational center in the field of International Relations.

Then the Rector of MGIMO-University Anatoly Torkunov read out a message of the Russian President Vladimir Putin: “I am happy that on the eve of such a significant anniversary, graduates from different countries gathered here, in hospitable Tashkent to exchange views on topical issues of the international agenda

in an atmosphere of friendship and solidarity, to discuss further prospects for the development of the University.”

Following the Rector, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov, delivered a speech at the event. “We are hosting so many prominent people here that proves MGIMO University is one of the leading Russian educational institutions, but also an internationally recognized Universities that graduate brilliant professionals for many foreign countries, including Uzbekistan,” the Minister said.

Abdulaziz Kamilov recalled that in 1945, five representatives of Uzbekistan had entered MGIMO University. One of them





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was a former front-line soldier Kuchkar Khanazarov, who later became a famous scientist. “He is 97 years old now and he asked to convey his best wishes to the forum participants.”



“Since 2000,” the Minister said, “the Uzbek language has been taught at the School of International Relations at MGIMO University. The University has a club of students from Uzbekistan, which is actively involved in the activities of student life. And now a branch of MGIMO University is to be open in Tashkent.” Abdulaziz Kamilov expressed confidence that the MGIMO branch opening “would make a worthy contribution to the education of highly qualified specialists who can work effectively and with full dedication in the modern, complex, and rapidly changing world.”

Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Pankin, a graduate of MGIMO University, announced the greeting of another graduate, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov: “Such regular meetings symbolize the immutability of MGIMO brotherhood. Countries and cities of gatherings are changing, but our loyalty to friendship and firm focus on maintaining a fruitful, truly friendly dialogue remains unchanged. This year we celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Alma Mater. We have something to be proud of. Being a major educational and research center, MGIMO University moves forward in a quick pace, implements new programs, and expands training areas. The opening of the first foreign branch



# ILHOM NEMATOV: “FOR 75 YEARS MGIMO HAS BEEN PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION”

In the early 2000s, Ilhom Nematov was first Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan. He was responsible for the relations between Russia and Uzbekistan and personally involved in the drafting of agreements on strategic partnership and alliance between the two countries. “That’s why when I was sent as ambassador to Moscow, I already knew everyone: from an attaché of the department to the MFA leadership. Unfortunately, I didn’t have a chance to work in Moscow for a long time. About a year later the president offered me to go to the USA as ambassador, and from 2010 to 2014 I worked there, during Obama’s second presidential term.”



**MJ: Did you go back to working with Russia right after that?**  
No, it happened somewhat later. After working in the USA, I became Ambassador at large and was in charge of boundary delimitation with neighboring countries.

**MJ: For Uzbekistan it was a very complex issue.**  
Exactly. Twenty five years after we got our independence we didn’t have formal boundaries in the classical sense with any Central Asian countries; we beat about the bush and couldn’t find a compromise. It’s only when Shavkat Mirziyoyev became president that the situation radically changed. Speaking before the parliament, he said that the Uzbek foreign-policy priority would be the relations with its immediate neighbors. Now these relations are very good

**I have worked a lot with your alumni and I have to say that the education that MGIMO has been providing for the past 75 years is of very high quality.**

and based on mutual respect and interest, having signed boundary treaties with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In November 2016, I was offered the position of the First Deputy Minister, and now I am in charge of cooperation with the CIS countries, including with Russia, as well as multilateral cooperation and other issues.

**MJ: There is a very tricky place in your region – it’s Afghanistan. The situation there is a very sensitive issue for Russia.**  
Yes, we understand. As I am in charge of the relations with Russia, I also have to deal with these issues, though it’s not my main area of responsibility. Afghanistan is our neighbor, it’s a very important country for us due to many factors, primarily security and economy. Uzbekistan is a landlocked country, and the shortest way to the sea-ports for us lies through Afghan territory. That’s why we are interested in the settlement of the Afghan issue as soon as possible.

**MJ: As a person who is responsible for Uzbekistan’s relations with Russia, could you, please, assess the state of relations?**  
Our relations with Russia have always been stable. I am very happy to note that thanks to the political will of our presidents – Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Vladimir Putin – our relations have developed stably in the past two years and are based on strategic partnership and alliance.

**MJ: One of the manifestations of this cooperation was the opening of a MGIMO branch campus in Tashkent.**  
Yes, it’s a very important event to us. I have worked a lot with your alumni and I have to say that the education that MGIMO has been providing for the past 75 years is of very high quality. We hope that the knowledge that Uzbek students receive in the branch campus, will contribute to the enhancing of our country’s diplomacy. I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate MGIMO on its anniversary! 🇺🇸







of the University in Tashkent is a vivid confirmation of all the above mentioned.” Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council of Russia Ilyas Umakhanov noted that the brilliant organization of the forum would have been impossible without the “strong support of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkhat Mirziyoyev”. Mr. Umakhanov

**A**n Uzbek proverb says, “the stars are brighter and the plov is sweeter when yiur friends are with you!”

also stressed that Russia and Uzbekistan are actively developing relations in many areas, but “their dynamics are directly related to the extremely warm relations between presidents Putin and Merziyoyev.” The Russian Minister of Culture, a graduate of MGIMO-University Vladimir Medinsky, thanked the hosts of the forum for the tour to Samarkand



which was “amazing from a historical and cultural point of view”. “In addition to the fact that 53 foreign languages are taught at MGIMO,” he said, “all the students are taught one more language, the language of mutual respect that is the main language of any international relations specialist, as it is not matter of translation.”

A Trustee of MGIMO University, a successful businessman and philanthropist, a native of Uzbekistan and a graduate of the University, Patokh Chodiev, said: “I am grateful to MGIMO for the fact that it provided all of us with such knowledge, thanks to which we could find a way out of the most difficult situations. I am very proud that our first

foreign branch is opened in Tashkent, we have not even dreamt of this! I am happy we have the opportunity to teach our young people the programs developed at MGIMO.” “The forum continued with fruitful discussions in the framework of three sessions devoted to political, security, economical, and cultural issues. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, MGIMO graduate Miroslav Lajcak joined the forum participants at the evening reception on behalf of the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov. Traditionally for MGIMO events, the reception was held in the form of a cheerful friendly party. ☑



Photos by Yuri Lukin

# SALAM MGIMO

The wonderful Khilola welcomed MGIMO graduates from around the world to hospitable Uzbekistan.





The name Khilola translates as “fragile, tender” or “moon face.” Khilola Ulugova (International Relations, 2013), Head of the Rector’s Office at MGIMO, was born in the Uzbekistani city of Samarkand, where she lived for seven years before moving with her family to Moscow. However, she is wonderfully nostalgic when remembering her place of birth. When MGIMO’s leadership had the idea to hold the next international alumni forum in Tashkent, she thought, “This is fate – I need to definitely show my native city of Samarkand to MGIMO graduates from around the world!”



**MJ: What’s great about the Samarkand Region?**

It’s ancient history, rich culture and people, and its main feature – generous hospitality! Guests are immediately brought home and fed, as well as given gifts when they leave. People from Samarkand love visiting their friends without notice, and you should always be ready for it. You need to immediately serve tea and get the dastarkhan ready. Having fed the guests, people from Samarkand will take you to see the city. Samarkand is called the “Pearl of the East”, and it is an important center along the ancient Silk Road. The city is 2,762 years old, but it hasn’t always been easy. Alexander the Great conquered the city, and it was at different times under the control of the Persians, Chinese, Arabs and Turks. Genghis Khan and the Mongols conquered the city in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, looting and destroying it. The city flourished during

**I am by nature a balanced person; I am a Libra, I try to avoid conflict and establish contacts, so I have the character of a diplomat**

the rule of Timur the Great (Tamerlane). Under the grandson of Tamerlane, Ulugh Beg, the city became a global center of science. During his rule, the first madrasa was built on the world famous Registan Square, as was an observatory named after Ulugh Beg.

**MJ: And where did you live?**  
In my family home. Its location is unique, with one side facing the mausoleum of Khodja Daniyori, a place of pilgrimage for

Muslims, Christians and Jews, who all worship him, and the other side facing the observatory of Ulugh Beg. By the way, at the observatory’s foot they sell the famous Samarkand bread “Galaosiyo”. It can’t be cooked anywhere else. Even though our bakers have traveled to different places and used the same ingredients and even tandoori ovens to bake it, it’s not the same! In summer – and ours is long – we slept in the wooden bed in the garden under the magnificent stars in the sky, and during the days we walked to the observatory, where they have preserved part of an ancient sextant, with the help of which they determined where the planets and stars were.

**MJ: How come did you move to Moscow?**

I studied in the Russian-language first grade at my school in Samarkand, but I had only studied there for one year before my parents, brother and I moved to Moscow. My grandfather lived there and had a small catering business. My parents had decided that their children – my brother and I – needed to get a good education.

**MJ: How did you arrive at the idea of entering MGIMO?**

I am by nature a balanced person; I am a Libra, I try to avoid conflict and establish contacts, so I have the character of a diplomat. English came quite easily to me as well. But translation didn’t appeal to me. I wanted to be where you made decisions and answered for them. So a choice was made. Mom said, “What are you doing? It’s MGIMO!” But I came to the university’s open house, signed up for evening preparatory courses and entered MGIMO in 2009. I’m lucky to have received such an incredible education!

**MJ: What was life like outside of class?**

In general, I studied so much that there was no time for different activities and clubs. However, I was an active volunteer.





I helped the Central Election Commission during the presidential elections and I helped to organize the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi. I especially remember the APEC summit in Vladivostok in 2012. We lived on Russky Island the entire month on the campus of the Far Eastern Federal University. As a way to encourage us – and on the orders of the president himself – the 500 most active volunteers were rewarded with a three-day cruise to Japan on the ocean liner “Legend of the Seas”. It was really cool!

The main problem was that because this idea was spontaneous, we didn’t have our passports or even visas for Japan. We immediately contacted our nearest and dearest in Moscow so that they could gather together and send us our passports. I remember how our coordinator sat all night in the Japanese consulate and put together the visas, taking our photos there in the hallway. We then spent three days on the sea! This was the first time in my life on a boat that had everything your heart desired: a pool, a casino, karaoke, dancing and more. There were dinners in the elegant restaurant and breakfasts on the deck... Once in Japan, we had a one-day excursion to Yokohama with a trip to Tokyo. We returned to Vladivostok by chartered plane.

**MJ: How did it happen that you didn’t join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after graduating and instead stayed at MGIMO?**  
It was a twist of fate. Vice-Rector Artem Malgin was looking for an assistant and asked me to stay. He had known me as a student and seen how I “volunteered”. I thought about it and decided why not. This turned out to be one of the best decisions I ever made.

**MJ: Because now you are in charge of the rector’s office at MGIMO!**  
I would characterize my time working for Malgin with the title of a famous book – “How the Steel was Tempered”. And now I continue to be “tempered”, but under the

direct leadership of our Rector, Anatoly Torkunov, instead. At the end of 2017, he asked me to lead the Rector’s office.

**MJ: What does this work involve?**  
I am in charge of the rector’s schedule. I regularly change it, keeping it up to date, and I also keep track of meetings and their organization; in general, I optimize the Rector’s work so that he achieves a lot without overdoing it. The Rector is delightful and inspiring. Despite his workload, he is always active

**I am in charge of the Rector’s schedule. In general, I optimize his work so that he achieves a lot without overdoing it. Despite his workload, Rector is always active and open to new ideas**

and open to new ideas. They often assign him to new projects – the Trianon Dialogue, to name one, which takes up the essential part of his time. Not long ago though, he came up with the idea of opening an MGIMO campus in Tashkent.

**MJ: How was this idea born?**  
Due to the changes in the country’s leadership, Uzbekistan has started to open up to the world in all directions, including in education; six different Russian educational institutions are preparing to open subsidiaries there! The Rector thought about all this and agreed: since there was both a demand and a potential student body that would be interested in the areas we teach, we needed to open a branch. And I was charged with working in collaboration with my Uzbekistani colleagues.

**MJ: But then you had this other idea of creating an alumni association for Uzbekistani MGIMO graduates?**





This idea had come to me much earlier. When I was a master’s student and working in the MGIMO Alumni Association, I thought that there were so many such associations around the world but not one for Uzbekistan. The number of graduates from the country isn’t small, and it includes leading figures such as Alisher Usmanov and Patokh Chodiev, who both are founders of the MGIMO Endowment Fund. I decided to start working to establish the association.



I want to succeed at everything; I don’t want to look back, only forward! This might be why I don’t love re-reading books. Maybe I’ll take them from the shelf a second time when I’m much older. One that I will definitely re-read is “War and Peace” by Leo Tolstoy. This has been my favorite novel since I was in school.

**MJ: And films?**

One of my few favorites is “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas”. It’s about the fate of two

and even its soulfulness, which are the characteristics of Samarkand. It is unbelievably easy to breathe there; even the air of Madrid reminds me of my homeland.

**MJ: Are you a sentimental person?**

Very. I easily can cry if something touches my soul. The last time I felt so was while watching the French-Israeli film “The Other Son”. It’s the heartrending story of how in a maternity ward in the Israeli



I’m interested in everything. I can jump from one thing to another. Today I’m playing badminton, tomorrow I’m signed up for tennis, and the dayafter that I’ll think “Should I learn how to play golf?” I don’t want to look back, only forward!

Moreover, I could help the process and move it along from Moscow. The previous leadership of the country never responded to my request, but once the new one took power, they were contacting us. They were interested in establishing an association, opening a branch and holding a forum!

**MJ: What interests do you have? What do you enjoy doing?**

I am very enthusiastic by nature, which means I am very inconsistent in my hobbies. I’m interested in everything. I can jump from one thing to another. Today I’m playing badminton, tomorrow I’m signed up for tennis, and the day after that I’ll think “Should I learn how to play golf?” or “Maybe I should learn another language?”

boys, a Jew and a German, who become friends in a concentration camp. The first is a prisoner while the second is the son of the commandant. In one scene, the German boy gets through the barbed wire to his new friend and finds himself in a true hell without suspecting so. And we have become witnesses to a human tragedy...

**MJ: Are there any places that you want to return to asides from Samarkand?**

Not really. I only want to return to one city – Madrid. I fell in love with it immediately; I can’t even say exactly why. It’s not the architecture or history but it’s special atmosphere, as well as the combination of the dynamism and pace of a big city that is peculiar to my dear Moscow, and its tranquility, assuredness

city of Haifa during an evacuation, two children are mixed up and a Jewish family raises an Arab-Palestinian baby and a Palestinian family raises a Jewish baby. Neither the parents nor children for 18 years suspect anything. When the secret of their birth is accidentally revealed, both families find themselves in a difficult moral situation. The boys start to suffer in general from existential crises; after all, the “Jew”, for example, follows all the traditions... It ends relatively well, and the families grow close and continue to live with it all. What a story...

**MJ: By the way, speaking of existential crises, how do you feel inside? Are you the Wolf or Little Red Riding Hood?**

I’m Pocahontas! ☺







# DILSHOD AKHATOV: “MGIMO WAS MY DREAM UNIVERSITY”

Dilshod Akhatov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, is quite a unique graduate in MGIMO’s history. Several months prior to his graduation from the International Energy Policy and Diplomacy Institute (MIEP) at MGIMO, Dilshod Akhatov, Head of the European Department of Uzbekistan’s Foreign Ministry at the time, was appointed Ambassador to Germany. “I had to take my last exams, write and defend my thesis as an ambassador,” Dilshod Akhatov recalls, “I am grateful to MGIMO and to MIEP’s boards for allowing me to take my exams earlier, ahead of the schedule, and to the Faculty for being so understanding. In early June 2010 I passed my exams, defended my thesis and went back to Berlin.”

**MJ: Why did you decide to attend MGIMO University? Your career was on the upswing anyway.**

Firstly, hard routine work took up a large chunk of my time. I needed a breath of fresh air. Secondly, I felt that if I wanted to move forward, I needed new knowledge. I learned that at MGIMO they had MIEP, by then energy diplomacy had acquired a special sense of urgency (it is still true today) in Europe and in the EU, and I headed a corresponding department at Uzbekistan’s Foreign Ministry. I thought, “That’s exactly what I need.” I decided I’d go deeper into a field that is closely related to international relations: international law, focusing on a fairly narrow subfield, i.e. energy diplomacy. And finally, MGIMO was my dream university since I was a child.

**MJ: How did your journey to MGIMO start?**

A small town of Kattakurgan, where I was born and lived with my family, is located between Samarkand and Bukhara. My father, a historian, worked in the field of general and professional education. That’s why at home we had tons of books on history and politics. I would watch analytical TV shows on global politics and read international sections in Pravda and Izvestia, my father had a subscription for those newspapers.

**MJ: Was Russian that widely spoken in Uzbek provinces?**

Russian was virtually our second mother tongue, I spoke it every day at kindergarten, then at school, even though it was a school where they taught in Uzbek. As for foreign languages, they were not taught at a level that would allow you to enter such a reputable institution as MGIMO. Dreams were all I had. After finishing school in 1989 I went to Ukraine and got into Kiev Polytechnic Institute.

**I decided to attend MGIMO University because I felt that if I wanted to move forward, I needed new knowledge. And finally, MGIMO was my dream university since I was a child**

**MJ: In another Soviet Republic? The Soviet Union’s dissolution was close already...**

Exactly. Eventually, I had to go back to Tashkent and continue my studies at the Technical University. Then, suddenly, I got a sign. One day I opened a newspaper and saw a presidential decree to open the University of World Economy and Diplomacy: a MGIMO of our own. I made

some inquiries and found out that they were admitting students from various other institutions. Then it struck me: I will follow my dream, and come what may. The University of World Economy and Diplomacy was founded in 1992 to train staff for Uzbekistan’s Foreign Ministry, there was a severe lack of talents. After graduating in 1996, I straight away got into the Foreign Ministry, to the German-speaking countries section in the European Department. In early 1999 I got a long-term posting to our Embassy in Germany, where I became part of a team in charge of political relations. I worked with the German political foundations, think tanks, the Bundestag, the Foreign Ministry, offices of the Chancellor and the President. This period was also marked by all governmental bodies and the diplomatic corps moving from Bonn to Berlin. We basically worked on the move for the first half of 2000. That was a great experience. A diplomat is a jack of all trades, if need be you interpret and translate, you drive, you handle housekeeping matters. You should not only be an expert in bilateral relations with the host country, but also be well-versed in economic matters, agriculture, aviation and other fields, even in how to move an embassy, if necessary. We hired moving companies, but still I helped them when I could to pack and carry our belongings. I was a young diplomat, and jumped at the opportunity to talk to common Germans, to



learn more about the county and improve my language. It is especially important for German. The Germans themselves call their tongue a mathematical language. It is a difficult language: its grammar looks a lot like math formulas. But it is utterly beautiful. It is the language of the great Goethe.

**MJ: What are Uzbekistan’s interests in Germany?**  
Germany is Europe’s number one economy



and one of the largest in the world. Hence our priority is to develop economic cooperation. We seek to adopt cutting-edge German technologies, to boost investment and trade. Today these objectives are our top priorities, since we’ve launched a new stage of large-scale reforms and fundamental transformations. Uzbekistan will fully rebuild its economy, foster new high-tech industries as part of a five-year development strategy. Germany also helps us a lot when it comes to democratic transformations

and legal reforms, that creates conducive environment for foreign investment, German included. Our cultural and humanitarian ties are also rapidly developing. We have quite a big German expat community – over four thousand people. We’ve always had a connection with German culture, and German is one of the main languages in schools and universities. Germany has opened a Goethe-Institute center in Tashkent, there are lots of schools with advanced syllabus in German, those students earn sprachdiploms, that allow them to enroll into German higher education institutions. History of our ties with Germany and its culture is fairly long. Even before the 1917 Revolution, German scientists, engineers and teachers came to Uzbekistan. For

**Russia-Uzbekistan relations are at a very high level. Mutual trust between our heads of states has contributed to it greatly. The frequency of contacts between the two Presidents is a manifestation of this trust**

example, German agronomist, academician Richard Schröder worked in Uzbekistan in horticulture, winegrowing and winemaking. After returning to the Ministry, I got appointed as Head of the section for Central and Eastern Europe, and in four years as the Head of the Department for Europe. That is when I started attending MGIMO. After two years at the University I decided to study legal aspects of the EU energy policies in my thesis, I titled it the ‘Legal Analysis of the EU Third Energy Package.’

**MJ: Was it somehow linked specifically to Uzbekistan?**  
No, we don’t work in that field, Uzbekistan



doesn’t have the infrastructure, that would work with the EU, our gas is supplied via Russia’s gas transportation system. I was simply interested in analyzing the Third Energy Package, that had been recently adopted, from a legal standpoint. I used a lot of sources, predominantly German ones, which impressed the board of examiners. I think it is not by chance that I got the highest grade on my thesis.

**MJ: As an ambassador, what were your accomplishments?**  
We contributed to the rollout of a number of investment projects. For example, we set joint ventures with Claas and Lemken. Speaking about cultural and humanitarian ties, thanks to our efforts, the Germans now know more about Uzbekistan. We succeeded in securing higher scholarships from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), as wells as, increase the number of

Uzbek under- and postgraduates who study in Germany. In 2013, I went back to Tashkent to head the Department for the UN and International Organizations. I learned firsthand that multilateral diplomacy was no less difficult than bilateral, since any international organization has an extremely wide reach, representing entire regions or even the whole world, the UN, for instance. However, this work was immensely engaging. It was quite challenging, I learned a lot, for before I only dealt with pretty narrow fields, but when it comes to multilateral diplomacy the scope is global, covering counterterrorism, climate issues, peacekeeping, economy, and other issues on a global or a regional scale. We held a number of important events, promoted significant initiatives. For instance, together with our permanent mission to the UN in New York we organized the visits of then-Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and his

deputy, UNDP Administrator Helen Clark. We promoted the Aral Sea initiative and a program to improve the situation in the Aral Sea region. Last year, President Mirziyoyev initiated the foundation of the UN MPTF Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region, Secretary General António Guterres personally contributed to the founding process. In early 2016, I was transferred back to my old position: the Head of the Department for Cooperation with Europe and NATO.

**MJ: What are NATO-Uzbekistan relations like?**  
Pragmatic and mutually beneficial. We joined the Partnership for Peace program in 1994. Starting from 1996 we have had annual individual partnership and cooperation programs, that provide a platform for training our military experts and for scientific cooperation.



**MJ: Hasn't NATO offered to open its base in Uzbekistan?**  
No. Such an offer would run counter to both our foreign policy principles and military doctrine, that clearly set forth that Uzbekistan's foreign policy is exclusively peaceful in nature, we take part neither in military alliances nor in military actions abroad, and we will not have foreign troops on our territory.

**MJ: In 2018, you were appointed Deputy Minister. What are your key tasks in this office?**  
I'm in charge of bilateral relations with Europe, the Asia Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East and South West Asia, Africa, as well as, of the Dunyo Information Agency. That's what falls within my mandate.

**MJ: You must be focusing primarily China.**  
We maintain balanced relations with all countries across the world, that is our foreign policy principle. Still, by the end of 2018 China became Uzbekistan's largest trade partner.  
However, our top priority are our neighbors: the Central Asian countries. Russia is our main partner in the CIS: we are allies. We closely follow the developments in yet another neighboring country, Afghanistan, for our region's security depends on the situation there, we provide support to Afghanistan in its pursuit of peace, stability and economic revival.

**MJ: Russia-Uzbekistan relations have been experiencing a true renaissance lately.**  
They are at a very high level, indeed. Naturally, mutual trust between our heads of states has contributed to it greatly. The frequency of contacts between the two Presidents is a manifestation of this trust. Let's take President Putin's latest state visit to Uzbekistan in 2018. I was part of the team that organized it and I know how many negotiations there were apart from the summit itself before and during the visit. We held a forum for higher

education institutions, held a presentation of a nuclear power plant, that will be constructed with Russia's participation, we hosted a business forum, where we introduced a new format of interregional cooperation, and presented the results of Russian governors' trips to Uzbekistan and Uzbek heads of regions' visits to Russia to attract Russian investment and boost trade.

**The opening of a MGIMO branch campus in Tashkent is a milestone in Russia-Uzbekistan relations, a new page in our bilateral humanitarian and educational cooperation**

**MJ: Last year MGIMO opened its branch campus in Tashkent. Is it a new page in our bilateral humanitarian and educational cooperation?**  
Yes, the opening of a MGIMO branch campus is a milestone in Russia Uzbekistan relations. For MGIMO it is the first project of its kind abroad, designed to train professionals, much needed in Uzbekistan, with fairly narrow specializations: experts in business IT, systems analysis, socioeconomic forecasting, certain areas of law, intercultural communication, conference interpreters for international organizations. I would like to thank academician Anatoly Torkunov, Rector of MGIMO, for opening a branch campus in Tashkent.  
On the other hand, it was a natural step. Uzbekistan and Russia have close historical relations, political, economic, transportation and cultural ties. Russian language and literature have played and continue to play an important role in Uzbekistan. Some even say that Uzbekistan preserved the Russian language that came to our country almost 150 years ago. ☐







Bakhtiyor Islamov with his son Donier (International Economy Relations, 2008) и granddaughter Maftuhanon

# BAKHTIYOR ISLAMOV

(International Economic Relations, 1977)

University Professor

Tashkent

In his five and a half years of service as Uzbekistan’s Ambassador to Russia and Belarus concurrently, Bakhtiyor Islamov set a record that to this day no other ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan has broken, he organized 22 summits. In his time as Ambassador, which is the longest time anyone held this office in history of Uzbekistan Russia diplomatic relations, two treaties ( the Treaty on Strategic Partnership and the Treaty on Alliance Relations) were prepared and signed in record time. “The story of my becoming an ambassador is actually quite curious,” says Bakhtiyor Islamov, “Uzbekistan’s first President Islam Karimov appointed me ambassador and posted me to Russia on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2003. I presented my credentials to President Putin of Russia at 13 o’clock, on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. People kept telling me it was a bad sign, but everything turned out differently: 13 is now my lucky number.”

I remember how I reached MGIMO University. It wasn’t easy, my parents only gave me their blessing to go to Moscow on one condition — if I didn’t get into MGIMO, I was to go back to Tashkent and attend a university there. Nevertheless, I got into MGIMO. During my senior year at the Institute, I decided I would do a postgraduate degree. I got permission from my parents to stay in Moscow for three more years, and entered the Institute of Economics of the World Socialist System. The studies were captivating, at the Institute we discussed the economic reforms that were taking place back then in Hungary, Yugoslavia, China at great length. But I had to honor the promise I made to my parents and went home. There I was offered to take the post of the Press Department Head at Uzbekistan’s Foreign Ministry. In quite a short period of time I worked with four Foreign Ministers.

Later I was invited to head the Department of External Relations at the Academy of Sciences, where they gave me carte blanche to manage the Academy’s external relations. That was quite a challenge, but fate had a real gift in store for me: I made it to the top 3 in the Republic’s competition for young scholars, and our prize was an internship at Harvard. Nobel Prize laureate Wassily Leontief recommended us to the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), an institute with incredible expertise in studying market reforms in developing countries, the then director of the HIID, Dwight Perkins himself, supervised our internship. He was one of the most prominent experts in Chinese Studies.

After returning from the US, I became chair of a new department at Tashkent University, the Department of International Economic Development. I taught Economics of Development and International Economics courses from the Harvard syllabus in English. At the same time, I worked as an economic counsel to Khalid Malik, the UN’s first representative to Uzbekistan, and later as the first National Director of the Macroeconomic

Policy Analysis and Re-training Project at the United Nations Development Program.

In summer 1966, I was invited to Japan, to the Center for Northeast Asian Studies at Tohoku University (the third oldest and most prominent after Universities of Tokyo and Kyoto). I became the first professor from Central Asia to teach at a Japanese university. In my years teaching in Japan, I wrote and published a monograph in English on development issues in Central Asia. I based my doctoral thesis on that work.To this day this is the first and the only thesis by an economist, written and then defended in English in Uzbekistan.

Then there was yet another twist of fate. Because of my MGIMO education and diplomatic experience, I was offered to work at Uzbekistan’s Foreign Ministry to be trained for the post of Ambassador to Great Britain. However, in early 2003, I was summoned by the Foreign Minister, who told me that, after a report on my candidacy was reviewed by the Ministry’s senior officials, they reconsidered, and from that day on I would be trained to take the office of Uzbekistan’s Ambassador to Russia. Before my departure I met with the President, we talked about the significance of our cooperation with Russia.

In my five and a half years of service as ambassador I took part in organizing 20 visits at the highest level to Russia, and two more to Belarus, where I was Uzbekistan’s Ambassador concurrently. We signed the two most significant, fundamental treaties on strategic partnership and alliance relations. Our new President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, during his very first meeting with President Putin said, “We are, have been and always will be strategic partners and allies.” It did justice to the two treaties.

I was lucky indeed — I was around when our relations were developing vigorously, so much was going on — you just made sure you kept up with the pace. In that period of time our trade skyrocketed 4.5 times, surpassing \$4.1 billion, contracts worth billions were signed with Lukoil

and Gazprom. Our migrant workers sent billions of dollars back home. To regulate their stay in the host country three important agreements were negotiated and signed—the Agreements on Labor Migration, Illegal Migration and Readmission. In 2008 in Uzbekistan there were hundreds of enterprises with Russian

I presented my credentials to President Putin of Russia at 13 o’clock, on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.13 is now my lucky number



capital, and vice versa, in Russia hundreds of companies were founded with Uzbek capital. Russia’s share in Uzbekistan’s foreign trade grew from 16% to 32%.

Two weeks after I came back to Tashkent, I was appointed Deputy Foreign Minister for bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the CIS countries. Later I took office as National Coordinator for the CIS and for the EU: Central Asia Strategy. The most complex matters, especially in our relations with neighbors, including water and energy, borders, trade

and economy also fell within my mandate responsibilities.

A lot was accomplished in slightly more than three years, howeverin 2011 I realized I was somewhat tired of constant strains and stresses, and switched to a calmer position at a university. I am a professor at the Tashkent branch of Plekhanov Russian Economic University and at Tashkent State Economic University. Apart from that, I give a special course on investment at the Higher School of Diplomacy, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy.

I think of MGIMO quite often. We were lucky, ours were happy times, it didn’t matter from which of the Republics you

came, from what city or village, you could still get the best education available in the world, both secondary and higher. Schools were so good at teaching their pupils that the latter could go to Moscow and pass entry exams and get into any higher education institution, even MGIMO, without any additional private tutoring. At MGIMO, they gave us fundamental education and expansive knowledge across the board, that enable us to solve problems way out of our field of expertise. At Harvard and at the other world’s best



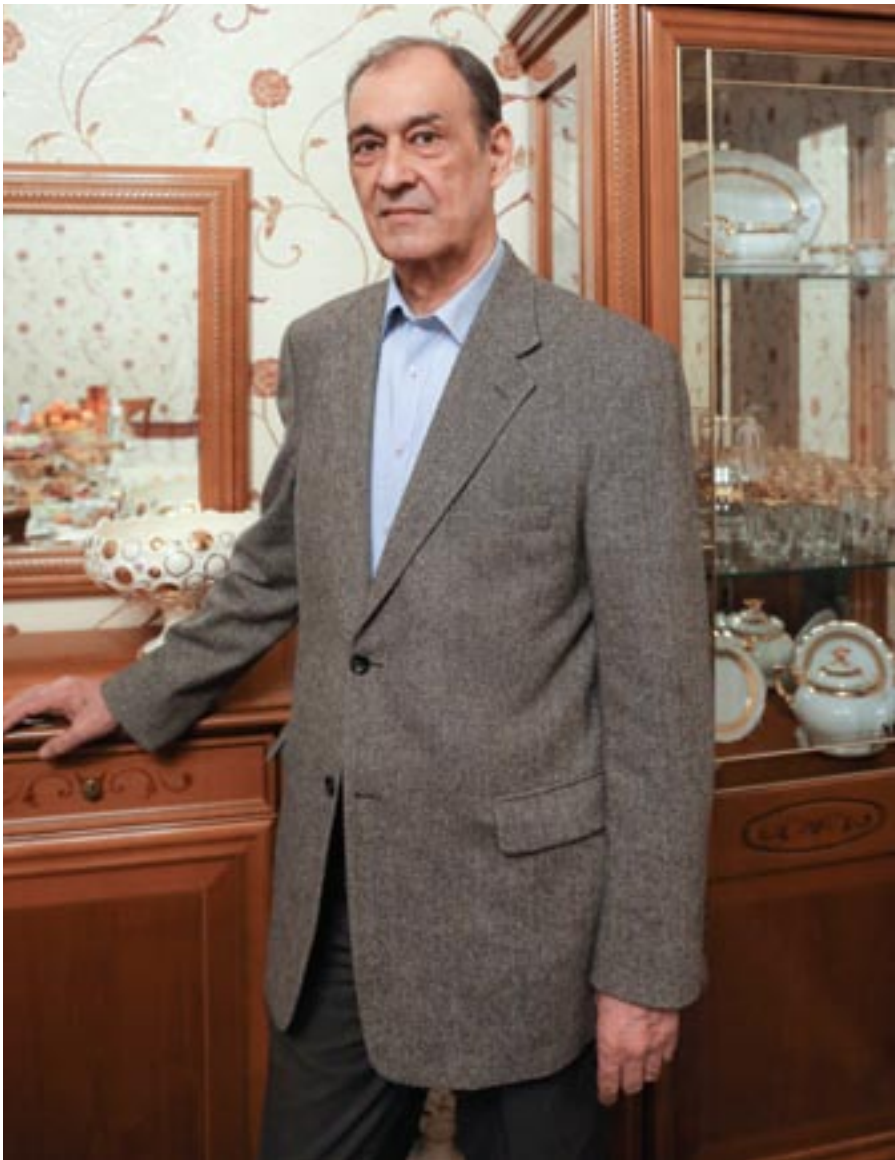
universities, during negotiations at the highest level I never felt below par, I always contributed freely to any discussion we would have with foreign scholars or top diplomats. Our teachers taught us to be open-minded, objective, to use lateral thinking, to look for the right solutions, to keep our noses to the grindstone, to be genuinely dedicated, to never back down no matter the odds. That is what I will always be grateful for, I will always cherish the years I spent at MGIMO. 🇺🇿

ABDUSAMAT HAYDAROV

(School of International Relations, 1976)  
Professor of Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies Tashkent

When Abdusamat Haydarov enrolled at MGIMO in 1971, he got Persian as his first foreign language. Not only did this event determined his whole life, but thanks to his knowledge of the Persian language, as well as, the similar to it Dari language, which he mastered, he later on managed to save not only his life, but also the lives of dozens of other people.

“In 1971, I came from Tashkent in a group of other Uzbek applicants to enroll at MGIMO. Alisher Usmanov and Patokh Chodiev, future founders of the MGIMO endowment and philanthropists, known today all over the world, were among those applicants. Persian language was taught by our beloved Sofya Klevtsova, who, unfortunately, has already passed away. I still remember the first Persian phrase she told us: “Hosh omadit be MGIMO!” (“Welcome to MGIMO!”). When I returned to Tashkent, I worked as the head of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan. We assisted in escorting high level foreign delegations visiting the USSR. In 1983,



the King of Spain, Juan Carlos I, visited Uzbekistan. My task was to accompany him at all protocol events: wreath-laying ceremony and others, where I helped him choose the right positions. A funny story happened with the wreath, although we were not laughing back then. On the eve of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier it suddenly turned out that the Spanish delegation had forgotten the ribbon to the wreath in Moscow. The worst part was that we figured it out around midnight. The ceremony was the next morning and we had a few hours to somehow solve the problem. Our Protocol Department was instructed to make a new ribbon to the wreath with an inscription from the King of Spain. To

begin with, we followed the delegation route to take down the Spanish flag hung on the occasion of the arrival of the king, and to use it to make a ribbon with the national colors of Spain. While we were taking it down, the police detained us. We explained the situation and were released. But it was already two in the morning. By that time my colleagues managed to find a tailor at night and bring him to the residence where the Spanish delegation was staying. We explained to him how to cut the fabric, even an artist was ready to write the necessary words in Spanish. But then we encountered an unexpected problem: the tailor said a strange thing, “I can’t work without an inspiration.” And only when a representative

of the Spanish royal court and I opened a bottle of vodka and “increased” the tailor’s inspiration did he begin to work. With the help of his Spanish colleagues the artist wrote the required text on the finished ribbon, and by morning, when the ribbon had dried, we attached it to a wreath. The ceremony was saved, the wreath was laid by the King and Queen Sofia. In 1982, I ended up at the USSR Embassy in Kabul and was not only a witness, but also a direct participant in the dramatic events connected with Russia’s withdrawal from Afghanistan. In 1992, when the government of President Najibullah fell, Mujahideen captured Kabul, and our embassy was trapped. Management raised the issue of urgent evacuation of employees and their families. As the first secretary, I had to participate in this rescue operation together with other diplomats. Three Il-76 were supposed to land at the airport on the appointed day to pick up not only Russian citizens, but also employees of the Mongolian and several other diplomatic missions. When preparing this operation, we were in constant contact with the leaders of the Mujahideen, including Colonel General Majid, who was in charge of the airport.

The city was divided by groups into zones, and at the request of the embassy management I had to negotiate with those commanders whose territories our bus route to the airport ran through. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the city was shelled by the forces of Hekmatyar, so it was necessary to periodically check the status of the runway. Each time we found holes from rocket explosions on it we had to persuade the commanders, and they would allow us to bring cement, which we filled the holes with after filling them with stones. On the night when our planes landed, a convoy of buses, one of which my wife was in, set forward towards the airport. And they managed to get there although the shelling

**M** GIMO cultivated love for my profession in me. These skills have allowed me to benefit the people of independent Uzbekistan

began and the rockets were exploding nearby. I was in charge of boarding the first plane. And the car with people was already heading towards the plane when a rocket hit it. A plane filled with fuel to the gills (there was no fuel in Kabul) burnt down in 15 minutes! In half an hour, we managed to get people on another plane and even take off. We landed on our military base near Termez. When I was coming off the plane, I saw that a general was sitting on a chair opposite the plane. “Sorry, son,” he said, “but for the first time in my life do I see such a huge thing landing on the rims.” It turned out that the landing gear tires were cut off during the take-off because of the fragments of rockets lying on the runway, and the Mujahideen on the ground were also firing at the plane after its take-off. The pilots worked a miracle! In early 1993, I returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan once again. After the collapse of the USSR, the country gained independence and was facing great challenges and threats coming from Afghanistan. It was necessary to engage in the formation of a new foreign policy, protect the borders and integrate into the global system of international relations. To this end, I was sent as an ambassador to Tehran,





and in 1999 I was recalled and appointed Deputy Foreign Minister. I participated in the preparation of the first Tashkent Declaration, the main official UN document on Afghanistan, which became the foundation for further steps towards finding a solution to the crisis and establishing peace in the region.

At the end of 2000, I started teaching at the Institute of Oriental Studies, where I defended my doctoral thesis: “Central Asia in Iran’s Foreign Policy” a couple of years earlier. This topic has been and remains relevant in our country and abroad. A little later I was invited to America, where in 2004 to 2005 I was engaged in research on the problems of Afghanistan, and also taught a course on security issues in the Central Asian region at the University of Georgia.

In 2007, I successfully passed the competition and began working as the head of the Western regional office of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in Herat, and after a couple of years, the Southern region with the center in Kandahar was added to my area of responsibility, I worked there for five years. This was the most difficult period in the history of Afghanistan, there was heavy fighting in the southern provinces of the country, where the backbone of the entire opposition movement, in particular the Taliban, had been formed and the activities of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization had been launched. At that time, I had to help establish a peaceful life for local authorities, to assist in conducting regional, parliamentary and presidential elections. And in early 2014, I was appointed head of the political department of the entire UN mission in Afghanistan and led the entire political work of the Organization in this region for three years.

I returned to Tashkent in 2016, where I worked as a professor at the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies, quite often reflecting on the beginning of my path. MGIMO cultivated love for my profession in me. These skills have allowed me to benefit the people of independent Uzbekistan. I also appreciate my alma mater for the friends it gave me. All of us are united by love for our home university. 🇺🇵

PULAT  
ABDULLAYEV

(International Relations, 1966)

Ambassador  
in retirement

Pulat Abdullayev was born and grew up in Tashkent in a family of prominent geologist, President of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan. One day in the summer of 1957, when he was in Moscow during his school break, a 15-year-old Uzbek schoolboy

accidentally became a guest at a dacha of a prominent Soviet high official. “There was a table laid with an appetizing meal on a spacious porch, the guests were having quiet intelligent conversations, and I started talking to an elegant young dark-haired man in simple glasses who was sitting in front of me. It turned out that he was a diplomat, an associate officer of a Soviet Embassy in a Western capital and was in Moscow on a vacation. Needless to say, he was a recent graduate of the prestigious MGIMO.” When the conversation turned to choosing a career, Pulat said he had not yet chosen his path, but everything was







coming to a point that in order to uphold family succession, he would choose geology. “Do not rush into any decisions,” the other person said. “I think you have more of a humanitarian mindset and it is better to look in this direction. Why don’t you try enrolling at MGIMO”?

Pulat Abdullayev admits that he didn’t listen to a friendly recommendation and went to study geology. And only two years later, when he finally realized, that it is not his path, he transferred from MSU to MGIMO’s School of International Relations, directly to a Sophomore year. “I became a MGIMO student in 1961 and next year my father died shy of 50. I visited him in the hospital a couple of months before his death. I remember how he introduced me to his hospital roommate: “Here is my son, he studies at MGIMO, he gave up geology and decided to become a Talleyrand.” It seemed to me that somewhere alongside the irony characteristic of my father there was a slight note of pride... My father was a man of his time and thought that a man should first master some serious profession, preferably in the engineering field, and then do whatever, including diplomacy.” Abdullayev speaks well of his professor Tarkhov, who was teaching their group political translation. “At the last phase of the war and right after it was over Tarkhov was attached as an interpreter to marshal Zhukov, who then had the need for regular communication with English and American allies. He certainly contributed significantly to us becoming language specialists.” One of Pulat’s annual language performance reviews mentioned his “no common language abilities”, which brought attention of the translation service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was invited for a talk.

Abdullayev, however, did not pursue linguistic career. Moreover, it happened so, that in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he had to work not with English language, but with French, his second foreign language that he didn’t know so well. However, during his first long travels abroad to a French-speaking Dakar (1966-1971) the situation began to change rapidly: “After two or three years I already accompanied distinguished guests from Moscow to local officials as an interpreter, and gradually reached Leopold Senghor himself, the President of the Republic of Senegal, masterful scholar of the French language, poet and philosopher. About a quarter of a century of working in French speaking countries did the job. I haven’t forgotten English, of course, it was often needed in various disarmament negotiations I had a chance to participate in, but it is definitely not my

first foreign language now. Considering the importance of foreign languages for diplomats, I’ll say the following: All my forty years of diplomatic experience and subsequent observations convinced me that successful work calls for, first of all, in-depth knowledge of the native language, moreover, the ability to match this knowledge to the standards of diplomatic documents. Figuratively speaking, one needs to work holding not only a glass of champagne, but also a dictionary of Russian language.”

Pulat Abdullayev’s career after Senegal was successful. In 1971-1977, he worked as the third, second and first secretary at the Department of International Organizations of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1977, he was sent to the USSR Embassy in the Kingdom of Belgium, where he subsequently worked more than once. Since

**I remember how my father introduced me to someone: “Here is my son, he studies at MGIMO, he gave up geology and decided to become a Talleyrand**

1991, Abdullayev was the Ambassador of USSR (later, of Russia) to Djibouti. In four years he was appointed lead advisor of the Department of Security and Disarmament of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2000, he was sent as an ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon, where he worked for six years. Pulat Abdullayev participated numerous times in multilateral disarmament negotiations within the

UN (General Assembly, First Committee, Disarmament Commission) and Conference on Disarmament, and also in the Soviet-American negotiations on intermediate-range missiles (1985-1986). Soon after coming back from Cameroon he retired. In 2008-2013 he periodically taught at the School of Economics at Nancy-Université (France) where he was giving lectures on the history of Russian French relations.

Abdullayev is working on memoirs, but this work, he complains, is “fair-to-middling”, “I think, in the end it could be something for family use. As a good friend and colleague of mine liked to say, there are usually five ‘suitcase carriers’ for one ‘writer’” in diplomacy. He meant, of course, diplomatic suitcases filled with important documents. Embassies certainly need both and an ideal employee is the one who can do both.”





**HABIB  
ABDULLAYEV**  
(International Journalism, 1989)  
*Head of Navoi Free Economic  
Zone (Uzbekistan)*

**C**hoosing MGIMO was quite natural: my father graduated from MGIMO. Of course, it is also important, that as a kid I had an aptitude for languages and humanity subjects. Besides, I grew up on prospect Vernadskogo, a couple-minutes' walk from the new building of our alma mater. It is interesting, that its construction started in 1972, when I was five, and ended when I've already become a student. Studying at MGIMO was pleasant. Regardless of the strict discipline and control we felt quite comfortable: the overwhelming majority of the students were united by the common mindset and

**C**hoosing MGIMO was quite natural: my father graduated from our university. Studying at MGIMO was pleasant, the overwhelming majority of the students were united by the common mindset and upbringing

upbringing. Subjects were interesting, professors were friendly, what else could we dream of?

The UN model was a very interesting format of the learning experience. It depicted the work of the General Assembly in the smallest of details, students played roles of the members of different delegations, headquarters' employees, journalists, etc. The model was full of real cases: the UN working languages were used when talking and preparing documents.

We studied mainly in the late 80s, during the years of soviet perestroika, thus student life was eventful and very diverse, we had crazy discos, discussion clubs, combined literary attempts in Mezhdunarodnik newspaper of the School of Journalism and theater productions.

We graduated from the institute in 1989, at the turning point of eras. The world was changing rapidly: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, the unilateral disarmament of the USSR, national conflicts, the deterioration of social and economic life. In the next few years I managed to work as an assistant to a deputy of the last Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, as a PR manager of the new Europa Plus radio station, and as a diplomat. In 1993, I started working in a Belgian construction company and managed its Moscow office. Then I worked in the Ministry of Press, the direction of "Special Economic Zones" of the Ministry of Economic Development, where I was responsible for investor relations. For the past few years I was managing the Rikor Technopark in Moscow.

At the beginning of last year, I was invited to work in Uzbekistan. Considering my previous professional experience, I was appointed the head of the Navoi Free Economic Zone.

This is a very interesting work, since I have a real chance to make my modest contribution to the historical transformation of Uzbekistan that has great prospects for economic growth.

More than once I remembered MGIMO with gratitude, when I found myself in

difficult circumstances. After all, we not only receiving knowledge, but we were also taught to analyze information and make best decisions, to identify priority tasks: this is also the "MGIMO school". And the MGIMO diploma always gave a great advantage when applying for a job, employers perceived it as a high-quality mark.

MGIMO background always helped me, and not necessarily in terms of acquired knowledge. I received the support of my fellow university friends three times in my life. This indestructible spirit of MGIMO's solidarity is perhaps the most valuable legacy of those wonderful student years. 🇺🇿

**MALIKA  
ABDULLAEVA**  
(International Journalism, 2013)  
*Lead of Automotive Practice  
Ketchum International  
Communication Agency  
Moscow*

**A**s I come from a family of MGIMO alumni, my choice of university was obvious. Since childhood I was surrounded by MGIMO graduates, who are successful and erudite people: my father and my grandfather. I was growing and understanding that MGIMO is the place for the best. I desperately wanted to become one of them and fit in.

I started preparing two years before the entrance exams. It was one of the most stressful period in my life as I was afraid of failure. My father told me that only bright people study here and that the admission doesn't mean anything, because you can easily be kicked out. However, it turned out not to be so scary. After my father morally prepared me, studying in MGIMO appeared to be quite a manageable task.

I chose the Department of Sociology of the School of International Journalism, and it was an excellent decision. The insights acquired in this area has helped me a lot in my work, starting from understanding how a focus -group works and what

the correlation relationship is to the ability to keep up a conversation about Spengler and Weber. We were taught the psychology of journalism, ways to find relevant newsworthy events, and this knowledge is very useful in my PR-career.

It's the languages that I am most grateful for. I've been learning French since childhood and it's the language that I chose for the entrance exam. However, I was the only one to do so, and with almost none knowledge of the English language I found myself in an

Upper Intermediate group. During the first semester each homework took five hours, but by the end of the year I managed to catch up with my groupcmates. Today I use English for my work on a daily basis, just as Russian, when it comes to the communication with foreign clients and the preparation of offers to companies.

I really liked the rating system, I was really passionate about it. In the past I used to do my best to get a good rating at the School, now I am doing my best to get a budget and sales commissions.








My university years help me understand that one half of your success depends on knowledge, and the other half on its presentation. The same principle applies to your career, especially if you are in consulting or dealing with clients. It's important to find the right approach and understand which points to highlight.

MGIMO also gave me an opportunity to get acquainted with charity. During my first year I learnt about the International Journalism students' initiative supporting an orphan asylum in Polotnyany Zavod village. I was happy, as many of us want to help, but they don't know how. We raised money, organized trips, bought New Year's presents. Certainly, it's not much, but for us it meant a lot. Today we support corporate social responsibility projects of our clients.

Now I head the automotive practice in Ketchum, international communication agency. Among my regular clients are such large companies as Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, SKODA, Geely Motors, ZF, I also worked

**M** GIMO also gave me an opportunity to get acquainted with charity. We raised money, organized trips, bought New Year's presents an orphan asylum. Today we support corporate social responsibility projects of our clients

with BMW Group Russia. It is my first and only job, which, by the way, is directly connected with MGIMO. The agency was founded by our alumni,— Mikhail Maslov and Sergei Chumin. In my first team there were only MGIMO graduates.

I came to the agency for an internship in summer after my second year of studies, when I was only 19. I worked for the agency during my third, fourth and fifth year, combining work and study. My schedule was exhausting, but my work motivated me a lot, and I realized that I was investing in myself. And it payed off. Even by Russian standards I got promoted very fast, and became the youngest practice lead in our company, aged 26. Sometimes international clients get confused at our first meeting, wondering why they will be consulted by a person who is 20, and sometimes 30, years younger. However, it doesn't impede my work. Now I often give lectures to students, including in MGIMO, and I always start them with this advice: do your internship as soon as possible. Only the experience can let you understand which topic you find the most interesting and help you make the right career choice. 







Bekzod Yusupov, Babur Kakharov and Ziyodilla Alimov

## BEKZOD YUSUPOV

(International Economic Relations, 2012)  
*Founder and editor in chief of news agency UzNews.uz*

Initially I was planning to enroll at one of the universities in Uzbekistan, but my father gave me sound advice: “It’s better if you enroll at MGIMO.” Especially considering that my brother was already a Sophomore here.

I listened to my father and chose the School of International Economic Relations, since in high school I was good at math and economics. Besides, graduates of this school have a great variety of professions to choose from, since they receive knowledge in the fields of microeconomics, macroeconomics and finances.

I would name such subjects as “Diplomatic protocol and etiquette”, “Economic geography and regional studies”, “Marketing” and “Accounting and finances” as my favorite ones and as the most needed in real life ones. I learned how to express my thoughts correctly, have a reasoned dialogue, attended lectures of many renowned Russian and foreign entrepreneurs and politicians who often visited MGIMO, I even got to meet some of them.

Social life was very interesting and full of events. Starting from my Sophomore year and untill I graduated from the university, I was the head of the Club of Uzbek students (about 50 people) that was a part of the “Union of Communities”.

When I returned to Tashkent, I got a job at the international audit company Baker Tilly where I began working as an assistant auditor. I’ve gained a lot of experience in the field of audit, accounting and corporate finance. However, in a couple of years I got bored and decided to switch to journalism. I registered the Russian speaking news agency UzNews.uz in

2015. Our website informs about the most relevant events in the country, we have the biggest audience of Russian speaking readers in Uzbekistan.

I always joke, that there would be no agency without MGIMO. Because it was the university’s dormitory where I got the idea of writing about events happening in Uzbekistan. I was interested in what was happening in my country and started writing about relevant events for other fellow countrymen.

## BABUR KAKHAROV

(International Law, 2012)  
*Director of STEDI company Tashkent*

It happened so that even though my elder brother was studying in MGIMO, I knew quite little about this university. It was partially due to the fact that education in our school was in English and teachers, mostly Englishmen, were advertising British colleges, in every way possible, convincing us that the choice of studying abroad is the best one. Nevertheless, after graduating from high school and under my father’s and brother’s influence I ended up deciding to enroll at MGIMO. And I didn’t regret it. There are a lot of great professors working at MGIMO, contacts with some of them have made a positive impact on my life. They tried to instill in us a responsible attitude towards work and taught us to spare no effort in searching for knowledge and achievements in our careers. I would like to especially highlight Legal English and Corporate Law. Perhaps because I became an entrepreneur.

I got lucky to be the President of the MGIMO Uzbek club and one of the

brightest moments of that period for me was the organization of Nowruz (holiday that marks the beginning of Spring among Turkic and Iranian peoples) that was celebrated on a large scale at MGIMO.

I currently work as a director of STEDI company and I’m also curating some directions of commercial operations in “Universal Capital” group of companies. I would probably name the opening of a glass factory as the main achievement of many years of work. In two years it has become a reliable supplier of high quality glass for some regions of Uzbekistan.

I value MGIMO’s education for broadening my horizons and for professors who encouraged us to think outside the box and develop such important qualities as confidence, determination and motivation.

## ZIYODILLA ALIMOV

(International Relations, 2012)  
*Deputy CEO Uzimex T&S Company Tashkent*

The idea of enrolling at MGIMO came to my father. We have a great tradition in Uzbekistan and in the East in general not to dispute decisions of elders, especially parents. I thank God and my father for showing me this exact path.

I was also quite motivated by the fact that there were a lot of my fellow countrymen among MGIMO graduates, such bright and extraordinary personalities as Alisher Usmanov and Patokh Chodiev. I remember that during an entrance exam one of the moderators told me: “Enrolling at this university is not the hardest task, the hardest one is to study



here and to graduate successfully.” At that point, I didn’t pay much attention to these words, but when I became a Freshman at the School of International Relations, I remembered them during the very first month and kept them in mind during all my study, because it was the truth.

I remember how, for certain reasons, I missed two classes of Professor Lyadov, who was teaching diplomatic protocol and protocol service. I don’t remember how I replied to his question about my absence, but he looked at me and said that if I missed his class one more time, he would call the President of Uzbekistan and would inform him about it: it turned out, he knew him personally. That’s the kind of outstanding people and real diplomats who taught us!

My work today focuses on several directions: I am a representative of an English company in the republic

**M** GIMO is not just a university, this is a good school of life and I’m proud that I was lucky enough to receive my education here

of Uzbekistan, deputy CEO in Uzimex T&S company, that specializes in foreign economic activity and a consultant on foreign economic activity in several major Uzbek institutions. The knowledge of international norms and standards received in MGIMO helps me in my work, which is filled with negotiations and contracts, management of different events and social relations.

I will never forget the years I spent at the university. MGIMO is not just a university, this is a good school of life and I’m proud that I was lucky enough to receive my education here. 🇺🇵



Bakhodir Umarov and Nodir Kakharov

## BAKHODIR UMAROV

(International Economic Relations, 1986)

**L**ike many boys from the 60s and 70s, I dreamed about the sky, I wanted to get into cosmonaut corps through the profession of military pilot. Uzbeks have a playful saying “If you want to hang yourself, then you need to hang yourself on the highest noose.” So after graduating from high school in 1976, I decided to

enroll at the most renowned summer school of the Soviet Union: Kacha Military Aviation School. However, I failed at the vision test at the medical board and all of my dreams and plans suddenly crumbled. I didn’t know what to do next. At that time my physics teacher helped me: he said that a path to Astronautics doesn’t necessarily go through aviation and that I can graduate from, say, MSU Faculty of Physics that has an Astronomy department.

Since I had a gold medal and was a physics Olympiad medalist, it was quite easy for me to enroll at MSU. However, because of the high selection

rate in the Department of Astronomy, I was enrolled at the Department of Theoretical Physics. However, after some time I realized: you need to be born a successful physics in order to become one. And I didn’t want to become a Professor of Physics.

My fellow classmates of the faculty of physics suggested I tried my chances with MGIMO. They knew that I really liked geography, always kept reading articles from newspapers and journals about foreign policy, knew all the world’s capitals and almost all of the rulers.

But I flunked MGIMO’s entrance exam by 3 points. I returned to Tashkent and really put my mind into preparations; the way I did for the aviation school. And my efforts had paid off, in 1981 I was enrolled at MGIMO’s School of International Economic Relations. I still think of that day as of one of the happiest ones in my life!

It was much easier and pleasant to study in MGIMO rather than at the Faculty of Physics. I didn’t have to exhaust my brain with abstract theorems, integrals and differentials. But the School of International Economic Relations had its own challenges. For instance, Professors of Political Economy demanded from us that we knew by heart all 3 volumes of Karl Marx’s Das Kapital. We had to take hundreds of pages’ worth of notes of this great but, to my mind, useless work.

I would first of all name philosophy as one of my favorite subjects, I enjoyed studying “International currency and credit relations”, “International economic relations in capitalist countries”, “International private and common law”, “History of economic thought” and English language classes.

Our main passion at that time was chess. There was a group of chess players formed in the dormitory that included students from Ukraine, the Baltic states, Cuba and Afghanistan. We held chess battles deep into the night.

After I graduated from MGIMO, I was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan where I started working

as a third Secretary of Protocol. The institution of foreign affairs of the republic was quite compact at that time and consisted of only seventeen diplomats. The Ministry was headed by Rafiq Nishonov, former USSR ambassador to Ceylon and Jordan. His door was always open for his subordinates. And in the late 1990s, I was sent on a long business trip to the USSR Embassy in the Republic of Mauritius.

This island state is the place where I found out about the collapse of the Soviet Union. After the Soviet flag was substituted with the Russian one (which happened on the night of December

**I’m thankful to the university for an opportunity to get a beloved career and to see the world. However, most importantly thanks to my work I met a lot of extraordinary and great people. Some of them have become my friends for life**

31st, 1991 to January 1 of the next year), I became a Russian diplomat, even though I was born in Uzbekistan. Those were the exact newyear days when Jakhongir, my first son was born. The staff members of the embassy called him Jonik in Russian fashion (later on he graduated from an American university and, as fate would have it, officially became John when he was getting American citizenship). I cannot but recall with the kind words of Viktor Trifonov, the then ambassador, great sinologist, MGIMO graduate, who, by the admissions of the native speakers from the Chinese expat community, spoke the mandarin dialect better than they did.

In 1992 to 1993, due to the financial issues and economic crisis that Russia and other post-Soviet states were facing, Moscow had to make an unprecedented decision: to suspend work of a whole range of Russian foreign institutions. Embassies in dozens of African and Latin American countries were closed. Those countries were bigger and more influential than Mauritius,— a small piece of land secluded by the vastness of the Indian Ocean. However, staff members of our embassy (just ten diplomats) and our colleagues on the neighboring Seychelles Island were spared this destiny. Apparently the





Center remembered Mark Twain’s famous phrase “God created Mauritius first, and then made a copy which he called Heaven.” Nevertheless, there was a serious staff reduction (by 70%) among diplomats. My position of the third secretary was eliminated and I made a decision to return to the motherland, to Tashkent. Over the years I’ve worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the independent and sovereign Uzbekistan as a head of different departments, spokesman of the Minister, Minister Counselor in the embassies of our Republic in Turkey, Italy and Azerbaijan.

What did MGIMO give me and what’s its deal? The main specific feature of the education of our alma mater is the depth of general scientific qualifications. The Institute and its wonderful Professors tried to develop such skills and qualities in students as absorption in one’s work, independence, responsibility, broadened horizons, high level of culture, sober and critical attention towards oneself and results of one’s work. We were taught to analyze the essence of complex things, to synthesize the general picture from fragments of information, to express our thoughts clearly and logically. All of this helped a lot in our future professional practices. 🇺🇵

**NODIR KAKHAROV**

**(International Economic Relations, 2008)**  
*Member of the Supervisory Board Universal Capital Group of Companies*  
**Tashkent**

I have always known that MGIMO is the alma mater of great people who made a great contribution to the development of Russian economy and some of them are world-renowned. I feel proud of my fellow countryman, Alisher Usmanov, who achieved so much as a businessman and is still contributing to the development of



**M**GIMO is an entire world, a community of experts who are intelligent, highly educated, committed to their cause, and, I am sure, proud to be part of the university

different areas in other countries, as well as, Russia. That definitely influenced my choice of university, and I can say with confidence that I never regretted entering MGIMO.  
MGIMO is an entire world, a community of experts who are intelligent, highly

educated, committed to their cause, and, I am sure, proud to be part of the university. I felt it during my studying there, and I’ll tell you more: often I didn’t feel confident as I was afraid not to live up to these standards.  
But this environment where, from my point of view, I spent my best years in youth, strengthened my will power and such traits of character as ambitiousness, resolve, self-confidence, – in brief, it shaped my personality.  
I recall with gratitude the attitude of professors towards us. They were not too harsh on us and at the same time demanding, pushing us to new academic heights. Once my economic theory professor Alexander Golikov learnt that I hadn’t done my homework and said: “It’s okay as you are a foreign student”. It hurt my feelings, and since then I started

doing my best to be always ready for classes.  
Currently I am a member of the Oversight Committee of the group of companies Universal Capital that, specializes in such directed activity, as construction, production of construction and other materials, intended as medical and hospitality services.  
I have always been interested in subjects related to economics. Apart from economic theory we also studied management, statistics, marketing. The acquired skills help me in my everyday life and in my business. Now I am a member of the Supervisory Board at the Universal Capital Group of Companies which specializes in construction, production of materials for construction, providing medical and hotel services. 🇺🇵

**ULUGBEK KHASANOV**

**(International Journalism, 1991)**  
*Head of International Relations Department University of World Economy and Diplomacy*  
**Tashkent**

I have been dreaming to become a journalist since school and I did a lot to make my dream come true: I went to a young correspondent club at the editors office of the all-Republic newspaper *Pioneer of the East*, I was learning how to write articles and short stories about life in my school.  
MGIMO has always been special not only because of its strong academic and

research traditions, but also thanks to a particular spirit of unity, friendship and solidarity which was maintained by the university at all levels. Students, as you know, are not very rich, and usually they run out of money before the next scholarship comes. In such cases my fellow students helped me out, be it Vladimir Medinsky, who is now Russian Minister of Culture, or Sergey Mikhailov, who is now Director General of TASS, the biggest Russian information agency. After my graduation from MGIMO, I continued my studies at the full-time PhD programme on political science. Regional security in Central Asia was approved as a topic for my PhD thesis. The knowledge acquired in MGIMO helped in my research abroad, for example, within the framework of



Ulugbek Khasanov and Sunnatjon Ikramov




the JICA scientific programme (Japan, 1997), visiting scholar programme at the University of California, Berkeley (the USA, 2004-2005), and the research programme of the Shanghai University (China, 2018).

When I completed my PhD, I was offered a job at the press-office of the President of Uzbekistan. In 2009 until mid-2011, I was the President’s spokesperson and his State Counsellor. The knowledge and

**I am particularly proud that UWED closely cooperates with MGIMO, which opened its first foreign branch campus in Tashkent to provide training on a number of priority BA and MA programs**

experience of information and research work, as well as, team work skills that I acquired in the alma mater always helped me to be up to high standard. Since 1998 I have participated in research and teaching at the leading university of the Republic, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED), on training experts in international relations. It was founded in 1992 as a national center for training experts in international relations, inspired by MGIMO, using its unique example and experience.

UWED takes part in many international university educational and research programmes, its alumni compete with alumni from other universities not only in Uzbekistan, but in Central Asia in general, representing the interests of our country in the leading international bank and financial, as well as, legal and business institutions. I am particularly proud that UWED closely cooperates with MGIMO, which opened its first foreign branch campus in Tashkent to provide training on a number of priority B.A. and M.A. programmes. 



**SUNNATJON IKRAMOV**  
(International Relations, 2014)  
*PR manager  
Department of Protocol  
and Public Relations  
“Lukoil Uzbekistan operating  
company”*

**M**y father enrolled at MGIMO on the verge of the collapse of the USSR. And in 1991, when this state ceased to exist, he lost a grant and had to leave Moscow and return back home to Uzbekistan. Unfortunately, he could not fulfil his dream and graduate from MGIMO, but his heart was filled with hope, he did everything to motivate us, his children, to enroll at this legendary university.

All my childhood I was growing up listening to my father’s stories about MGIMO. As my mother told me, when I was two years old, my father and I were walking around MGIMO territory, and he told me, still just a little boy: “Son, you will study here!”


I dreamed about this top-rank CIS diplomatic university and one of the best universities in the world, where outstanding politicians and diplomats who made the history of their peoples had studied. And of course, I wanted to see pride in my father’s eyes when I would finish for him the path that he had begun many years ago.

And the fate smiled in 2010, I got a one-in-a-thousand chance: I enrolled at MGIMO school of international relations. In my opinion, this is one of the most important and advanced schools in the university. And I did not regret it: over the years I have gained tremendous background, a huge bundle

of knowledge and a lot of different experiences.

It is difficult to single out one memory or one vivid episode – every day was filled with something special: new knowledge, acquaintances and funny stories that happened to us. Most of all I was impressed by classes with professors – experienced ambassadors, whose careers are filled with diplomatic events and world developments of paramount importance.

I’ve acquired one more valuable thing after four years of studying in MGIMO apart from knowledge – a huge family of students and friendship that knows no boundaries. I have friends, fellow students or just acquaintances in every corner of the world.

I currently work for Lukoil Uzbekistan Operating Company as a PR manager in the Department of protocol and public relations. I also opened my own IT business. It is quite significant for me, that my partner is Mustafa Gurbanli, my close friend from Azerbaijan, whom I met at MGIMO. 

**TEMURBEK KASIMOV**  
(School of International Law, 2016)  
*CEO of “Geco Inno” LLC  
Tashkent*

**M**y parents advised me to enroll at MGIMO, but I chose the school by myself: legal profession has always appealed to me. In 2010, I came to Moscow, passed the exams and was admitted to MGIMO.

MGIMO is, so to speak, a club university, everything in it was imbued with the spirit of unity and friendship and students were united by common views and values. MGIMO developed me as a person, gave me motivation in the field of scientific research and prepared me as a professional. The MGIMO brand is well known in Uzbekistan, many doors open before its graduates at the mention of it. This, of course, is the merit of Anatoly Torkunov, the rector, and the entire

academic staff of the university. They train young people just out of schools, many of whom don’t have any idea of which way to go, to become qualified

**MGIMO is, so to speak, a club university, everything in it was imbued with the spirit of unity and friendship and students are united by common views and values**

specialists and give them a professional start.

Studying was difficult, the amount of information that had to be mastered was very large. I was especially interested in all subjects related to history, – both general and Russian, as well as, the history of state and law. All the academic years were exciting: they included the Day of National Cuisine, sports tournaments and student clubs’ round tables. All of this had one goal: to expand students’ horizons, give an impetus to their personal growth and enrich them culturally.

Geco Inno company, where I am the CEO, is engaged in the import of innovative and unique construction



Temurbek Kasimov and Aziza Khamraeva



solutions for the Uzbek market. And since our contractors are mainly foreign enterprises, the education received at MGIMO helps me greatly in the business affairs. 🇺🇵

**AZIZA  
KHAMRAEVA**

(School of International Relations,  
2014)

*UCMAS Uzbekistan Program  
Development Manager  
Tashkent*

My grandfather, professor, academician and turkologist, Murad Khamraev dreamt of attending MGIMO, but he never had the chance. That is why he wanted so mubadly his son, my father, Farkhad Khamraev, to get into MGIMO. My dad became a diplomat, but he graduated from a different university. It was only us, the granddaughters, who fulfilled my grandfather’s dream. My sister Camilla graduated from the International Law School in 2011. Later I also joined the ranks of MGIMO alumni.

Studying didn’t come easily to me, I was good at some subjects, but not so much at others. Nevertheless, I have fondest memories of my four years of bachelor’s degree. And if I was offered to attend MGIMO once again, I would agree without a second thought. In Uzbek, we don’t call someone who provides instruction a teacher, we use the word ustoz, which literally means mentor. Some of my MGIMO teachers really became my ustoz.

I work for UCMAS International Education Program. I love my job, because I work with the younger generation. My MGIMO education helps me a great deal. My future employer hired me during the very first interview, immediately after learning I was a MGIMO graduate. Our university lays a solid foundation for its graduates’ future careers. 🇺🇵



**RUSTAM  
SAIDULLAEV**

(MBA MGIMO, 2019)  
*CEO of MY FAIR Exhibition  
Company  
Tashkent*

When Rustam Saidullaev enrolled at the“Economics and Management in International Business” Programme of MGIMO’s School of Business, he thought that it would be quite simple for him to study there, considering that the business he works in is connected with international education. “But it turned out that not everything was so easy. After some time, I realized that I was far from knowing

everything. And in a year many of my friends and colleagues started noticing changes in me. ‘You are conducting a dialogue differently,’ they said, ‘you are faster at finding solutions to the problems. You are probably projecting knowledge received at MGIMO on your business processes.” This is true. First of all, I managed to partly structure and update knowledge with such new trends as digital economy and big data work. Second of all, after finishing MGIMO, you are becoming a part of a worldwide family that broadens opportunities for business and friendly communication.”

However, most importantly Rustam has got new ideas thanks to studying at MGIMO. “I’ve created the “My Mentor project” within which we were





implementing workshops held by MGIMO professors, “Personnel management” project for managers, workshops on marketing and on Digital Economy. Another new project that Rustam came up with during his, so to say, MGIMO studenthood, is an educational center for studying Russian as a foreign language. “Russian language is a mode of communication in former soviet countries. If you want to work across the CIS, then by default you should preferably know Russian language apart from your native language.”

Rustam is doing a business since he was a schoolboy, he started with used computers’ repair and resale. When he was a Freshman at the Tashkent Automobile and Road Construction Institute, he worked in the tourism field and was organizing tourist groups to Issyk Kul lake. His current business is connected with exhibition

**A**fter finishing MGIMO, you are becoming a part of a worldwide family that broadens opportunities for business and friendly communication

activities, he is the organizer of the “Education and Career” exhibition. Now the two years of the MBA programme are in the past, Rustam has defended his thesis. The thesis is related to his company’s business and addresses the prospects of the international educational market development with the account of special national management aspects in this field in Uzbekistan. What’s next? “I want to create new business processes based on the knowledge received,” says Rustam, “I hope it will bring us to a new orbit of international and Uzbek educational field and will allow us to make our fair share of contribution to the creation of partnership between Uzbekistan and other countries in the field of education.”





# FAR EASTERN CARTE BLANCHE

Viktoria Panova, who graduated from MGIMO's School of International Relations in 2000, spoke with us after arriving from New Delhi, where she had taken part in the Raisina Dialogue, a major security conference, as well as, held negotiations with the leaders of Jawaharlal Nehru University only to continue her journey from Moscow to the Far East in a few hours. The distances she has to cover are endless.

Four years ago, Viktoria received a call in Moscow from Russky Island on the far side of the country. The then leadership of the Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU) offered her the position of director of the Institute of Oriental Studies' School of Regional and International Studies in order to add, as they say, MGIMO DNA to the international part of the new university's activities.

"At the time, I worked at MGIMO as Head of the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Russia," Viktoria recalled. "To be honest, I had wanted something new for a long time. When I left for Vladivostok, I thought that a few years would be enough to improve the project and I would return to my native Moscow, without which I could not imagine life. But everything turned out otherwise."

Viktoria had long focused on the G8, a topic that was popular more than ten years ago. She had showed impressive results, a PhD dissertation and a Letter of Acknowledgement from President Putin, for her assistance in organizing the G8 in Saint Petersburg in 2006. "I coordinated the 'security basket' and the questions of human security. Unfortunately, due to worsening relations with the West, the topic of the G8 is no longer relevant; however, even before this, I desired to work with cultures and systems that were exotic to me, as well as, to see the world from a different perspective. I started to pay attention to another of the 'club' formats: the G20. In 2013, the year Russia hosted the summit, I was in a working group to organize the event's

second track, i.e. public diplomacy. Since 2015, I have been an official representative of Russia in Women 20 (W20) and have been actively involved in working on problems facing the BRICS countries, as well as, serving on the BRICS Council of Centers of Expertise."

Today, Viktoria is euphoric about the scope of her tasks. "Not long ago, the President of Russia signed an order to move the capital of the Russian Far East from Khabarovsk to Vladivostok. We now face tasks on both a capital and federal scale. We want to become one of the key players in the international market for innovative educational services in the near future. In order to do so, we are launching new partnerships with leading global universities. We have an open representative office at Vietnam National University in Hanoi, which is Vietnam's leading educational institution, and we opened an office for the Far Eastern Federal University at Tokai University in Tokyo. We launched a pilot project with MGIMO for a dual master's program called "Politics and Economics in Eurasia". We are increasing the number of English-language Master's programs "for export". Moreover, among them are not only purely humanities disciplines but scientific ones; for example, biomedicine is enjoying great popularity. Students from 74 countries enrolled this year."

The Far Eastern Federal University is known for holding the Eastern Economic Forum to which President Putin comes every year. "We are present at the Eastern Economic Forum both as a venue and as an organizer – we are responsible for an integral and very authoritative

APEC Conference on Cooperation in Higher Education that is attended by ministers, deputy ministers and rectors of leading educational institutions. In addition to President Putin, other leaders attend – for example, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan has attended three times and the president of Mongolia has attended twice. At the last forum, Xi Jinping took part. At the latest Eastern Economic Forum, our honored guest was Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. The Koreans always participate at the level of president or prime minister.

Vladivostok is Russia's California. There isn't the same crazy pace as in Moscow. Asia is very close. The Eastern mentality, the interaction of cultures – all of this affects your lifestyle and rhythm... "But I still miss Moscow. If I am home for longer than a few days, I try to visit my alma mater and see colleagues and friends, as well as, give my regards to MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov, who approved my move to the Far East, seeing the possibility of greater synergy between MGIMO and the Far Eastern Federal University, as well as, the development of academic mobility.

I really like how vice-rectors here have carte blanche to carry out the university's strategic initiatives, offer new and creative solutions, and to attempt to implement grand ideas. If I fail to accomplish something, I answer with my head, but no one is going to interfere with me before then." ❏

Vladivostok is Russia's California. There isn't the same crazy pace as in Moscow. Asia is very close, and there is the Eastern mentality and a combination of cultures





# AZER TALYBOV: “I AM CLOSE TO MY ALMA MATER”

When Azer Talybov started working at the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia in 2003, he had an interview with Herman Gref, the then Minister of Economic Development and current President of Sberbank. “First, he noticed my MGIMO education. Another advantage of mine was foreign languages. I speak three: French, English and Vietnamese. Gref noted that this was a good foundation.”

Vietnamese at that time was not much in demand, but when Azer flew to Vietnam with the minister, his knowledge of the language was an added bonus. The young employee was not yet capable of serious insight, but he managed to introduce the minister to Vietnamese cuisine. “Ever since, when I am in Vietnam with my colleagues and friends, I lead a gastronomic tour through Hanoi’s famous establishments. They just can’t leave the country without trying pho!”

For Talybov, who is now a Deputy Minister of Economic Development of Russia, the Vietnamese language came into his life in the following manner. From 1984 to 1989, he and his family lived in Vietnam, where his father worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Although I was a child, I still have many impressions about how the country rebounded after the war, how Soviet funding developed its economy and how Vietnamese specialists who were taught in the USSR returned to build a new life. For me, Vietnam is still a very familiar place.” Therefore, when in 1994 Talybov learned as a schoolboy that MGIMO had decided to renew courses for rare languages, including Vietnamese, he went for an interview and was accepted. He studied at school in the morning and went to courses at MGIMO in the evening. At the end of his studies, he took an entrance exam in Vietnamese and entered MGIMO’s School of International Relations in 1995.

“MGIMO was the peak of my ambition,” Azer recalled, “but it revealed new ambitions to strive for. Take, for example, meeting with leaders of countries and economies who arrived at the university to speak in front of us and answer our questions! Through outstanding speakers and interesting programs, the university rewired the mindset of yesterday’s schoolboy and broadened my horizons, giving me a global view of problems. The program for specialists in international

relations was so complex and the courses so in-depth that what was most important for any student was finding the desire to improve one subject or another, and to deepen their knowledge. But the most important thing that MGIMO teaches the students is to study; it provides the constant motivation to improve, add new competencies and conduct serious research all by yourself.”

**M** GIMO was the peak of my ambition, but it revealed new ambitions to strive for. Take, for example, meeting with leaders of countries and economies who arrived at the university to speak in front of us and answer our questions!

In 1997, Talybov had a year-long internship in Vietnam, where he graduated with high marks from the Hanoi University of Science and Technology. “Thanks to the full immersion in the language, my Vietnamese improved to a conversational level.”

Sometimes it happens that graduates from MGIMO no longer keep up with

their region or language of study. Talybov has in this sense been lucky: he oversees Russo-Vietnamese relations for the ministry, the potential of which with each year grows ever bigger. “We recently implemented a free trade zone with Vietnam, the turnover is growing at a good pace, and there is the mutual transfer of technologies. We are exporting many solutions in the electricity generation sector, as well as developing public transportation, starting with the building of metros in major cities and ending with port and road infrastructure. We receive textile products from Vietnam. The Vietnamese are investing a lot in the Russian economy, understanding that Russian reforms are of a long-term character. Our economies are working in an interconnected system, complementing each other.”

After graduating from MGIMO, his dream of working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs didn’t come true. “There were few vacancies then, not like now. But it was a blessing in disguise since HR-people at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told me that there was a need for specialists at the Ministry of Economic Development. And now I can surely say that I was lucky! Herman Gref at this exact time was gathering a group of young employees, with whom he started an ambitious total reformation of the ministry. It was important to take all of the best practices from Soviet state planning and add





modern practices, answering the demands thrust upon us by society. We all spent nights in the ministry, including its leaders and the minister himself. Going home did not make sense. There were meetings until two in the morning that resumed at 9 am.”

In 2007, Gref left for Sberbank, but the transformative trend that he put in place continues on, and Talybov’s career continued to trend upwards. For the next ten years, he headed the secretariat of the next minister, Elvira Nabiullina (the current head of the Central Bank of Russia) and when she left to join

**I oversee Russo-Vietnamese relations for the ministry, the potential of which with each year grows ever bigger. We recently implemented a free trade zone with Vietnam, the turnover is growing at a good pace**

the APresidential Administration of Russia as an economic adviser, he led her administrative apparatus there as well. “Presidential Administration of Russia is a special structure that works exclusively for the head of state. It has a wide authority, in particular control over the practical execution of assignments for which the government is responsible. The Administration’s approach to this allowed me to realistically estimate the role of separate elements in this system, to see the points where interaction between different blocks could be closer and

endeavors more focused. Moreover, the role of the Administration’s is not only to point out the government’s mistakes but to help to create advantageous conditions so that elements of the system work consistently and harmoniously, and so that decisions are developed to the end.

In 2014, Nabiullina left the Presidential Administration to lead the Central Bank

**I am close to my alma mater; I share our values and am ready to do everything in my power to help the university succeed. The ministry can help MGIMO through the competencies and range that we have**



of Russia, and Talybov received an offer from her to lead her administration. Three years later, he joined the team of Maxim Orshkin, the new Minister of Economic Development of Russia, as a deputy.

“There is currently a wide spectrum

of issues under my control, the most important being the development of state programs. The ministry is responsible for the methodology of state programs, the setting of goals and the achievement of results, as well as for budgetary legislation.

The second big responsibility is a targeted investment program and the development of a system for capital investments by the state. This is a complex system that the ministry worked on for decades. It allows us to track and effectively solve problems regarding the development of social infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals, etc.”

There is an international part for each of the 13 deputy ministers. Talybov oversees Vietnam, Azerbaijan and Israel, and he is the co-chair of a Russo-German working group.

He can often be seen at MGIMO events. “I am close to my alma mater; I share our values and am ready to do everything in my power to help the university succeed. The ministry can help MGIMO through the competencies and range that we have, and the university could help the ministry search for answers to current issues in our work to help us make the correct decisions. After all, an educational institution becomes a true scientific research center when it solves practical tasks, combining science with practice.”



MINISTERSTVO  
ZAHRANIČNÝCH VECÍ  
A EURÓPSKÝCH ZÁLEŽITOSTÍ  
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY

斯洛伐克共和国  
外交部

DOBRY NÁPAD SLOVENSKO

МИНИСТЕРСТВО  
ИНОСТРАННЫХ  
ДЕЛ  
СЛОВАЦКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ

GOOD IDEA SLOVAKIA

# LUKÁŠ PARÍZEK: “MGIMO PRESENTS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES”

State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic on his successful start at MGIMO

Lukáš Parízek (IR, 2012) was captivated by geopolitics while a student at the gymnasium in his home city of Bratislava, dreaming to become a diplomat. “Once my father told me that there was a renowned diplomatic university in Moscow,” recalls Mr. Lukáš. “I googled that information and came across MGIMO – one of the best educational institutions in the world specializing in international relations.” Today Lukáš Parízek is State Secretary at the Slovak MFA, where he deals with security and development policy, economic diplomacy, diaspora overseas, as well as international organizations and bilateral relations with non-EU countries. Lukáš Parízek believes that it was in MGIMO that his successful career started: he got a bachelor’s degree in 2010 and a master’s degree two years later.

MINISTÈRE  
DES AFFAIRES  
ET EUROPÉENNES  
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE





**MJ: Was is difficult to enter MGIMO?**  
At first it seemed unrealistic, but then I learnt about the opportunity to get a Slovak Academic Information Agency scholarship. We get a quota of two people annually thanks to a Russian presidential decree. I met all of the requirements and passed the entrance exams even before I received my school certificate. Passing my finals at school was the last step before entering the University.

**MJ: What events were the most memorable and interesting? Who, among MGIMO professors, influenced you the most?**  
There were a lot of interesting events. Visits from prominent global leaders were of particular interest to me. Ted Turner from CNN, Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz al Saud from Saudi Arabia, and President of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud

**P**rominent global leaders spoke before us, MGIMO students. I am sure that no other university presents such opportunities

Abbas spoke before us. I am sure that no other university presents such opportunities. I will never forget Professor Alexander Revyakin from the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Russia not only because he familiarised us with the profession at the beginning of the first year, but also because he addressed us as “my friends”. I would like to seize this opportunity to send my best wishes to Associate Professor Natalya Shuyskaya who taught me Arabic, and Artem Malgin who gave us lectures on the CIS. An important role in the life of every foreign student was played Irina Providentseva from the Dean’s Office of the School of International Relations; as well as Vladimir Shishkin, patron of all foreign students at MGIMO.



**MJ: What were you dreaming about at university?**  
Naturally I was dreaming about becoming a successful person in international relations at the global level. I was studying Arabic as I saw myself working in the Middle East in the future. Surely, as any other student, I was dreaming about passing my exams and graduating from the university, which I managed to do.

**MJ: How did your career go after graduating from MGIMO?**  
I spent the last semester in the OSCE doing an internship in the Actions against Terrorism Unit, where I continued to work after the graduation. Then I transferred to the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, namely International Relations Division, and later to the Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency, within its Department of Communication and International Cooperation. In 2016 I was appointed to the post of State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. I am also a Special Representative of our MFA for Slovakia’s Chairmanship in the OSCE.

**MJ: What qualities, skills and experience did you acquire at each of these stages? Do you have any achievements that you are proud of?**  
As I have already said, when I left the OSCE, I joined the Ministry of Defence where I dealt with security, which is my specialization. For example, I took an active part in the completion of the White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic and in preparation of the Defence Strategy of the state. Thanks to working in the OSCE I understood the way the organization functions. At the same time I gained invaluable experience of working in an international institution which enabled me to open “the door to the world of diplomacy”, so to say. That experience helps me now, when Slovakia is presiding over the OSCE. Being a Special Representative of the Slovak presidency I am in charge, inter alia, of the Working Group on Scales of Contributions. Three months of hard work led us to a consensus in early April this year on the scales of contributions for 2019. As the scales did not effectively change since

2007, I consider it a significant achievement. I should add that I have learnt a lot from this work. For instance, I realized again that the efforts of one person are not enough to achieve great results. You can get them only through teamwork, with the support of your colleagues. The key is to learn how to use your communication skills and find compromises on a daily basis. It is true not only for civil service, but for any work connected with international relations.

**MJ: Have you ever faced a career crisis? How have you handled it?**  
I was appointed as the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic just before our EU Presidency started. I would call this period my personal “shock therapy”. The fact is that I transferred from the Slovak Innovation and Energy

Agency to the Ministry very rapidly, so I didn’t have time to adapt. On the one hand, I was supposed to defend the interests of the Slovak Republic within the European Union and, on the other hand, manage the policy of the Ministry. Thanks to the support from my colleagues and the Ministry staff this transition was a smooth one. We managed to address all the challenges successfully.

**MJ: You took up this important position when you were very young. How would you explain such a rapid promotion?**  
I believe this is the result of a combination of circumstances such as my education, professional training, personal qualities, as well as the chances that I seized. And a bit of luck!

**MJ: What would you recommend to those MGIMO students who dream of**



**I**believe my success is the result of a combination of circumstances such as my education, professional training, personal qualities, as well as the chances that I seized. And a bit of luck!

**professional success?**  
It is very easy: you need to try your best and jump at all chances and opportunities; you should not turn them down. Moreover, if fortune does not smile on you, you should create these chances yourself. It is important to be ambitious and remember famous words: “One must study, study and study again.” I’d like to take this opportunity to congratulate MGIMO on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and I wish my dear alma mater many happy returns of the day, and success in all endeavors. 🇸🇰



Photo by Igor Drobyshev  
Press Dept, Russia's Ministry  
of Digital Development,  
Communications  
and Mass Media

# MIKHAIL MAMONOV: “BY BOLDNESS OF THOUGHT, MGIMO HAS NO EQUAL!”

Mikhail Mamonov, Deputy Minister of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media, graduated from MGIMO’s School of International Relations in 2003. In choosing this education, he is thankful to his “ambitious mother.” “Somehow she convinced me: ‘There’s an institute in Moscow, and you cannot even imagine someone from our city of Stavropol entering there.’ This hurt me. I even went to Moscow and visited MGIMO, where I finally understood that it was the place for me. MGIMO was one of the few educational institutes that offered a classical education. This satisfied my demands: I loved humanities, languages and history. In 1998, I applied and, lucky for me, I was accepted!

In Mamonov’s family, no one had ever been commercially-minded: all of his relatives had been soldiers, engineers and teachers, and all had worked for the state. Therefore, he was never infected with the business fever of the early 1990s. There were many like him among the students of MGIMO at the time. “Everyone I knew in the dormitory studied non-stop.

This was because all of the teachers were great. The pleasant sensations of the periodic “explosions of the mind” that occurred in their lessons inspired me to study. Indeed, the scope and boldness of thought at MGIMO, I think, has no equal. But there is only so much one can do, so the institute, making the educational program as intense as possible, needed

to reduce its lecture and seminar courses. Students were responsible for finishing the material themselves, supplied with a few methodological instructions and a list of literature.”

Mamonov was always comfortable at MGIMO. “It was, possibly, the first educational institution in Russia which, while not having a Western-style campus, was gradually developing one,

**M**GIMO was one of the few educational institutes that offered a classical education. This satisfied my demands: I loved humanities, languages and history

including fenced-off areas, small places for walking and inner lawns next to the library; indeed, the library itself was comfortable and provided a place for academic contemplation – like a Russian Cambridge.”





Mamonov was assigned English and Chinese. “Chinese has always helped me. It has always impressed people. Besides being considered an intelligent and ‘well-rounded’ person, knowing Chinese as a young specialist gave you a certain charm, admitting you to sacred knowledge, inaccessible to most.”

Mamonov was appointed to the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media in December 2018. “I was attracted to new tasks connected with national economic activities, with a large amount of work on planning for negotiations with foreign companies that do business in Russia. I am responsible for all international matters, the digital agenda of the Eurasian Economic Union, issues of electronic commerce and the development of exports of information technologies. This is an area in which Russia has a strong competitive advantage.

Together with the Ministry of Economic Development, we created a strategy to develop artificial intelligence. Russia is one of three countries in the world with its own technological platform, the others being the US and China. Rarely do countries have their own messengers or social networks – we have V Kontakte and Odnoklassniki. Few have a powerful search engine – we have Yandex, which is available to all users who use the Cyrillic alphabet, not to mention the results we have in radioelectronics, or the global success of Kaspersky Lab. Our possibilities in cybersecurity are colossal; Russia is one of the top 30 countries by the amount of development of digital services and Moscow is the world’s leading ‘smart city’!”

Mikhail Mamonov believes that MGIMO’s role in his professional success “amounts to about 80 percent, and I am not exaggerating. My colleagues know very well that I consider MGIMO to be a very good educational institution that continues to keep its competitive edge. I hope that it will continue to be so, and not only in Russia but abroad. Not long ago I had the honor of participating in the presentation of diplomas at MGIMO and I saw many people from many different



**M**GIMO was, possibly, the first educational institution in Russia which, though without a Western campus, gradually developed one, akin to Cambridge

countries, meaning that we are interesting to the world.”

What can MGIMO give to young people? “Above all, it gives them a high level of empathy, the skills to understand

the person they are talking to, to be understood and respectful, and to be able to make a good impression. Secondly, because of the amount of material and its range, you learn to somehow interlink everything. The result is the alignment of new neural connections that grow at the speed of thought. Finally, it gives good and thorough knowledge of a foreign language. I would also like to point out that MGIMO cultivates a way of behaving in a dignified manner. Surrounded by individuals at MGIMO whom I considered to be better than me in some respects, I felt the constant desire to catch up to them, and this made me better and more interesting. I feel that this is the merit of our rector, Anatoly Torkunov – he is



**T**he part MGIMO played in my professional success? I would say about 80 percent. And that is not an exaggeration. Colleagues know well that I consider MGIMO to be a very good educational institution

trying to cultivate this atmosphere among us. At MGIMO, a culture of openness to new ideas has been well developed because you constantly face them; it is a culture of seizing opportunities. Today, my former classmates are working on a variety of different tasks: besides working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other foreign political structures, some work for Yandex, some work in the gaming industry, and some work for the Presidential Administration of Russia on domestic policy. What is the advantage of



our education? If you are a civil engineer, then your career trajectory is more or less clear – sooner or later you will become an engineer. In order to move to a different track, you need to invest your resources and health, and change your karma; you must be very lucky. If you are an MGIMO graduate, you are universally adaptable. Colleagues of mine who work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs know

that they will come across extremely different situations and have to deal with them – from the oil industry to the Arctic. It obliges you to understand a many topics, meaning that you can become a fully rounded individual if you want. I think that MGIMO is better than other educational institutions in preparing people for a life that is diverse and unpredictable.”





# TRILOGY OF DIALOGUES

On the eve of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, MGIMO-University, which hosted the Russian-French Trianon Dialogue, initiated the rapprochement of the three existing dialogue mechanisms – French, German and Austrian – of Russia's bilateral cooperation with Western countries. This initiative was called the Trilogy of Dialogues.







# Trianon Visiting David

A meeting of the coordination Council of Trianon Dialogue Russian-French Civil Society Forum was held in Moscow. This year, the Russian side hosted the French delegation at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts.



Rector of MGIMO-University Anatoly Torkunov opened the meeting with words of gratitude to the owner of the site – a member of the coordinating Council and Director of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Marina Loshak. She, in turn, stressed the symbolism of the meeting in the opening days of the exhibition on “Shchukin. Biography of a Collection”, which is closely connected with French

history and culture. “The exhibition tells the story of Sergei Shchukin’s collection formation – said Marina Loshak – through his personality, family biography and cultural and historical context, which help to recreate the collection of the brothers – Peter, Dmitry, and Ivan. The exhibition includes iconic works by Claude Monet, Pierre Auguste Renoir, Paul Cezanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and others. We



succeeded to make the name of Shchukin familiar only in Russian, but now it is known in France and elsewhere. The exhibition was the longest lasting of all exhibitions in France. We are ambassadors of France, ambassadors of French culture all over the world: many of the exhibitions that museums import from abroad are related to French art.”

The All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center’s report devoted to the Perception of France by Russian youth through the prism of education started the discussion of the Trianon projects. The youth are interested in

France and strongly associate it with its cultural dominants, as well as with the traditionally developed spheres of consumer goods. According to the participants of the study, France is traditionally associated with such industries as wine- and cheese- making, perfumery, haute couture, art, cinema, literature, philosophy, and architecture. Young people treat Paris, along with Rome, Vienna, Venice, Berlin, London, Barcelona, Florence, as the cultural capital of Europe. The cultural dominants of France, according to the participants of the discussions, are the Louvre, the

**The Window to Russia project will provide foreign users with online access to unique collections of literature pieces by Russian authors, the collection of Russian movies, the largest museum collections in Russia and more**

Sorbonne, the Eiffel Tower, the Pompidou Center, Notre Dame Cathedral, the French cabaret, fashion weeks, various abbeys and the Cannes festival. In general, the analysis of the discussions shows a great interest of the young audience to the culture of France, as this area is the basis of the country’s perception.

The co-chairs of the Trianon Dialogue, MGIMO-University rector Anatoly Torkunov, and Ambassador Pier Morel briefly described the Trianon events already held in 2019. The co-chairs paid special attention to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum; several





Trianon sessions were devoted to the dialogue format of interaction between countries, education of the future, culture, as well as cooperation between business communities.

Alexander Orlov, the Executive Secretary of the Trianon Dialogue from the Russian side delivered a speech about the literary competition held by the Association of French specialists in the Russian language in Paris. The competition winners were awarded a trip to Sirius Education center to participate in the August literature session. The trip was organized by the Russian Secretariat of Trianon Dialogue.



Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications Vladimir Grigoriev presented a Window to Russia project to promote Russian culture abroad. The project will provide foreign users with online access to unique collections of literature pieces by Russian authors, the collection of Russian movies, the largest museum collections in Russia and more.

The French member of the Council Claudie Haignere presented a joint French-Russian youth writing contest named Dear Tomorrow (Cher demain). The preliminary topic of the contest is “If you could address the intelligence of the future, what message would you send it?”

The French member of the Council, Claudie Haignere, presented a joint French-Russian youth writing contest named Dear Tomorrow (Cher demain) with the preliminary topic of the contest “If you could address the intelligence of the future, what message would you send it?”

Project coordinator of the Moscow center of urban studies, Alexey Raskhodchikov, talked about the joint Russian-French contest of young architects for the design of University campuses and libraries. The first stage of the competition was launched later at the

Moscow Urban Forum (MUF).

Nicolas Shibaev, Executive Secretary of the French side, presented a seminar project on linguistic policy in France and Russia, initiated by the French Ministry of Culture.

Following the rules for the selection of the dialogue topic for the year, the French co-chair proposed Sustainable Development (Développement durable) as a relevant topic for the year 2020. Next year will be devoted not only to the search for effective and modern ways to solve environmental and social problems. The attitude of society and the perception of sustainable development issues will be a core topic of all next year’s projects and discussions.

After the meeting, the members of the Coordinating Council had a tour of the “Shchukin. Biography of a Collection” exhibition. It is one of the most significant collections of European modernist art, covering the most important artistic trends of the late 19<sup>th</sup> — early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.



Christian Krohn. Portrait of S. I. Shchukin. 1915







# TRIANON DIALOGUE AT THE PARIS PEACE FORUM

Last November Paris hosted “the Trianon week”, a series of events organized by the Russian-French Trianon Dialogue and MGIMO University.





In November 2018, French President Emmanuel Macron organized the first Peace Forum in Paris to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The leaders of European countries, including the Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as the Donald Trump attended the Forum.

A year later, neither Vladimir Putin nor his American counterpart came to the 2019 Forum. However, the image of Trump was everywhere in Paris: on bus stops, where there were posters with his photos and a motto “Ecoutez, le monde changer!”, and on lamppost posters in the form of skull with recognizable bangs and a slogan “Trump c’est la guerre!”

Venued in the Great Hall of the parc de La Villette, the Paris Peace Forum was opened by the newly appointed 13th President of the European Commission, and the former 8th German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen. At home, she is considered the weakest head of the Bundeswehr in history. Why was she made head of the European Commission? Moreover, Emanuel Macron sensationally

claimed NATO's “brain death.” Are not these facts connected?

Taking the floor, Emanuel Macron spoke about the crisis in Europe and the world's political and economic structure, stressing that the formed after the Second World War system had been effective for 70 years. “However, recent years have shown,” he said, “that new inequalities have appeared, they

have fragmented the modern community, forming a crisis of our democracies and a doubt in all Western democracies. This has revived the unilateral policy of those who were the guarantors of this international system.”

Meanwhile, at the second level of the hall in the Masterclasses working session, The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov,



The MusicAeterna byzantine choir performs at St-Louis-en-l'Île, an ancient church, recognized as a monument of the national heritage of France



Donald Trump didn’t come to the 2019 Peace Forum. However, his image was everywhere in Paris: on bus stops, where there were posters with his photos and a motto “Ecoutez, le monde changer!”, and on lamppost posters in the form of skull with recognizable bangs and a slogan “Trump c’est la guerre!”

delivered his speech. “Undoubtedly, the world is changing,” he said. – Multipolarity is its main essence. No one – not a single state, not a group of countries like what we call the “historic West” – can rule the world alone. New centers of economic growth, financial





power, and political influence are emerging before our eyes. Naturally, our Western friends are not happy about this.”

Mr. Lavrov talked President Macron for an hour, concluding his speech on a positive note: “The end of history ‘triumphantly proclaimed’ after the collapse of the Soviet Union did not happen. History is alive and feels quite good, and Francis Fukuyama’s prediction of the eternal domination of the West did not come true. This reality is already recognized in numerous analytical works, and in the recent interview statements of the President of France Emanuel Macron.”

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A series of the Trianon Dialogue meetings was opened by the performance of the musicAeterna byzantine choir (the choir artistic director – Teodor Currentzis). The unique concert was held in the ancient

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church St-Louis-en-l'le which is recognized as the monument of the national heritage of France. We begin “Trianon Days” in a remarkable place, – said Anatoly

V. Torkunov, MGIMO Rector and Co-chair of the Trianon Dialogue. – This concert in one of the oldest churches of Paris makes you think once again of the unique role played by spirituality, culture, and art. The project was presented by Head of the RDI Group Board, managing director of the contemporary arts fair viennacontemporary Dmitry Aksyonov. The first expert meeting within the “Week” was a round-table “30 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Outcomes and Prospects” which took place in the School of International Relations HEIP on 12 November. School Director F. Kattelat kicked off the discussion. The event was attended by President of the World Association of Russian Press V. Ignatenko, Ex-foreign minister of Poland and Co-chair of the Russian-Polish Group for Difficult Issues Adam Rotfeld, Professor of Columbia University Robert Legvold, Strategy Director of the PH “Kommersnt” and Editor of the “Peterburger Dialog” newspaper Viktor Loshak, Vice-Rector of MGIMO Artyom V. Malgin, as well as executive secretaries of the Trianon Dialogue A. Orlov and N. Shibaev, and others.

A key event at the Paris Peace Forum was presentation of projects. Over 100 countries presented their projects (114 projects in total). The Trianon Dialogue project entitled “The Art of Dialogue. The Dialogue of Arts” was accepted to participate in the tender.







Its goal is to promote culture as a tool of reflecting political trends and exposing present-day issues, as well as establishing contacts among different countries and nations, first and foremost between Russia and France. Dmitry Aksyonov presented the project. The Trianon Dialogue organized a round-table based on the topic of the project. It was attended by France’s Minister of Culture Franck Riester, UAE Minister of Culture and knowledge Development of the Noura Al Kaabi, Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts Marina Loshak, the well-known collector Thomas Kaplan, General Director of the international contemporary art biennial in South America Bienalsur Aníbal Jozami, Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Arts N. Kuzmina, and Director of the Alexandrinsky Theatre and MGIMO graduate R. Dosmukhamedov.

**Within the Russian-French contest “The Dear Comes Tomorrow!”, over 5000 Russian and French schoolchildren can compete to become the best author writing about future and man-IT interaction**

The moderator of the discussion was Steven Erlanger, the Chief Diplomatic Correspondent for Europe for The New York Times.

Another venue for the “Trianon Week” was the Paris Science and Industry Museum which gave an official start to the Russian-French project – the contest “The Dear Comes Tomorrow!”.

Over 5000 Russian and French schoolchildren can complete to become the best author writing about future and man-IT interaction. The contest was kicked off by First Deputy Minister of Education, MGIMO graduate Pavel Zenkovich, Deputy Director of the Federal Agency on Press and Mass Communications V. Grigoriev, President of the French Institute, Special Representative



**A key event at the Paris Peace Forum was presentation of projects. The goal of the Trianon Dialogue project entitled “The Art of Dialogue. The Dialogue of Arts” is to promote culture as a tool of reflecting political trends and exposing present-day issues, as well as establishing contacts among different countries and nations**

of France on International Cultural Ties P.Buele, and others.

The day ended at the Russian spiritual and cultural center which brought together over 200 participants. Among them were members of the French Alumni Association of MGIMO and Trianon Dialogue friends. They watched the movie premier by First Deputy Director General of TASS Mikhail Gusman “The Formula of Power. Jacques Chirac. Epilogue”. The movie is about the outstanding French politician Jacques Chirac who ruled France from 1997 till 2007. Then the guests watched another movie “MGIMO. In All Languages” shown on a Russia’s major Channel 1 and was dedicated to the 75-th anniversary of MGIMO. The event was attended by Russian Ambassador to France Aleksey Meshkov and Russian Permanent Representative to UNESCO Alexander Kuznetsov, and others.



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Next day there was a discussion held at the Paris Peace Forum that was dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The session was attended by Hubert Védrine, Francois Mitterrand’s advisor and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of France; Andrey Grachev, press secretary of M. Gorbachev, the President of the USSR; Daniela Schwarzer, director of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) and Yoichi Suzuki, former

ambassador of Japan to Singapore and France. Toma Gomar, director of IFRI, was moderating the discussion. The opening of the first Siberian Education Salon, organized under the auspices of the Trianon Dialogue, took place at the Russian Center for Science and Culture. A. Meshkov; K. Volkov, director of the Russian Center for Science and Culture; A. Torkunov, MGIMO Rector; E. Galazhinsky, Tomsk State University Rector and A. Ilin, Deputy

General Director of Campus France agency on the Promotion of French Higher Education Abroad and International Student Mobility participated in the opening session. The meeting of the Forum’s Coordinating Council at the French Foreign Ministry was the central event of the Trianon Dialogue in Paris. A. Torkunov, MGIMO rector, and P. Morel, ambassador and Special Representative of the President of France – co-chairs of the dialogue – opened the meeting. The meeting



discussed preliminary results of the Trianon Dialogue 2019, which was held under the main topic “Education and Enlightenment”. M. Kotyukov, Minister of Science and Higher Education of Russia, was a special guest of the meeting. He presented high-priority directions and projects of the Russian-French cooperation in the field of education and science. From the Russian side, the meeting was attended by K. Shakhnazarov, general director of Mosfilm film studio; V. Grigoryev, deputy head of the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications; B. Titov, commissioner for the President of Russia for the protection of entrepreneurs’ rights and MGIMO graduate; V. Yakunin, head of the department of Lomonosov Moscow State University; M. Loshak, director of the Pushkin Museum and others. As for French participants, there were P. Pouyanne, Chairman of the Board of



**The Choiseul 100**  
 Russia project  
 promotes experience  
 exchange between  
 economic leaders of both  
 Russia and France







Directors and Chief Executive Officer of Total Group; C. Brechignac, Permanent Secretary of the French Academy of Sciences; C. Haigneré, former Minister of Science and Technology of France, and others. The participants outlined the main directions of forum’s work for the next year that will have “Climate and Environment” as a central topic. The program continued with the activities



of the Choiseul Institute as part of the return trip of the participants of the Choiseul 100 Russia list to Paris. At the welcoming reception in Ritz, the participants were addressed by P. Lorot, president of the Choiseul Institute; J.-B. Lemoyne, French Deputy Foreign Minister; A. Torkunov, MGIMO Rector, and P. Sorokin, Deputy Minister of Energy of Russia.

The next day, the participants visited both houses of the French Parliament - the National Assembly and the Senate. Participants were welcomed by G. Longuet, former minister, senator, chairman of the France-Russia interparliamentary group; C. Janvier, deputy of the National Assembly of France, chairman of the France-Russia Friendship Group; A. Genevard, deputy chairman of the French



National Assembly. The participants also visited Station F startup incubator and Dior boutique and held a series of meetings. The goal of the Choiseul 100 Russia project is to establish contacts and promote experience exchange between Russian economic leaders and their foreign colleagues, who got into a similar rating

in France. The project was organized by the Choiseul Institute in partnership with Sberbank and Total group under the auspices of the Trianon Dialogue. The Choiseul 100 Russia list includes bright and talented representatives who are up to 40 years old and whose potential contributes to the modernization of the



country’s economy. There were also MGIMO graduates among them. They are: A. Zadorina, chief designer and founder of Zasport brand; M. Duma, founder and CEO of Future Tech Lab; E. Zhivov, deputy general director of Alfa-Capital; D. Nechaev, founder and CEO of Triton Bikes and M. Petrova, Director of the Endowment MGIMO.



# Urban revolution on campus

University campuses and learning space architecture were the two main topics discussed at the Trianon Dialogue Business Program on the sidelines of the Moscow Urban Forum. The starting point for the discussion was a panel session “Greater Paris — Greater Moscow. Sustainable development practices.”

Local authorities and experts of the two capitals came together to discuss the issue of joined territories in urban development, new approaches and time-tested practices. One of the main topics was learning environment architecture.



MGIMO’s vice-rector, Artem Malgin, addressed the participants with the overview of the work on university campuses that has already been done within the framework of the Trianon Dialogue. Last year’s advances in urban development became a stepping stone for this meeting of the Trianon Dialogue that now revolved around

the educational side of space planning. The discussion took place as part of the MIPIM property market that featured a separate session on university campuses and a workshop at the technopark of the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis. These discussions became a foundation for a new project that was launched as part of the Trianon

The session was focused on the modalities of the Russian-French contest of young architects who were to present their projects of a university campus under the auspices of the Trianon Dialogue.

Dialogue program – a Russian-French contest of young architects entitled “The Architecture of Learning Environments and University Campuses”. The participants continued discussing the issue of organizing learning environments and designing university campuses during the design session “The Architecture of



Dominique Fache, board member of the Sophia Antipolis technopark.

In today's Europe, university campuses play a special role in urban development and actively integrate in the economy of postindustrial communities.

Learning Environments”, which was held at the Moscow Urban Forum. The session focused on the modalities of the Russian-French contest of young architects who were to present their



projects of a university campus, organized under the auspices of the Trianon Dialogue. Malgin delivered the opening statement, highlighting the special role that university campuses play in urban development and the importance of their integration into the economy. Russia and France have the same trajectory of learning environment development; that is why the contest may become a good opportunity to find solutions to common problems in designing learning environments. Dominique Fache, board member at Sophia Antipolis, is one of the founding fathers of the unique campus in southern France; his presentation

dwelt on the development of the learning environment of the technopark back in the 70s. Fache stressed that a university campus today should be open, because the very idea of a university has substantially transformed, and digital technologies are one of the reasons behind that change. The outcomes of these discussions were duly noted and became part of the organizational plan for the Russian-French Campus Design Contest for young architects, that was adopted on the day of its official launch.



# Sirius started speaking French

French school students – winners of the French association of specialists in the Russian philology contest participated in the educational program of Sirius center. There was a special “French” session created for students. It was held between 31 July and 13 August and was integrated into creative writing program called “Homo Legens: reading man”. More than 120 school students from all over Russia participated in the program. From the very first days of the session, French students merged themselves into the atmosphere of vivid creativity, inspiration and search for new ideas for Sirius whose main slogan is “Be curious! Be creative! Be victorious!”

There were several modules in the French session’s program. The first module included participation in different workshops. French participants were offered 9 options, and they chose “Paper movie” and “Theatre of stories”. French students teamed up with other Sirius students and had 4 days to create a stop-motion animated feature film and prepare a puppet show. The module ended with a workshop festival that took place in the Sirius scientific club.



During the module participants visited “Inside. Outside. In-between”, an interactive art-exhibition, workshops on preparing presentations, writing long reads, creating art-books, infographics, and so forth. The “Text 2.0” workshop was the second module of the educational program for the French youth, where they were supposed to implement their common project on a long-read creation by telling their readers

about their trip to Sirius. It turned out to be a traveler’s diary with photos and interactive content. There was a special event prepared for the participants of the program – a visit to the art exhibition of Sergey Andriaki in Sochi art museum. After the tour there was a “professional talk” between the artist and the students of the Sirius center, where the young people had a chance to ask all

the questions they had about his art, his life journey, and the profession of artist as a whole. Moreover, French students participated in workshops on animal sculpture, ceramics, water-color painting and fundamentals of choreography, which were led by professionals. A nice addition to the educational program, workshops, seminars, and interesting meetings was the students’ visit to the Carmen ice show, a concert by Julia Lezhneva, a Russian opera singer, a harp concert, and a trip to Sochi amusement park. A visit to Krasnaya Polyana – a big settlement with a ski resort that is also called Russian Courchevel – was a separate part of the program. Rosa Chutor with its star attractions – Rosa Pick and Kamenny Stolb – is the most popular and modern resort. The “French” session ended with a farewell party, where French students presented their projects – the long read they created about their stay in the Sirius center – and received certificates upon completion of the program.

# A good hundred

There was a gala-dinner of the French and Russian Choiseul 100 Russia project held in the Metropol hotel, in Moscow. This is a top list of 100 young Russian economic leaders. During that event, they met up with their counterparts from the French one hundred. The project was created by Paskal Loro, the president of Institut Choiseul (Paris) and the initiator of Choiseul 100 France and it was held within the framework of Trianon dialogue created by the presidents of Russia and France. The dinner united representatives of political and business elites from both countries: Bris Rocher, the president of Yves Rocher group; Elvira Nabiullina, governor of the Bank of Russia; Patrick Pouyanné, CEO of TOTAL; Claude Janvier, deputy of the National Assembly, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, French minister for relations with Russia; ambassador Pierre Morel, co-chair of the Trianon Dialogue; and others. Anatoly Torkunov, MGIMO rector, spoke before the business youth of both countries and expressed his hope for this project to become a good start of closer relations between young French and Russian economic leaders.





# Andrei Fursenko: “Russia cherishes the historically important relations with Austria, and Vienna in particular”

We cannot say that the idea of holding the Sochi Dialogue as a means of interaction and communication through the institutes of civil society with overseas partners is quite new, states Andrei Fursenko, the co-chair of the Dialogue, aide to the President of the Russian Federation. “Now we have fewer barriers and constraints for this kind of communication. On the other hand, we are faced with an increasing need for direct engagement. We have no barriers in information sharing. Thus, issues related to authenticity of information and trust both towards the information and partners take on a different dimension. Cooperation in any area is nowadays primarily determined by the level of trust towards your partner.

**MJ: Why did this trust issue arise?**

It is in part connected with the manner in which facts are presented, the emotional component of information sharing rather than facts themselves. Trust is what defines partnering relations, namely how much you trust the information, how much you are prepared to see and read only the true essence of this information without paying attention to the way it was presented to you. The Dialogues – St. Petersburg, Trianon and Sochi – and the contacts with Italy which are resuming in this format, are designed for people, humans rather than parties to understand and trust each other.

**MJ: Why was the Forum named after the city Sochi? Was it a symbolic or practical decision?**

I believe, both. Symbolism is that today Krasnodar Region is developing very fast, which is very much thanks to our Austrian partners. I mean first and foremost the Olympic complex was built owing to the active participation of Austrian firms. The practical component

of that decision is the status of the region, Sochi in particular. Russia considers Sochi a very important tourist center both for summer and winter leisure activities.

**The Dialogues – St. Petersburg, Trianon and Sochi – and the contacts with Italy which are resuming in this format, are designed for people, humans rather than parties to understand and trust each other**

Perhaps, the above-mentioned facts contributed to the idea of holding the “Sochi Dialogue”. And finally, the project was officially launched by Russian and Austrian presidents in Sochi. This city is

changing greatly. It is one of the cultural and intellectual dominants of the country as well as the tourist center. I want to note the work of the Sochi-based “Sirius” educational center for talented children. It unites all Russia. It is a place for young Russian children from across the country who are talented at sports, art and science. And this is the format for engaging with Austria that we would like to promote.

**MJ: At the St. Petersburg Forum’s ‘the Economy of Culture’ Dialogue session there arose a question – which is primary: economy or culture? What do you think?**

It reminds me of the eternal argument about the egg and the hen. If we take economy and culture broadly, then both appeared at the same time and cannot exist by themselves. Economy and culture are two important constituents of human existence and the development of any person and society. Speaking of the discussion itself, I’d stick to Alexandr Auzan, the well-known scholar, who





believes that culture is a more strategic thing, it is much more stable and long-lasting. This means that culture can survive several economic formations absorbing them and remaining unique at the same time. In fact, it is a matter of taste. During the discussion, the two were not opposed to each other. Rather, the participants of the Dialogue voiced two crucial things. One is pragmatic – how culture is supported and conditioned economically. The other is that culture determines a person’s way of life including in economy. Culture of communication, building relationships



in terms of education, identifying new senses is both a driver of new economic decisions and an element determining the structure of these relationships. That is why, I would say that the two very important notions – culture and economy – converge rather than oppose one another. Moreover, the provocative name of the session allowed us to address this issue thoroughly. We had not originally set ourselves the goal of discussing the matter in detail. We had intended to see the connection between culture and economy. We wanted to

see how these notions complement each other and arouse interest as a whole.

**MJ: Why did the Russian-Austrian Forum decide to discuss the economy of culture?**

Austria is a country with rich history, which had a great impact on European culture at all stages of its development. Russia has always maintained traditional relations with Austria, France, and Germany. These countries have actively cooperated throughout the history of European institutes. Specifically, what immediately comes to mind is the

**Culture is more strategic; it is much more stable and long-lasting. This means that culture can survive several economic formations absorbing them and remain unique at the same time**

Salzburg Festival which is famous both in Europe and in the whole world. From the very beginning, it was part of Russian-Austrian relations since both countries’ artistic works were performed at the Festival. This is also true for museums and music festivals that take place in Vienna and are connected with Austria. It seems to me that Russians like Austria and Vienna in particular. Russia regards these relations as historically important. Now, Austria is a place to implement many of our non-economic and cultural projects above all.

**MJ: The Sochi Forum pays a lot of attention to youth exchanges. What should a young people’s strategy be to embrace a brighter future?**

I believe, the first thing for the young to do is to understand that this is their future only, that it is them who are responsible for their future and should build it themselves. It seems that youth’s problems are a priority issues at the forums. The St. Petersburg Dialogue which was held in Krasnodar in late September and attended by the Sochi and Trianon Dialogue representatives focused on the role of youth. Moreover, the most informal speeches were made by the representatives of the three Dialogues. They said that an agenda for the Dialogues and on collaboration between countries should be set by young people. But this is not an easy task for the youth. One problem is that modern youth do not plan big and far in comparison with their peers 20-30 years ago. This is a specific feature of Generations Y and Z. The world is changing rapidly and young people do not yet fully grasp that within “short-term oscillations” there are also “long-term waves”. And besides, they are not quite aware of those long-term waves; it is not easy for them to become strategic planners. The future may not necessarily be bright. The idea is that the future should belong to them only. The first

thing for us to do is not to interfere but enable them to make their own decisions. The next thing is to help them technically, discuss with them risks associated with certain spheres of human activity, and suggest ways of achieving success. It is important that young people understand the balance between risks and directions they plan to move in. Despite ups and downs, Russia and Europe have been enjoying peace and stability over the past decades. In general, we have lived during a prolonged time of peace. Moreover, the situation has been changing for the better in the past two plus decades. Unfortunately, continued growth and well-being can be negative. It means that we should be bold to engage young people in discussions related to such issues and make strategic decisions with some unpleasant realities in mind. We should at least be ready for unexpected turns. I do not think that the youth’s prospective strategy should have a completely positive end, which in principle is impossible! Their strategy should be about responsible behavior, responsibility for themselves, for the countries they come from and for the world. If young people behave responsibly, their life will be quite interesting and bright, and have some purpose, and they will be able to realize their potential. These words are lofty, but this is all true. The most difficult thing is to develop this strategy to help you realize your ambitions.

**MJ: You attended the St.Petersburg “Trialogue of Dialogues” session. What is your attitude towards the idea put forward by MGIMO? Is the synergy of dialogues possible? What is needed for this to happen?**

To my mind, the synergy has already taken place. The representatives of all the Dialogues did want to work together. These Dialogues are coordinated by people who do their job on a voluntary basis, pro bono. It is not a compulsory

**Their strategy should be about responsible behavior, responsibility for themselves, for the countries they come from and for the world. If young people behave responsibly, their life will be quite interesting and bright, and have some purpose, and they will be able to realize their potential**

task. They do it because they are ready to devote their time to resuming positive relations between countries and communities. I believe, the very idea of expanding cooperation from bilateral to multilateral for people who decided to spare their time and efforts for this cause is a good and interesting opportunity. I consider our interaction useful and beneficial, we learn something new. The key moment here is that the participants of the Dialogues communicate with one another, though it requires the most precious resource – time. What is needed for synergy? Nothing. It is necessary that communication within the Dialogues be lively and informal. 







# Christoph Leidl: “The Sochi Dialogue is a platform for confidence-building”

Christoph Leidl, the Austrian co-chair of the Sochi Dialogue, honorary President of the Federal Chamber of Economics of Austria, shared interesting thoughts at the Trialog of Dialogues session, where the heads of the three dialogue formats – St. Petersburg, Trianon and Sochi one – discussed the possibility of synergy.

**MJ: Russia's President Vladimir Putin, while speaking at the inaugurating reunion of the Sochi Dialogue, said that the Forum ought to be “a new mechanism in bilateral cooperation.” What, in your opinion, is so new about it?**

As we all know, the whole idea of the Sochi Dialogue can hardly be considered brand new: On the one hand, there already are successful “role models” – the Dialogue platforms of Germany and France, and on the other hand, Austria and Russia have a long tradition of strong bilateral ties. With this in mind, our vision for this new established platform is not to reinvent the wheel, but to build confidence and promote dialogue. 2019 marks the birth of the Sochi dialogue, and we are eager to translate it into action.

For example, a completely new approach would be to focus on the most prominent cultural characteristics of Austria and Russia. Topics like national identity and multiculturalism. Questions like, how does Russia redefine its position in Europe? These questions, amongst many others, determine how our societies relate to each other and can be the source of trust and mutual understanding, but also of possible conflict and controversy. I am confident that we are facilitating a dialogue that truly matters, between prominent personalities and relevant topics.

**MJ: How come the Sochi-DIALOGUE was given the name of Sochi and not after any other Russian city? Was it**

**a symbolic, emotional decision, which is pretty Russian by nature, or was it out of practical reasons, which is pretty European?**

I am very sceptical of generalizations like “Russians, as emotional” vs. “Europeans, as rational”. The decision definitely had an emotional component – but not only for our Russian host. In my humble opinion, Sochi is positively associated with almost

**Our vision for this new established platform is not to reinvent the wheel, but to build confidence and promote dialogue**

everyone who has ever visited this city! We couldn't have picked a better namesake for our platform.

**MJ: At the “Economy of Culture” session during the SPIEF, you had a minor disagreement with Russian colleagues on what should come first – culture or economy – why? And how did you reach a proper balance not to make culture a business?**

“Economic questions are key” could serve as my own personal motto. I have been working in business throughout my entire career. Thus, my statement at Russia's

largest economic forum should not have been misconstrued nor surprised anyone. It is my second nature! But this does not mean that culture is negligible – on the contrary! It is also at the very centre of our forum. Not only does the private sector/economy have the power to bring people together – culture, sports and science do as well. These are the cornerstones of the Sochi Dialogue. As for “culture as a business” – we discussed this in St. Petersburg. Culture is already a business. These spheres cannot be disentangled. For example, Austrian culture is a core value for tourism. Keeping the proper balance between business and culture will be one of the challenges in the course of the Sochi Dialogue.

**MJ: Why did the Russian-Austrian Forum need to discuss culture so extensively to begin with? Wouldn't it make more sense make it a key question for the Dialogue de Trianon of France and Russia, known for major institutions such as the Louvre or the Hermitage, and theatres like the Bolshoi and Grand Opera?**

Leaving the cultural questions to the French? How would this make sense? Let me state, firstly, that Austrian museums and theatres – some of them are just as renowned as the ones you mentioned – are launching hundreds of events every year, cooperation with Russia being no exception. The exchange between these cultural institutions is inestimable,





and there is no doubt that cultural projects lead to more communication and a broader understanding between cultures, which is also the aim of the Sochi Dialogue. We need to differentiate between the work of concert halls, exhibition organizers, museums, festivals in both countries and our work. The Sochi Dialogue is a separate and independent format to be held annually on the highest level.

And, secondly, why focus only on the most famous and spectacular flagships of a country's culture? There is so much more to it! Of course, the Sochi Dialogue involves some very prominent cultural institutions, but it is not only about advertising the Salzburg festival or showing artefacts from the KHM in

**Who else should build the future if not the youth? Whenever I meet young people in Europe, it makes me proud to see their openness and fresh ideas**

the Hermitage or vice versa. We want to create a fresh approach, making the Sochi Dialogue an achievement in its own right.

**MJ: The Sochi Dialogue pays enormous attention to youth exchange as well as**

**to the role the European young people who should play a key role in building the future of our continent. What, in your opinion, should the youth strategy be to build "a bright future", as the Russian Bolsheviks used to call it?**

Who else should build the future if not the youth? Whenever I meet young people in Europe, it makes me proud to see their openness and fresh ideas. My vision of a bright future might somewhat differ from what the Bolsheviks were promoting. As a convinced European, I have initiated the EYFON youth festival in Neumarkt, where young people – including participants from Russia – are discussing the future of Europe through dialogue and exchange with peers. Only in the format of an open dialogue and uninterrupted

communication, we can productively develop international partnership and achieve our goals.

**MJ: At the SPIEF, you took part in the Trialogue of Dialogues round table. What do you think of the idea that MGIMO University came up with? Will the synergy of three dialogues be possible? And what do we need to do to make it happen?**

It is without a doubt a good idea. Let's see if Germany, France and Austria could find synergies in their mechanisms of bilateral cooperation with Russia. At this early stage, though, it is difficult to foresee specific steps. The Trialogue of Dialogues round table was a great chance to get to know each other. Now we can move in the same

direction to "make it happen". Maybe, in the future, also other countries will join the Dialogues with Russia.


**MJ: During the SPIEF, you visited St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, where you met students, whom you gave a lively lecture on "Vectors of International Economic Development". What subject you would chose for the MGIMO students and why?**

In Russia's major IR think tank, I would definitely choose a subject from world economy or international economic relations, because this is my major professional competence. And I would take the time to ask students of MGIMO about their ideas and visions for the future in Europe. But I am also always open for the students' questions and thoughts.

One of the challenges that we face looking forward will be the way information is created, shaped and shared between us. It will be increasingly harder to distinguish between narratives that pursue ulterior motives, and objective and balanced reporting. It is therefore my conviction that we must establish a firm and solid foundation of trust upon which strong and long-lasting relations can foster and grow. This is one of the main purposes of the Sochi-Dialogue, a platform resting on strong pillars of mutual understanding, dialogue and trust. Only then will we be able to truly and fully understand each other. The upcoming generation of diplomats, businessmen and women and journalists are the future of this initiative and we're going to reap just what we sow. So by planting the seeds of



**MJ: What is, to your mind, the key problem of the future that you would like to discuss with MGIMO students specifically, as diplomats-to-be, as well as economists, business people and journalists?**

tolerance and respect we ensure a mutual understanding generations to come, focusing on unity, rather than division. I'm looking forward to engaging and discussing these topics with MGIMO students. 





# Viktor Zubkov, “The Dialogue unlocks the potential of people-to-people relations.”

In late September, the Krasnodar region hosted a meeting of the working groups’ leaders of the Russian-German Petersburg Dialogue. The forum was presided over by Viktor Zubkov, Head of the Russian Coordinating Committee of the Petersburg Dialogue and Chairman of the Board of Directors at Gazprom, as well as Ronald Pofalla, Chairman of the Board of the Petersburg Dialogue and the CEO of the Infrastructure Department of Deutsche Bahn.

The Petersburg Dialogue is an established public and legal discussion forum set up in 2001 by Russian president Vladimir Putin and former German chancellor Gerhard Schröder. The idea behind the forum is to deepen the understanding between Russia and Germany, stimulate contacts between the two countries, and build constructive dialogue among members of all public life domains. In these almost 20 years, the Dialogue has become a major platform for discussing all topical public issues, as well as questions that have to do with the Russian-German relations. The Petersburg Dialogue also acts as a basis for joint projects in

corresponding tracks, which are Politics, Economy, Science and Education, Mass Media, Civil Society, Churches in Europe, Workshop of the Future, Culture, Health, and Ecological modernization.

Wide-ranging exchange in experience

and knowledge creates the conditions for the development of a major expert platform which is ready to respond to any challenge of the modern world, said Viktor Zubkov. Undoubtedly, this helps to carry out proper analysis of the global agenda

**V**iktor Zubkov, “Wide-ranging exchange in experience and knowledge creates the conditions for the development of a major expert platform which is ready to respond to modern-day challenges”

all kinds of areas ranging from economy to health care and culture. The Dialogue operates in the form of annual conferences that are held by turns in Russia and Germany. Throughout the year, ten working groups regularly gather to work on their







in the context of the Russian-German relations with all inherent complexity and differences of opinion. This dialogue brings together different generations. A number of youth projects have been set up within the framework of the forum. The open dialogue that we maintain helps to single out problems in different areas and at different levels of state-to-state relations. Most importantly, it facilitates the search for optimal solutions.

More and more meetings and conferences take place under the auspices of the Russian-German Petersburg Forum every year, and its agenda is growing too, encompassing such topics as the introduction of value-oriented medical services, ecological modernization, visa regime liberalization, and many others... The success story of the Petersburg Dialogue acts as a catalyst for the creation of similar discussion platforms between other countries. Following the establishment of the Russian-French Trianon Dialogue forum a few years ago, this year, the Russian-Austrian Sochi Dialogue forum

**This dialogue brings together different generations; a number of youth projects have been set up within the framework of the forum**

has been launched. We are cooperating closely with both of them. This early June, the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum 2019 saw co-chairmen of all three ‘Dialogue’ forums meet for the first time. A great potential lies in exploring new ways of interaction between Russian, Austrian and French civil societies that can produce powerful expert platforms. These platforms may help to bring the people of these three nations closer.

There is no doubt that the Forum exerts serious influence on the entire agenda of the Russian-German relations. It facilitates direct contacts between the representatives

of the two nations’ civil societies and generally strengthens the friendly relations that our countries enjoy.

The meeting that brought together the Trianon Dialogue and Sochi Dialogue forums took place in the village of Plastunovskaya in the Krasnodar Region. In line with the previous agreements, it was attended by Andrey Fursenko, the Russian-Austrian Sochi Dialogue forum Co-Chairman and Presidential Aide, and by the Russian-French Trianon Dialogue forum Co-Chairmen, French ambassador Pierre Morel and rector of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) Anatoly Torkunov.

The parties discussed the Russian-German bilateral agenda, as well as cultural cooperation and specific initiatives proposed for the year 2020, such as a modern art exhibition to be hosted by Paris, Moscow and Berlin. Motivating reports were made by Eleonora Mitrofanova, Head of the Federal Agency for the CIS, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation



**The forum exerts serious influence on the entire agenda of the Russian-German relations. It facilitates direct contacts between the two nations’ civil societies**

(Rossotrudnichestvo), and Johann Moeller, Director of the MDR radio station and publisher of the Russian-German newspaper The Petersburg Dialogue. Contributions to the discussion were made by Vitaly Ignatenko, President of the World Association of Russian Press, Victor Loshak, Deputy General Director of the Kommersant Publishing House, Walter Smerling, President of the Bonn Department of the Foundation for Art and Culture, and Johann Wadephul, German MP and Member of the Petersburg Dialogue Board, among others.

Veniamin Kondratyev, Krasnodar Region Governor, gave the most cordial reception to the guests and reported on the region’s potential in the area of cultural cooperation. Co-Chairmen Torkunov, Morel and Fursenko reported in detail on the Russian-French



and Russian-Austrian cooperation. The meeting’s agenda also included a discussion on cooperation in the areas of research and development, university collaboration, innovations, startups and others.

The meeting concluded with a decision to hold another meeting in early December and to invite representatives of the Russian-Italian Dialogue Forum to participate. The meeting will focus on producing a detailed 2020 program for the emerging European “Dialogue cooperation network.”

The Co-Chairmen of the “Dialogue” forums will also meet on October 22 at the MGIMO-hosted Convention of the Russian

International Studies Association (RISA) where they will discuss the role of dialogue-promoting mechanisms in the cultural and education cooperation.

The Krasnodar Region visit program included a number of working meetings with Governor Kondratyev and MGIMO’s regional partner organizations in academic and business fields. The program included a visit to the agricultural and sports facilities in villages Plastunovskaya and Pavlovskaya. Member of the Krasnodar Regional Parliament and MGIMO Board of Trustees Robert Paranyants was the program’s guest of honor. 





# Polish Gambit

There is a chess opening called the Polish Gambit. Its goal is to get a lead by sacrificing a pawn and launching an attack. This opening is considered to be a trap. Russian-Polish relations to some extent resemble the above-mentioned opening, which seems to have lasted for several centuries. The Russians brought independence to the country, saved it from the Nazis, but the Poles are constantly acting as if they were a rabbit trying to put the skids under a bear instead of simply having a good talk. There is no real dialogue, but there is the Centre for Russian-Polish Dialogue and Understanding. Its employees, MGIMO graduates, do their work to let the people communicate against all odds.





## ALEXANDRA GOLUBOVA

(International Relations, 2012; Master's in 2014)

*Director of the Russo-Polish Center for Dialogue and Understanding, as well as a teacher at MGIMO*

**W**hen I received the offer to become the director of the fund, I thought it over for some time. Leaving my alma mater as my place of work was, perhaps, one of the most difficult decisions. At


MGIMO, I received not only my theoretical knowledge but my first practical skills. During my master's, I was moonlighting as press secretary for the Alumni Association, and I then worked for five years in the secretary team as an assistant to the rector.

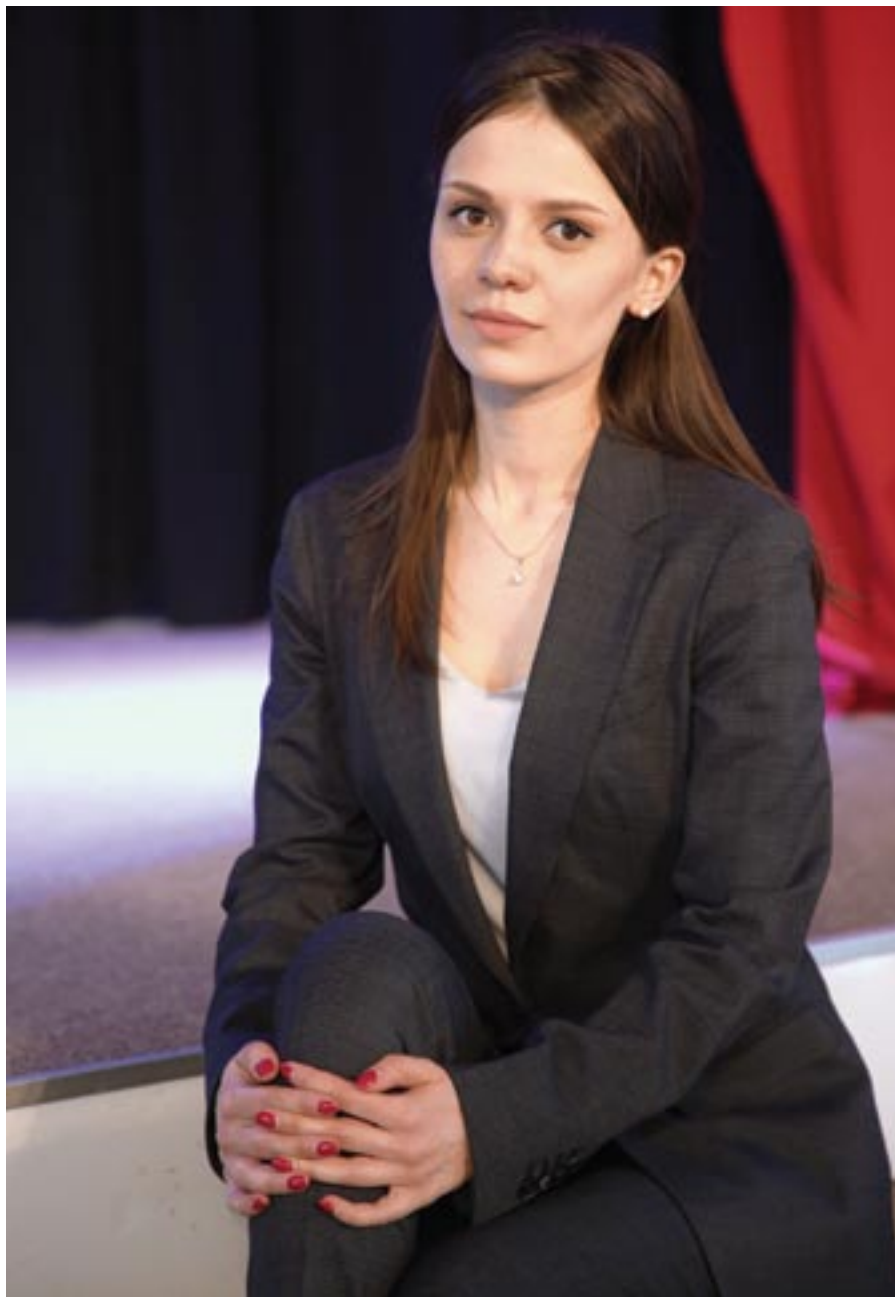
The Russo-Polish cooperation came into my life unexpectedly, but quite naturally. My first experience was to organize tours to Warsaw and Gdansk for the MGIMO theater-studios where I acted during my student years. I afterwards learned more about Poland and prepared Russo-Polish conferences at MGIMO. I met prominent Slavic experts from Poland, with several of whom I became friends.

Being appointed director of the Russo-Polish Center for Dialogue and Understanding was a great responsibility as well as a big challenge. After all, Russo-Polish bilateral relations are

**T**here have been public and explicit anti-Russia provocations by Polish media. But Polish society is heterogeneous, and we have not observed widespread Russo-phobia

undergoing a difficult and tense period. It is impossible to deny that there have been public and explicit anti-Russia provocations by Polish media. Unfortunately, statements by official figures and actions undertaken by Poland in relation to Russia have again convinced us that nothing conciliatory or constructive can be expected at this moment at the highest level.

But Polish society is heterogeneous, and we have not observed widespread Russo-phobia or seen it among the Polish elite. Therefore, it is a good decision to continue to work in the cultural space and on scientific and educational cooperation, supporting contacts and humanitarian connections. Yes, these are being developed in what is not the most friendly of atmospheres, but our models of joint programs and work formats are more important and more significant. 



## ARIADNA ROKOSSOVSKAYA

(International Journalism, 2002)

*The Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper*

**I** graduated from MGIMO with a knowledge of German and English languages. I learnt Polish basically at home, in the family. When I was

promoted and demonstrating their talents and skills. Despite my being very young, I was invited to work in the issuing department, where I was

busy preparing newspaper issues, editing texts, thinking of headlines and the way the materials should be presented. I wrote articles very seldom, and I was not going to join the ranks of writing journalists. It was in 2007 that there was nobody in the International Department to attend the parliamentary elections in Poland.



an intern at the European Office of TASS, I made friends with a lot of Polish journalists specializing in Russia, and I always spoke Polish as if it were my mother tongue – I simply switched from one language to the other.

After graduating from the University, I got employed at the International Office of “Rossiyskaya Gazeta” with a view to work on the European policy, including Germany and Great Britain. Meanwhile, the newspaper itself was undergoing changes: new heads of editorial offices, changes in the issue of the newspaper. Young journalists were given an opportunity of getting

**U**nfortunately, my favorite interlocutors – ex-president of Poland Wojciech Witold Jaruzelski, and director Andrzej Witold Wajda – are no longer alive. But people come and go, so I always have a lot of work to do

My colleagues turned to me as I knew Polish. I was told to take a vocational retraining course to become a special correspondent, and I was sent to Poland. This trip was a complete U-turn in my career. I had a feeling that on election day I was to go to the Warsaw Club, where the “Civil Platform” opposition party and its followers were waiting for the results of the elections. It stood little chance of success, which is why they were easy to come up to and speak with. They were modest and available. Ultimately, it was the “Civil Platform” that won the elections. So, I gave my business cards



to my new friends – I was surrounded by future lawmakers, ministers and even one of them the future Polish president! My special report was praised by the editorial board as one of the best contributions. I returned to Moscow in a new capacity – a journalist specializing in Poland, which I am now.

I enjoy some popularity in Poland and I managed to earn a good reputation there. I have made friends among Polish colleagues who will always support me and give me a helping hand.

In 2014, Bronisław Komorowski, the then president, awarded me with the Bronze Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland “for the contribution to creating in Russian society a positive image of Poland, unbiased and professional coverage of events in the country”.

But what I appreciate most is communication with interesting people – directors Krzysztof Zanussi, Juliusz Machulski, Jerzy Hoffman, actors Jerzy Oskar Stuhr, Daniel Marcel Olbrychski and Beata Tyszkiewicz. Unfortunately, my favorite interlocutors – ex-president of Poland Wojciech Witold Jaruzelski, and director Andrzej Witold Wajda – are no longer alive. But people come and go, so I always have a lot of work to do. 📧



## ANNA CHERNOVA

**School of International Journalism (MGIMO, 2008), research degree (MGIMO, 2014)**

**Spokesperson for the Centre for Russian-Polish Dialogue and Understanding**

I have always had this bond with Poland. When I was a child, we often went there with my family, and also with a Scout unit – Polish Scouts are called ‘harcerz’, and scouting is a very popular movement there. When I first came to Poland I camped out and slept in a sleeping bag. They say that the Poles feel with their heart, while the Russians, with their soul. I believe that we feel alike, and my friends and acquaintances in Poland will bear witness to it.

I didn’t spend much time on studying Polish; I just picked it up quite easily. Whenever I came to Poland I started speaking Polish, and that’s it. Later on I had the opportunity to study Polish at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. I specialized in other languages at MGIMO, but my graduate thesis was on Polish issues. I went to Warsaw especially for that purpose, to get acquainted with the work of Poland’s national news agency – PAP. When I was a junior student I started working for

RIA Novosti news agency in Russia, and it was of interest for me to compare its work with that of a large news agency in Poland. Having graduated from MGIMO and defended my graduation thesis on Polish issues, I decided to go on with my PhD research; my scientific supervisor was Artem Malgin, MGIMO Vice-Rector for General Affairs and Corporate Relations, an expert on Poland.

In the international division of RIA Novosti news agency, I also dealt mainly with Poland; while working in the pool of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs under Sergey Lavrov, I flew to Warsaw, among other places, as a member of the delegation. And the pinnacle of my Polish way in journalism was the position of a staff reporter in a news agency in Warsaw.

There have been so many meetings! I fondly remember the interview with Andrzej Wajda. He celebrated his 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary that year; his schedule was extremely tight with almost no time for meeting journalists. It was my colleague, Valery Masterov, who helped organize that meeting. All of a sudden I got a phone call and was informed that Mr. Wajda made some time for the meeting. I vividly remember how I rushed to “Illusion” cinema in Warsaw, my car skidding on the first ice, as I had not yet changed my summer tires to winter ones. We talked about his films, Russia, and his life in cinematography: “Dostoyevsky taught me



everything I know about people”, he said. It was through Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s works that Andrzej Wajda discovered Russian art. He believed that the Russian writer “knew absolutely everything about people”.

I remember celebrating Catholic Christmas at the house of my old friend, Pavel Litskevich. Trying 12 traditional fish dishes and attending a midnight Mass in the cathedral are part and parcel of Christmas Eve in Poland. Warsaw is, indeed, a very special place to me...I got married there, and Pavel was the only witness at our wedding, except for Warsaw, of course, – it will remain on our wedding photos forever.

A year and a half ago I was offered a position of the Spokesperson for the

**It seems to me that Russian-Polish dialogue should start, first and foremost, between young people, who are sincere in their assessment and free from prejudice. Young people are very flexible in this regard; they do not put up artificial barriers**

Centre for Russian-Polish Dialogue and Understanding. MGIMO helps us a lot in this work, as through the MGIMO community you can easily find the person you are looking for – it does work, indeed. And the “Polish community” in Moscow is rather small – everyone knows each other, or at least has heard about each other.

Here, at the Centre for Russian-Polish Dialogue and Understanding, we are engaged in an extremely important work – helping to build people-to-people ties between Russia and Poland. I am happy to see that the Polish people are eager to attend the Russian cinema festival SPUTNIK OVER POLAND, which we annually sponsor, or for instance, how Russian and Polish youth meet at the events we organize, and easily get along with each other. It seems to me that Russian-Polish dialogue should start, first and foremost, between young people, who are sincere in their assessment and free from prejudice. I remember how utterly surprised I was a while ago to find out that that there were some problems and misunderstanding between Poland and Russia. Young people are very flexible in this regard; they do not put up artificial barriers.

I am trying to make the work of a spokesperson more creative – for instance, now at the Centre we have a series of interviews “Cultural Exchange Through the Prism of People’s Lives”. I interview different interesting people from Russia and Poland – people of creative professions, whose lives are connected with both countries. In these interviews they share personal examples illustrating how we can find common ground and describing this interaction the way they see it. Interpersonal communication is the key to holding Russian-Polish dialogue under the given circumstances.

I believe that feeling with one’s heart and feeling with one’s soul is one and the same thing, but most importantly we shouldn’t engage in cold calculation and harboring resentment towards each other. Let others do it if they wish. There is practically no official dialogue between our countries at the moment, but we do know that, in fact, it has never stopped. 📧





# MGIMO Brings Russia and the Czech Republic Closer

A Russian-Czech Discussion Forum was organized by MGIMO following the decision made by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Miloš Zeman of the Czech Republic.

The decision to establish the discussion forum was made when the president of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman visited Russia in 2017. This forum was meant to become a suitable platform for open informal discussions between civil societies on a wide range of issues related with global politics, shared history, and current bilateral relations.

In June, MGIMO hosted the Second Russian-Czech Discussion Forum. The forum brought together the co-chairmen, MGIMO's rector Anatoly Torkunov and the director of the Institute of International Relations in Prague, Ondrej Ditrych, Special Representative of the Russian President for International Cultural Cooperation, Mikhail Shvydkoy, the Ambassador Extraordinary and



Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to Russia, Vitezslav Pivonka, Representative of the Office of the Czech President Petr Perunchik and others.

In his opening address Anatoly Torkunov, the rector of MGIMO, said that since the first forum held in Prague, meaningful cooperation has been established with the Czech colleagues on a number of tracks. That day MGIMO became a meeting point for heads of museums, art galleries, and major libraries. "We would like to continue developing our cooperation. Today, we will focus more not on the ties between states and not on political cooperation, but on something that lies at the foundation of



any bilateral relations, and that is cross-cultural interaction and convergence of cultures," said Torkunov.

Ondrej Ditrych, co-chairman of the forum, underscored the importance of topics that were chosen for discussion, which were "Cultural cooperation between Russia and the Czech Republic", and "The Czechs in Russia and the USSR, and the Russians in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic." Mikhail Shvydkoy reminded the participants about the centuries-old relations between the two countries and shed light on Russia's cultural presence in the Czech Republic, as well as, expressed

**Miloš Zeman, "Help to eradicate old clichés and stereotypes, seek open dialogue without any ideologization of history"**

his hope for the increased presence of the Czech culture in Russia. He also read aloud the welcoming letter from Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who acknowledged the forum "as an increasingly useful

platform for building up dialogue between the civil societies of Russia and the Czech Republic." Petr Perunchik, in his turn, addressed the audience with the letter from the President of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman, which stated that even though the forum was initiated by the leaders of the two countries, it is in no way a presidential project. "This Forum is a non-political platform for open and frank discussions. I call upon you to help eradicate old clichés and stereotypes, to seek open and fact-based dialogue without any ideologization of history," read the letter.





**MJ: Mr de Montbrial, when I opened the book on a random page, the first word that caught my eye was “Samarkand.” By coincidence, MGIMO is organizing a forum for its alumni in May in Tashkent and Samarkand.**

It has changed a lot since I came there for the first time in 1984.

**MJ: Indeed, and there is no USSR now. Independent states rose from its ashes, such as, Uzbekistan.**

You know, the strange thing is that initially they didn’t want to leave the USSR, but then Boris Yeltsin said that the Russian Federation should declare independence. Imagine Charles de Gaulle announcing in the middle of the Algerian War of Independence that France should become independent from Algeria.hat’s how bizarre Yeltsin’s proposition sounded.

At the end of the day, these five Central Asian countries became independent, even though the way they were governed hadn’t fundamentally changed since the Soviet times. The leadership itself came from the Soviet elite, and Nursultan Nazarbaev is the most representative example. These countries didn’t see any democratic revolutions, they didn’t become fully independent in the blink of an eye, it took them some time to formulate their own foreign policies and national interests, as well as, decide on their own path of economic development. These countries’ interests were quite obvious, they wanted to have closer ties with Russia, and, of course, foster relations with China and the West.

Step by step, Russia worked out a new ideology for these Asian countries, which was named the Eurasian ideology. By the way, for Russia, the very meaning of the word “Eurasia” is different to that what we in France think it is. When I say “Eurasia”, I mean Europe and Asia, while the Russians limit that notion to the European and Asian part of the former Russian Empire.

The idea behind this Eurasian ideology for Russia is to reinforce and expand relations with the former Soviet republics. However, to my mind, this ideology seems to be failing today because these countries are becoming increasingly aware of where their own interests lie. The situation we see is quite complicated and to some extent it resembles how the European powers competed for control over Central Asia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even though it’s still a far cry from that famous Great Game.

You mentioned the forum of MGIMO graduates in Uzbekistan. I can tell you that such events surely help Russia to forge closer ties with former USSR republics. I’ve been maintaining good friendly relations with MGIMO and its rector Anatoly Torkunov for quite some time already, and I know that the network that MGIMO’s alumni have formed is a powerful political force. Actually, the President of Azerbaijan Ilhan Aliyev and I discussed that phenomenon when we first met.

**MJ: When was your first encounter with Russia?**

I stepped on the Soviet soil for the first time in 1976 when I landed at Sheremetyevo Airport and spent several hours in the transit area on my way to Tokyo. Until then, the USSR was something absolutely abstract for me. Let me tell you a story. When I listened to the radio as



# THIERRY DE MONTBRIAL, “THIS IS MY WAY”

Last March, the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To mark the occasion, Thierry de Montbrial, founder of the institute, organized a special event at the palatial Hotel Ukraina. It was attended by a plethora of prominent guests, such as, the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration and the President’s Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov, Aide to the President Andrey Fursenko, MGIMO’s Rector Anatoly Torkunov, Ambassador of France to Russia Sylvie-Agnès Bermann, and others. The jewel in the crown was the presentation of the Russian-language issue of Thierry de Montbrial’s The Russian Journal. 1977-2011, which was part of the Trianon Dialogue program.







**MJ:** The overwhelming majority of MGIMO graduates dreamt of working in the international relations domain from childhood. Did you have the same dream?

Absolutely not. It was quite a long journey for me. On the one hand, I was always attracted to some abstract scientific research, while on the other hand I never wanted to be working in one field all my life. I really liked creating something. I remember that I wanted to become an architect, and then, when I was 14, I thought I'd become president of the French Republic. This

**M**y goal is to help IFRI become a more powerful analytical center for international studies in 60 years that would be respected in France, Europe, and the whole world

a child, often news “would come from the TASS agency. In French, it was “Agence TASS” but what I heard was “Agent Stas”, and so I thought it was some KGB agent named Stas covering world events. Time and again the news featured some Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, and I would think of Nikita Khrushchev, Stalin and other major political figures holding sessions at some high place. It was some kind of mystery, and I actually never tried to solve it, never asked anyone about what that Supreme Soviet might be. Perhaps, deep inside I was afraid, like any other child, that if I get the answer, the mystery would disappear. By the time I touched soil at Sheremetyevo, I had worked for as much as three years as Director of the Policy Planning Department at the French Foreign Ministry, so I did know a thing or two about the USSR. However, that first direct contact with this country produced a rather peculiar effect, I felt as if I lifted the iron curtain even for a little bit and could take a look at the real Soviet Union.

contradiction between doing something abstract and something very concrete is not unusual, many people run into it. Those who solve this problem become happy and succeed in life. Only if you overcome that contradiction can you find your way and do something that would make you whole. I did it, I solved it for myself by becoming both a researcher and, to some extent, an architect – I created a research institute that specializes in international relations and economy, as well as, a very powerful set of methodological tools for research. I think I am a very lucky person, and I am happy.

**MJ:** Your family name, de Montbrial, is not an ordinary one, you must belong to the aristocracy, to the political elite rather than the scientific elite that, let's say, serves it. Is it another contradiction?

It is true that I belong to a very old French family, its roots can be traced back into history for a thousand years. My father was sometimes referred to as count, even though he didn't occupy any of the highest positions at the Bank of France. He didn't really like his job much because he was a poet, he wrote books. He was born in Hanoi in 1912, where his father, my grandfather, worked at the French colonial administration.

**M**GIMO alumni are the best product of the Soviet system. They are very well-educated people with a sense of reality and the ability to maintain civilized relationships.

**MJ:** So, you are a count then?  
No, I don't use that title.

**MJ:** Some say that after the French Revolution, people in France shy away from using their titles instead taking pride in the values they fought for – liberty, equality, fraternity. Don't believe them, the French love titles!

**MJ:** Isn't that hypocrisy?  
More like schizophrenia. For example, in Austria, they abolished titles before we did it, and the Austrian don't think there is anything special about titles now. In France, people love kings, they like to read stories about the lives of the nobility in the magazines. Today, the president of the Fifth Republic is basically a king, a real monarch. The political elite established that monarchy leaving us with only one right – to cut off king's head (figuratively speaking, of course) by means of elections that take place every five years, and it was seven years before Jacques Chirac. Nicolas Sarkozy and Francois Hollande served one term as presidents, and we don't know yet how many Emmanuel Macron will do. You see, presidents change quite often.

**MJ:** You graduated from the Ecole Polytechnique, then the Paris School of Mines. I know one person who has the same educational background, that is Total's chairman and CEO Patrick Pouyanné.  
I can tell you something else, he was one of my students at the Ecole Polytechnique. I taught theoretical economics there at the Department of Modern Economy, which I founded in 1974. Actually, I don't really remember Pouyanné because around 400 students would come to my lectures, and it was the assistants who would interact with students personally.

**MJ:** Does that mean that the mix of the Ecole Polytechnique and the Paris School of Mines is an elite education?  
Yes, only the very best graduate from these two institutions, they are creme de la creme of the French education system. As for me, I also graduated from UC Berkeley in 1967-1968.

**MJ:** That means that you didn't take part in the historic student protests in Paris in 1968, did you?  
No, I wasn't involved in that youth revolution of 1968, and I don't regret that. I was very lucky because I was studying passionately in America with a view to becoming an expert in economic theory and receive a master's degree in mathematical economics. By the way, UC Berkeley was a major youth culture center at the time. The hippie movement started in Berkeley to later spread all over the world. Back then, I did not cut my beard and didn't have



a haircut for a year. It wasn't because I wanted to look like a hippy, I just thought that that was probably my only chance to grow a beard.  
**MJ:** You were also lucky to get to know America before learning about the US as a superpower from your political studies.  
Yes, that's true. And I can tell you an anecdote to illustrate that. On Christmas of 1967, I decided to spend winter holidays in Las Vegas with my young wife, who was already pregnant at the time. We had an old and worn-out car and it happened that we had some problems with it on our way from Berkeley. It was Death Valley, and there was only one hotel. We were stupid enough not to book a room in advance. So, the place was already packed, what is more, they basically kicked us out because dogs and hippies were not allowed!



It was evening on December 31, we simply had no other option but to drive further looking for a village or else. And we found one! The village was called Shoshone. It was already past midnight when we stopped at a motel and got a room, a very modest one. There was a restaurant right across the street with lots of people celebrating New Year. We went there, sat at a free table and ordered T-Bone Steak, that huge American steak. We were spending that night practically right the way we planned. Suddenly, a waiter came up to us and asked much to our surprise, “Would you like some dessert or a bottle of champagne?” I didn’t have enough money to pay for champagne, but he said, “There is a person here in the restaurant who would like to buy you something.” So, we ordered a bottle of champagne. After we finished, I wanted to thank that person, but the waiter stopped me, “No, he doesn’t want to identify himself, he just liked you two.”

**M**GIMO graduates’ forums surely help Russia to forge closer ties with former USSR republics

**MJ: And what’s the moral of that story?**  
The moral is that we had two absolutely different situations that evening. At first, we were kicked out from the hotel, even though my wife was pregnant, but a couple of hours later some stranger showed genuine concern for us and never asked anything in return.

**MJ: Maybe it was the spirit of that Indian place?**  
That’s what I thought too! On a serious note, I learnt a lot about America from those two different situations. This country has one interesting feature, the majority of the population is very conservative, but that does not lead to any suppression of extreme views and eccentric behavior. Few people know this from where I’m am from but many of the movements that started in Europe in late ‘60s originated from the US.

**MJ: How did it happen that you at a certain point stopped working for someone and started your own project instead: IFRI?**  
There are two groups of people, those who want to be part of a system, which offers protection, and work in some specific limited area, and those who tend to embrace the risk of doing something different, they cannot stand it when there’s someone bossing them around. I have zero doubt that I belong to the second group. For me, the only way to live a full and happy life is to be creating something that never existed before. Prior to IFRI, I founded the Policy Planning Department at the French Foreign Ministry, that was my first creative experience. After that came the Department of Economics at the Ecole Polytechnique, and only later I established IFRI. My most recent creation is the World Policy Conference. I’d like to add that I’ve always stood at the helm of the institutions I created.

**MJ: Which is you most beloved creation?**  
IFRI, of course. This institute ranks highly in the reputable think tank index compiled by the University of Pennsylvania. IFRI is only 40, it’s still young. The Chatham House, for example, will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year! So, my goal is not only to celebrate a centenary with IFRI in 60 years from now, but to help it become a more powerful analytical center for international studies that would be respected in France, Europe, and the whole world.

**MJ: Why did you decide to create the World Policy Conference?**  
It was over ten years ago that I noticed that these kinds of closed forums stem from the Cold War, with confrontation and the standoff between two powers separated by the Atlantic in their very DNA. My personal experience of working with Russia convinced me that the Cold War is over and we are living in a new world. My aspiration was to create an organization that wouldn’t be caught up in alliances and confrontation, but would be working towards an open world in the long term. To use an old political science concept, it would promote the idea of peaceful coexistence, but with a new substance that would have nothing to do with the Cold War constructs. This new substance would imply that we should work together to benefit from our relations without imposing out respective mindsets on our



partners, recognize our differences and respect each other’s way of life. I used that idea of tolerance to build the foundation for the conference. This year, we’ll see its 12<sup>th</sup> iteration, as we call it, and every time I always try to engage Russia. Our first successful attempt was in 2008, when I managed to have Dmitry Medvedev, he was the Russian President at the time, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy address the conference. It was a resounding success, because both presidents wanted to meet unofficially on neutral territory to discuss the Georgian issue (i.e. Georgia’s aggression against South Ossetia)



and they had the chance to do it. And it helped us launch our project! Since then, I’ve always sought to encourage our Russian counterparts to participate in the conferences more actively, so we can move beyond the current disagreements and problems in this mini Cold War that we unfortunately have on our hands today.

**MJ: Are you satisfied with how IFRI is doing in the year of its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary?**  
My answer is yes, quite so. At the same time, I’d like to add that nothing in life should be taken for granted. A project like this is very hard to launch and very easy to lose. I want to underline that the WPC has no ties to the French government, it’s a completely independent platform managed by IFRI. It can very easily wilt and die if we don’t work on bolstering it. And I very much hope that Russia and MGIMO will lend it their friendship and support.

**MJ: For decades, you’ve been interacting and working with MGIMO alumni. Could you describe what kind of people they are?**  
In a way, they are the best product of the Soviet system. They are very well-educated people with a sense of reality and the ability to maintain civilized relationships. It was MGIMO alumni that showed me something amazing: people who studied France in the USSR spoke splendid French without ever visiting France or indeed any foreign country! By the way, it was the same in China. MGIMO survived a number of difficult times, first and foremost

**T**he only way to live a full and happy life is to be creating something that never existed before. I am a very lucky person, I created a research institute and a powerful set of methodological tools for research, and I am happy.

the turbulent ‘90s. I remember very well how challenging it was for rector Torkunov, and it’s not that easy today either, I’m sure. So, I’d like to express the respect I feel for him, since one of the reasons we understand each other so well is because we’ve faced similar challenges. MGIMO is an outstanding brand. I know this year the university celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I believe what you’ve achieved over this time is highly commendable. It’s an absolutely marvelous asset.

**MJ: What’s your take on the Trianon Dialogue?**  
It’s a good initiative, but you know how many similar initiatives came to nothing. The Trianon Dialogue still exists largely thanks to the personal involvement of Anatoly Torkunov and MGIMO on Russia’s side and my longtime colleague Pierre Morel on the French side. When smart people on both sides seriously put their minds to it, there is a good chance of a fruitful dialogue. Always remember that even the best ideas are nothing unless they are promoted by competent enthusiasts. ▣



# TIME FOR AGRICULTURAL DIPLOMACY

“Global agrarian markets and international economic activity in agro-industrial complex (AIC)”, the School of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation has announced the launch of a Master’s program entitled “Global agrarian markets”. Sergey Levin, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, thinks that this new direction started in MGIMO is extremely important for Russia. It is imperative in our time to train specialists who should have in-depth knowledge about agriculture and its technology, know uncommon foreign languages, and understand the specifics of international relations.



“Modern agriculture,” says Levin, “is a high-tech sector and one of the most rapidly developing ones not only in Russia, but in the world economy as a whole. One billion people – which is one fourth of the world’s working population – are working in AIC, and annual value of production amounts to 3 trillion USD. Today many people are talking about economic crisis and growth slowdown, but people will always need high-quality products. The population is growing, thus considering the growing demand, agriculture will keep developing and modernizing.

AIC is a sector of big money and, despite all the stereotypes, of high technology. Today, the sector successfully uses big data and artificial intelligence in managing all stages of agricultural production, UAVs – for monitoring and treatment of crops, unmanned autonomous tractors and combines, and robotic farms.

AIC technological development is driven by the need to increase its efficiency. The planet’s population is at 7.7 billion people and, according to UN forecasts, will increase up to 11 billion by the end of the century. It means production and sales growth for agriculture. Logistics and product delivery methods are developing and more and more people are getting access to all kinds of information thanks to the Internet and modern technology. Huge data bases are being accumulated about all elements of production and consumption. It leads to the fact that the market gets more and more players, competition is escalating, and trade is developing. As a result, the world trade volume in agricultural products and provisions has increased by 15% in the last 6 years and has surpassed 3.2 trillion USD.

Over the past few years Russia has lived through more than one crisis, and the only economic sector that hasn’t “plummeted” during these years was agriculture. There was a constant growth in the AIC during all of these last years. Russian AIC today is holding its ground against all leading countries. Domestic output is constantly growing and, as a result, so is export – last



year it accounted for almost 26 billion USD. Russia is the leader in terms of world’s wheat export; we are in the Top-3 in terms of total grain sector and in the Top-10 in terms of meat.

Russia’s domestic demand is fully satisfied when it comes to the majority of key products. In business language, it means that we saturated the market – within the country we have nowhere to grow. At the same time, while our market demands were being met, major agricultural companies have grown and compete with the world’s major players in business and technology.

Moreover, our country occupies the majority of black soil – the world’s most productive land. We have all the prerequisites to become the real “breadwinner” of the world. That’s exactly why starting from 2016 the first subprogram on export support was created. Its aim was to provide fundamental conditions for the support of our exporters. This subprogram was successfully implemented: in 2017 the country was supposed to reach export revenues of 17.9 billion dollars, but in fact exceeded this figure by more than a billion.

Last year Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia, set a new ambitious task – to increase agricultural export up to 45 billion dollars by 2024, in other words – to double today’s volume. To implement this task, the Government of Russia has approved National and Federal export development projects.

Future agricultural attachés and heads of agricultural representation offices abroad will be solving the most complicated task of eliminating tariff and non-tariff



**“Attaché on agricultural issues” is a unique individual program that includes the most relevant modules adjusted for a very short studying period, as 2020 is when first graduates should already start working abroad.**

barriers that are limiting import of Russian products to foreign markets. Food is the product that is most difficult to sell abroad, because the number of veterinary and phytosanitary restrictions runs into the thousands, and they also differ from country to country.

Almost all countries in the world have a system of agricultural representation offices. The US is the world’s main exporter of agricultural products. And there is a special Federal Foreign Agricultural Service in the States under the Ministry of Agriculture. It has 93 offices and it represents States’ interests in 171 countries.

We should also act upon world’s experience. Therefore, there is a special part within our “Export of agricultural products” project that includes the creation of a national agricultural export support system. Asia, more specifically China, is our number one market. It had 1,5 billion consumers whose well-being is growing with each year and who are changing their food preferences. Africa is the second most important market for us. In addition, we are working closely with CIS, European Union countries, and also considering South America.

Future agricultural attachés need to have knowledge in agriculture and

international studies – two disciplines that are not at all connected within a standard educational program. You won’t find a person in Russia, who was taught to speak Swahili and to know the specifics of grain processing technology – it has just never existed before!

That’s why Russia needs new and unique human resources in order to implement these ambitious tasks. “Attaché on agricultural issues” is a unique individual program that includes the most relevant modules adjusted for a very short studying period, as 2020 is when the first graduates should already start working abroad. 



NEW PROGRAM



# AGRIATTACHE – A NEW MGIMO PROGRAM

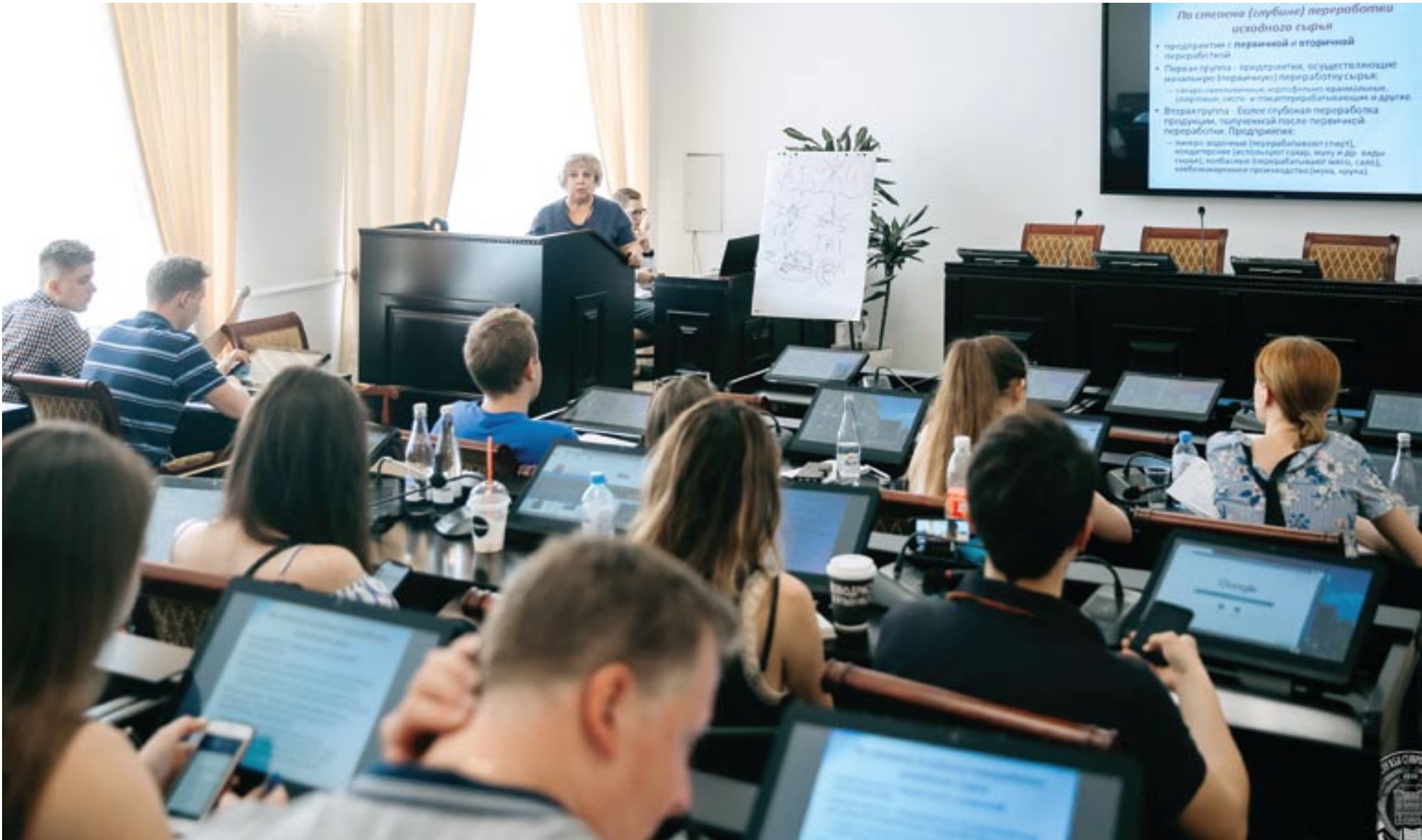
They came to this program from different universities, but they are united by the desire to become specialists in international affairs that no university has yet trained. The Attaché of the Agricultural Issues program is as innovative as it sounds.



The Global Agrarian Markets, the unique program in which 40 students started this year, is run by MGIMO's Department of International Agrarian Markets and Foreign Economic Activity in the Agro-Industrial Complex for the Russian Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with Stavropol State Agrarian University, the Timiryazev Moscow Agricultural Academy and Kuban State Agrarian University.

In July, the future AgriAttachés were sent to southern Russia, where the export

In July 2018, MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov and Minister of Agriculture Dmitry Patrushev signed a cooperation agreement on training a wide network of AgriAttachés



potential of Russia's agricultural industry is forged. The field training module started at Stavropol State Agrarian University prior to then moving to the Kuban. Lessons were held over a week and split into four educational modules focused on the specifics of agriculture, the development of agrarian production, and international and national statistics in the field of agriculture, as well as, on the basics of phytosanitary and veterinary requirements and on the economics of agricultural enterprises. The program also took place "in the field" at leading

agricultural enterprises. The idea of creating a new department to prepare international agricultural specialists came to life a year ago. "In July 2018, MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov and Minister of Agriculture Dmitry Patrushev signed a cooperation agreement," said Natalia Cherner, the director of the program. "According to the minister, by 2024, Russia will have a wide network of attaches in the agro-industrial complex. In order to increase exports of agricultural products and reduce production costs when entering new markets, as well as, to increase the

The uniqueness of this absolutely new product on the education market is that the program was developed around the juncture of three disciplines – agriculture, management and diplomacy

competitiveness of domestically-produced goods exported abroad, expanding the breadth of goods exported. MGIMO has always prepared qualified personnel for the international sphere, so we therefore are tracking the needs of the market and the priorities of Russia's state policy." What is unique about this absolutely new product on the education market? "The program was developed around the juncture of three disciplines – agriculture, management and diplomacy," Cherner said. "It includes a basic set of the foundational disciplines provided by MGIMO's own educational standards





Nowadays, the agro-industrial complex claims to be the main demonstration site of the new technological revolution results says the rector of Stavropol State Agrarian University, professor Vladimir Trukhachev. Stavropol State Agrarian University, located in the South of Russia is one of the MGIMO-University partners in the implementation of the International Agricultural Markets master's program of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture.

"The future image of the agro-industrial complex will be very diverse," Trukhachev said. – The Internet of things and the so-called "Internet of everything" already unites the entire production chain into a single ecosystem: from the creation of new fertilizers, breeds of animals and plants to the production of products that can radically improve human properties. Industry 4.0 robotic technologies allow using most of the agricultural machinery in an unmanned mode. International Agricultural Market's program graduates will need to consider global trends and sustainable trends that have a significant impact on the medium – and long-term prospects for the development of agriculture. The educational process in the program is planned in such a way that it integrates the competencies that are difficult to combine at first glance. Graduates are to be well-versed in the peculiarities of the modern Russian agriculture development to assess

the opportunities of domestic producers and restrictions existing on world markets to increase the production of competitive agricultural products. They need to be keen upon modern marketing technologies, including methods of product promotion, as well as ways to increase sales based on the constant demand study and possible competitive advantages of agricultural products in the socio-economic conditions of specific countries. As professionals working in the digital economy, the program graduates should use management tools based on big data to make effective management decisions to promote Russian goods in international markets.

**We consider the economy of the Russian agricultural sector in the context of the world division of labor**

Stavropol State Agrarian University graduates of the World Economy master's program have the competencies to work with foreign partners in agricultural markets. Within the framework with MGIMO-University, they will train students of the joint master's program the skills that allow navigating in the economy of agricultural enterprises, to understand the production features, crop sale, and livestock products to form an idea about the organization of agricultural raw materials processing. Our University closely collaborates with a variety of agricultural enterprises of the Stavropol Kray. Thus, training sessions and workshops based on our partner enterprises will be a mandatory element of the training within the International Agricultural Markets master's program. The knowledge and skills allow you to fully understand the economic foundations of agricultural production and to know the demands of foreign customers.

for training managers, as well as, the disciplines of World Agricultural Markets, Foreign Activities and International Transport Operations, and Foreign Language (Professional), which are all led by MGIMO teachers.

As for agriculture-specific subjects, they are taught by agrarian universities. For example, Stavropol State Agrarian University teaches Economics of Agricultural Enterprises; Innovative Technologies in Agronomy, Production and Mechanization; and Phytosanitary and Veterinary Control. Kuban State Agrarian University teaches Legal Aspects of International Agrarian Rights.

Specialists and practitioners from state organs, including from the Ministry of Agriculture and the financial sector (Rosselkhozbank), as well as, employees and executives from major agricultural enterprises and major Russian and international grain suppliers, lead the courses. The courses include State Regulations of Agrarian Business, Global Commodity Exchanges in the Trade of Agricultural Products, Managing Financial and Operating Risks in Agriculture, International Currency and Credit Relations, and others.

"Thanks to the selection of professional competencies," Cherner said, "graduates will be recruited into Russia's state organs and the business sector. It is no wonder that MGIMO is first overall in the world for the employment of graduates in their first working year, a fact attested to by the international rating agency QS."

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"The decision to enter this program was deliberate," said Boris Nekrasov, "but the impulse was my desire to develop and work for my country, contributing to the fulfillment of Vladimir Putin's order on the 'stimulation of exports of agricultural products'. Working as an AgriAttaché involves the practical application of the knowledge and skills I have gained from the Department of External Relations and Diplomacy of Russia during my Master's program at MGIMO, where I also learned about different aspects of economic diplomacy.

The learning process in the program is therefore built on the theoretical basis received in lectures that are supported by practice. These two components were especially close during the module in

**Thanks to the selection of professional competencies, graduates will be recruited into Russia's state organs and the business sector**



Krasnodar, where we had the opportunity to speak with producers.

For example, in Stavropol, we learned about the system of quality control for food enterprises that meet all international standards and then got

some practical experience at the Stavropol Dairy Plant, where we observed the entire technological process and were provided with details on how to exert control over the whole production chain, from the field to the feeding stage and finally to

production. Enough time was allotted to the basics of phytosanitary controls over the ecosystem and plant-based products. We learned about phytosanitary monitoring, plant diseases and different types of damage caused by insects, as





Alexander Trubilin, the rector of the Kuban State Agrarian University situated in the south of Russia, believes that the benefit of the training program for specialists who are not only able to work in the agro-industrial complex of Russia but also to understand the features of international agricultural markets is quite obvious. The Kuban State Agrarian University has become one of MGIMO-University's partners in the implementation of the International Agricultural Markets master's program.

"Network programs are the most effective way to train highly qualified specialists in a relatively short time," Alexander Trubilin stresses. "This task can be solved only by joint efforts if each module of the program is led by the most qualified teachers using the best practices that have been accumulated by leading universities. Together with our colleagues, we will be able to give the participants of the program a comprehensive idea of how agriculture is developing in Russia and abroad, and what major industry trends should be paid attention to. The strong points of MGIMO-University are good facilities and resources while the Kuban State Agrarian University is proud of two effectively functioning educational and experimental farms: Kuban and Krasnodarskoye. After all, to promote domestic products, equipment, and scientific developments abroad, it



is necessary to know their strengths very well. Having the most state-of-the-art Russian and foreign equipment, our farms apply highly efficient production

**Network programs are the most effective way to train highly qualified specialists in a relatively short time**

technologies in both plant and cattle breeding. Both farms have well-equipped classrooms that provide the best opportunity for education and practice. We use them for educational purposes. There is no doubt that the potential of instructional farms will be actively used in the masters' network training. Secondly, our University has a faculty

of law, which is considered to be one of the best in Russia. We have a serious law school tradition, which has accumulated experience in training lawyers for the agricultural sector, so we were assigned a module on international legal regulation in the agricultural sector. Thanks to cooperation with the leaders of the agricultural market, the University has created twenty-six training centers and implemented scholarship programs for talented students. Some companies provide grants for research and foreign internships. The members of the Association of European Business are our reliable partners for a long time. There are a large number of agricultural enterprises in the region, which are always open for cooperation with the University and are ready to help us in professional personnel training. We cherish such opportunity as it gives students the chance to get acquainted with market leaders, know some success stories, and to understand the challenges faced by companies. It is a matter of practice that cannot be gleaned from textbooks. Our partners will be happy to share their knowledge with the participants of the International Agricultural Markets master's program. As part of the module, we plan to conduct practical classes in the field in the territory of Kuban region enterprises, round tables with the participation of agricultural business representatives, interactive discussions, etc."

well as, got insight into the activities of international organizations that protect and quarantine certain plants. The next day, we learned practical skills in the Stavropol Veterinary Laboratory's department of phytosanitary inspections, seed production and grain quality. The program was designed in such a way that the knowledge gained complemented what we learned in the Kuban, such as, the specifics of international and national statistics in agriculture, the economics of

agriculture, international legal regulations in agriculture and the specifics of legal and arbitration practices regarding international and foreign rights as applied to the agrarian sector." \*\*\* "Russian agriculture," said Dmitry Rodriguez-Popov, a student, "is witnessing great export potential among all sectors of the Russian economy. However, as shown in discussions with representatives from

major enterprises (the Rodina and Rossiya collective farms), they have not yet figured out how to enter foreign markets. In us, the future agricultural attaches, they see those who will ensure and guide their activities abroad. I remember learning about the foundations of growing crops and raising animals, as well as, about phytosanitary regulations and legal support on deals in the agro-industrial complex, not to mention lectures on topics such as 'General





characteristics of agricultural legislation in Russia and abroad’ and ‘Procedures for mediating regulatory issues in the agro-industrial sector’ with their detailed exposition of theory, which we later practiced in a case involving a dispute between two commercial organizations. Students performed as both sides in the dispute and as the mediator. We sometimes wonder whether anyone could

**The learning process in the program is built on the theoretical basis received in lectures being supported in practice**

have imagined a year ago that MGIMO master’s students would be walking among cowsheds and not along the corridors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, learning about the conditions for maintaining livestock or listening to a fascinating lecture by an agronomist in Sad Gigant gardens about cultivating apples. The southern hospitality we received throughout all of the modules deserves

special mention. In Stavropol, each excursion ‘in the field’ included plentiful meals with several courses consisting of dozens of dishes. The food was exclusively natural, homegrown, harvested and prepared by our hosts. We lived in luxurious rooms in the university’s dormitories and had free access to the university’s sports facilities. In Krasnodar, the meal at the Fanagoria factory, which

**Russia’s agricultural sector is witnessing great export potential, but collective farms haven’t yet figured out how to enter foreign markets**

included a similarly festive spread, was accompanied by a performance by a Cossack ensemble. It was unforgettable!”  
  
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Nikita Sklyarov saw an announcement about the AgriAttache program on the MGIMO website, and it immediately drew his interest. “I was a student in my second year of the International Political



Consulting Master’s program and I was thinking about how I would make it work in the international relations sector. This program looked like a great opportunity for this. Moreover, a background in political science is not useless but, in turn, I believe it will allow me to locate stakeholders in the agriculture sector in the target country, to understand how the players have a direct influence on the ‘rules of the game’ which become specific legislation and regulations for agriculture. This understanding allows for the building of a more effective work

**A**n important part of the away modules was the opportunity to personally speak with exporters, around the needs of whom the work of AgriAttaches will be oriented



strategy in regard to the promotion of our agricultural products in a particular country. That aside, knowledge of political science gives an understanding of the specifics of working with state organs in other countries and an understanding of which ministries and institutions regulate issues and which affect the interests of our producers.

I am convinced that this program will be a wonderful addition to my education. I would consider its greatest advantage to be the combination of the theoretical and the practical in the learning process. At the Rossiya collective farm, we became closely acquainted with the process of maintaining and breeding the remarkable Hereford cows. It is interesting that some of them are hornless, and that this is a competitive advantage since it keeps the cows from injuring one another in case of conflict. It was interesting to learn about daily weight gain and how often they feed them. The farm has a high pedigree, and their livestock is ideal for purchasing and breeding. They presented the pride of the farm to us, a bull called Mars that weighed as much as a car at 1,600 kilograms and that regularly represents the farm at different exhibitions. Because of his weight, the bull can’t run and live among the herd, as cows can’t bear his weight.

The experience gained from speaking with practitioners during the final away module will play an important role in our professional development. In particular, we discussed the Russian grain industry in a roundtable format with representatives of state organs of the Krasnodar Region, representatives of European businesses in Russia (e.g. Syngenta, Klaas and others), and Russian grain business. They emphasized the importance of the path we were preparing for, and they said that what they would expect from us in the future would be an active dialogue with state organs of other countries with the goal of removing barriers for our products, as well as, to explain the benefits provided by our companies in their markets.”





EXCLUSIVE

# UPGRADING THE ECONOMY THROUGH CULTURE

A MGIMO delegation took part in the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, initiating the Trilogy of Dialogues





Prime Minister Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, a refined representative of the Caribbean, strolled by the stands at the St Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). He had taken part in productive discussions with Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during which they discussed how to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between Russia and Antigua and Barbuda, as well as, agreed to create a mutual visa free regime between the two countries, so Browne was feeling upbeat. His attention was drawn to a robot that, thanks to artificial intelligence, drew portraits of guests and poured coffee for anyone who wanted it. The robot brewed coffee for the prime minister and placed the cup directly in his hands. However, there were problems with the portrait. The robot’s neural network should have determined the trajectory of the movement of the “pencil”, emphasizing the contrasting areas of the prime minister’s face. However, the robot was unable to do so because of Browne’s dark skin. The developer from Saint Petersburg Polytechnic University scratched his head and said sheepishly, “We need an upgrade for this program.”

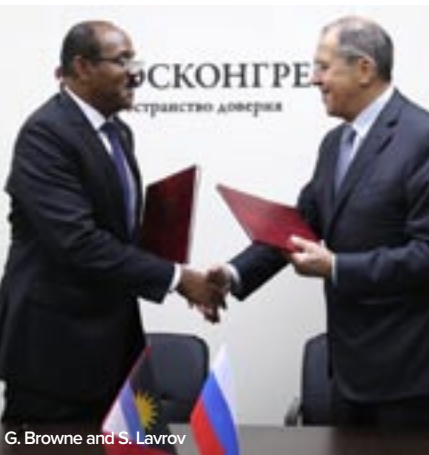
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The development of Russia in all fields is underway in accordance with an upgrade program as life dictates. However, international relations specialists say this is due to external pressure. MGIMO, which is developing the French-Russian Trianon Dialogue, took the initiative to combine the three existing dialogue mechanisms of bilateral cooperation between Russia and the Western countries.

The first of the “Trialogue of Dialogues”, as the initiative was called, opened at the Saint Petersburg forum and was dedicated to finding general connections between the Saint Petersburg (German-Russian), Trianon (French-Russian) and Sochi (Austrian-Russian) dialogues.

The leaders of the forums sat at a round

table. Viktor Zubkov, Chairman of the Petersburg dialogue, which at twenty years of age is the oldest of the three, and Chairman of PAO Gazprom’s Board of Directors, noted that the German Russian dialogue did not stop its work even in difficult periods. However, as they say, one cannot conquer alone. “Under the conditions of unprecedented pressure from sanctions imposed by the West,” he said, “the top officials of the three leading governments of Europe with a total population of more than 160 million people, Austria, France and



Germany, and the civil societies of these countries are ready to work closely with Russia and its civil society. I can right off the bat name several other countries that could work with us in this format, such as, Hungary and Slovakia.”

“Our dialogues are designed, before anything, to solve tasks regarding interpersonal relations between people,” noted his co-chair, MGIMO Rector

**The development of Russia in all fields is underway in accordance with an upgrade program as life dictates. However international relations specialists say this is due to external pressure**

Anatoly Torkunov. “Therefore, we in the Trianon Dialogue started first by creating a powerful Internet portal for greater cooperation. It is in great demand, and we are constantly working on it.”

“The Sochi dialogue, the ‘youngest’ of the three, is ready to pass on the experience of its fellows,” said Christoph Leidl, President of Eurochambres, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry. “Countries and governments either sign contracts or, in reverse, initiate conflicts, but people are always interested in stability, peace and



friendship, and the goal of the dialogues is to help them in this. The problems we have should be solved by politicians, and we can support them fully at the civil society level, where relations between those united by culture are important. As for multilateral projects, there are many possibilities for cooperative, active work. I really like the name ‘Trialogue of dialogues’, and I would even name

it “Trialogue+”, because we are inviting other countries to it.”

Andrei Fursenko, an aide to President Putin and Co-chair of the Sochi Dialogue – who in his role as Minister of Education and Science worked as a co-chair of the Austrian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission – emphasized that humanitarian relations between countries not only go together with the development of economic and political agendas but define bilateral relations as well. “In the modern world, interpersonal humanitarian relations not only follow behind economics, but they very much define them,” he said. “Political conflicts are far more economic than ideological.”

The discussion of issues of public diplomacy continued as part of the press conference “MGIMO’s Beyond Diplomacy: Informal Dialogues and Interdisciplinary Skills”. Torkunov spoke about the new Master’s programs with interdisciplinary

**Leidl: “Countries and governments either sign contracts or start conflicts, but people are always interested in peace”**





features that the university is offering in collaboration with Microsoft, ADV and NVIDIA, MIPT, Karakan Invest and MISiS, including in sports diplomacy and global agrarian markets.

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The round table “The Economics of Culture”, part of the Austrian-Russian Sochi Dialogue, was also interesting. Zelfira Tregulova, General Director of the State Tretyakov Gallery, spoke about the special role of museums. “This is a place where, on the one hand, a person experiences unbelievably strong emotions that they might lack in life, but they also form a different view. A dialogue with real art leads to thinking outside the box, and it impels people to be more creative, which is the key to the future of the country. People feel this instinctively and go to museums, from a feeling of self-preservation.” Sabine Haag, General Director of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, supported Tregulova. “Culture is the

**T**orkunov: “We in the Trianon Dialogue have created a powerful Internet portal for greater cooperation. It is in great demand”



medium for everyone,” she said. “It helps individuals develop, and we need creative leaders in all fields. Culture is absolutely directed towards the future.” Concerning the declared theme of “The Economics of Culture”, some interesting figures were discussed at the session. For example, the share of state funds in museum budgets in Russia has decreased, but the share of sponsorship money is growing “at an unbelievable rate”. While state funds accounted for 68 percent of the Tretyakov Gallery’s budget in 2014, the

share of state financing had dropped to 32 percent by 2018. Today, in the Pushkin Museum, the Tretyakov Gallery and most museums, all exhibitions, publications and educational projects are organized with funds from sponsors. This is creating a serious problem, as no one knows for how long this funding can continue, while the government can think, “Well, they can manage without us.” However, the maintenance of a museum, its development, and changes to its infrastructure are the responsibility of the state, because museums educate

**Z**ubkov: “I can right off the bat name several other countries that could work with Russia in this format, such as Hungary and Slovakia”

people about the future on which they will rely. Another important function of

museums is to speak when the guns fall silent. “Today, when political relations are tense,” said Marina Loshak, Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, “when economic ties are failing, we all see how intense cultural contacts are. We have a special mission these days, as well as, the mission to introduce the world to Russian art.” The discussion then turned back to the initial argument about what is more important: culture or economics? It started with the renowned academic Alexander Auzan. He considers culture to



be more important than economics. “The costs of cultural changes compared to the transformation of economic systems is very high, at least forty years. The prophet Moses was right when he took forty years to complete the first such cultural operation in history.”  
Leitl, being an economist, did not

At the ceremony to give awards for international cooperation and the development of foreign economic activity, Anatoly Torkunov, Rector of MGIMO, received an award for his prominent contribution to the development of Russia’s human resources in regard to foreign economic

Russian higher education and improve the training of scientific and pedagogical personnel, as well as, to intensify the search for promising opportunities for integration in scientific research and educational practices, and to develop the scientific, educational and industrial



agree with this thesis, but he did make a concession. “We are not here to decide what is more important – the chicken or the egg. We want to think systematically. I consider both culture and economics to be important. For me, the decisive factor is that culture leads to the development of creativity, which we combine with all of our thinking. From this comes innovation and improvements in the standard of living.”  
Why does business support culture? “Major businessmen support the future,” Tregulova said. “This is a powerful internal impulse, and they have a different horizon of thinking. This includes not only financial support but at times incredible, interesting ideas.”  
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The delegation from MGIMO attended the forum over several busy days.

**M** GIMO Rector signed coordination agreements with the governments of the Leningrad, Ryazan and Penza regions

directions and the development of high standards of education in international business.  
Torkunov met with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and signed agreements with the governments of the Leningrad, Ryazan and Penza regions. The agreements foresee collaboration between MGIMO and the Russian regions to develop the best traditions of

potential of the regions. Governors Alexander Drozdenko (Leningrad Region), Ivan Belozertsev (Penza Region) and Nikolai Lyubimov (Ryazan Region) all took part in the signing ceremony.  
At the MGIMO stand with Sergey Levin, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, the signing of an agreement with Corteva™ Agriscience to develop the Master’s program “Global Agrarian Markets” took place. MGIMO’s Economic Club presented a model to attract investment called “Russia and the World: Creating a Competitive Edge 4.0”. Andrey Baykov, Vice-Rector for Masters and International Programs, took part in the session on the “Role Played by Young Scientists in Implementing International Scientific and Technological Projects”. Viktor Sumsky, Director of the MGIMO ASEAN Center, moderated an EAEU-ASEAN business dialogue. [E]





# MGIMO’S FRENCH CONNECTION

In 2018, Lyudmila Potushanskaya, the oldest teacher of MGIMO University, celebrated the centenary. “A centenary?” she asked, clearly displeased with the pathos of our congratulations. “Well, yes, I am a hundred years old, but I don’t see what I have to boast about. And I have no secret to longevity! I have always been a keen person; I was interested in everything. And I did only what I liked and what was easy for me – at least, my dad always spoke like this about me.”

From 1956 until her retirement, Lyudmila Potushanskaya taught French to MGIMO University students. She laid the foundation of the French teaching tradition at the University and co-authored numerous textbooks of French grammar, which are still reprinted. In 2019, she passed away.

Lyudmila Potushanskaya was born on May 24, 1918. Her mother, Bella, worked as a primary school teacher, spent all day at school, and was not interested in her family. “Mom took all our books to school. “Why do we need books at home? my mother asked. “Schoolchildren need them much more.”

Thinking about her future career, Lyudmila remembered her father’s French education and entered the Moscow State Linguistic University. “I fell in love with this language immediately and I adore it throughout my life. It is as beautiful as Russian. But most of all I loved the grammar, the structure of the language which gives it transparency and clarity.”

She was at the Institute, when she heard the news about the start of the Great patriotic War. “It was Sunday, June 22, 1941. I came to the exam, and the terrible news hit like a bolt out of the blue. So, I returned home. When the evacuation began, dad was sent to the city of Kokand in the Uzbek SSR. He began to work there as a Deputy Director of a chemical plant, and I got a job as a quinziner there. There were outbreaks of malaria in Central Asia, and quinine was extremely necessary.”

Life was a challenge, we were starving. “I was always hungry, so my mother asked me to go to bed early. I remember my father, who was a very intelligent and good-mannered man, that could not cope with



constant hunger so he picked up cabbage leaves from the floor to eat”.

Returning to Moscow, Ludmila resumed her studies in the Institute but soon moved to the Military Institute of Foreign Languages, where they had teaching courses for those who were going to work in female classes of the Suvorov Military schools. Then she was recommended to the French Department at MGIMO-University. “When I was in the office of the rector, Mr. Ryzhenko, he suddenly asked me: “Are you going to wear a coat in the class?” It was a joke. “If you are not going to hire me, I won’t take it off.” I answered. “And I don’t know whether you will hire me or not.” Mr. Ryzhenko realized that the only hanger in his office was his one, and appreciated my diplomatic approach. He liked me, so he just asked his secretary: “When should Lyudmila come to start her work?”

First of all, speaking about her work at MGIMO-University, Lyudmila Putushanskaya always kindly mentioned those with whom she worked and those whom she taught. “I was very lucky to meet wonderful people, and they always enjoyed my company, no one ever hurt me. I loved all

**I fell in love with this language immediately and I have adored it all my life. It is as beautiful as Russian. But most of all I loved the grammar, the structure of the language which gives it transparency and clarity**

my students, always stood up for them. If it is my student, he or she is untouchable!”

Lyudmila Putushanskaya was proud of her friendship with MGIMO University legend Vitaly Kabatov, who was a Professor of law. “I loved him very much. He was a perfectly benevolent man, with not a whit of envy in him. He was a very elegant man, striking in his beauty. But he had been seriously wounded and had lost both hands



on the battlefield. Can you imagine, that he went on his business trips alone? It’s unbelievable! He has never experienced any household problems, as he had perfected a self-service system, he could do everything himself! I will never forget our MGIMO University trip to France. When our group returned to Moscow, I talked about Vitaly more than about the country of my dreams! He was absolutely amazing! He helped

me with the chair when we were at the restaurant. When we got off the bus and he cared about my coat. This man had an amazing cultural background! A sense of humor is what I like in people the most. Once Vitaly was looking at the Paris photo, in which I stand next to the statue of Venus de Milo in the Louvre. “My God, is that you?!” he exclaimed. I grasped his joke and played him along: “Alas, no!”



# THE ENGLISH LADY

Elena Zeltyn is one of the founders of the English teaching tradition at MGIMO-University. She began teaching at MGIMO-University in 1944, the very year of its foundation.

Last year she passed away at the age of 100. Her way to the University started in 1926 when her family arrived in London. “My father, the chief of Soyuzneftesbit oil company, was sent there on a business trip. He was at the beginning of the Soviet oil industry. Elena could not imagine that England and the English language would become the main subject of her life. “Since both my parents worked (my mother was a doctor at the Embassy), two of my younger brothers and I were sent to a boarding school. For a year and a half, we lived on the beach, where I started speaking English, my Russian became worse as I had no practice and even started to forget it.”

Ten years later, already in Moscow, when it was time to choose a University to enter, she wanted to enter a flight school, but they accepted undergraduates from the age of 19. Then her mother said: “Enter the Moscow State Linguistic University. Languages will always be useful and after graduation, you will go wherever you want.” In 1936, she became a student of the foreign languages’ faculty.

She graduated in 1940, and the next year the war began... “Every night we sat on Moscow roofs and extinguished German incendiary bombs that were dropped on the city. I hoped that I would go to the front as a volunteer (my brother had already been there), but I had to evacuate to Siberia.”

There Elena was the instructor of shooting sports, taught shooting from a Maxim machine gun and a Mosin rifle in the training center where people, including the wounded soldiers, were sent to when they needed retraining after work.

When the war ended, she was invited to teach at MGIMO-University. She was

enthusiastic about the proposal: she would be teaching, not future teachers, but diplomats and experts in area studies.

Initially, it was not easy to work without any textbooks. Those from the Moscow State Linguistic University, which were common for the future teachers of MGIMO-University, could not fully fulfil the educational demands. “Until the end of the 1950s, we created our coursebooks, and we printed texts from Dickens and other authors ourselves. Language classes



**When I was offered to teach at MGIMO, I was enthusiastic about the proposal: I was to teach future diplomats and experts in area studies. It was a challenge!**

in the language labs were of great help. Then they began to write their own textbooks”.

In the early 1960s, Elena Zeltyn began to work as a translator with the delegations of the Communist parties of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Australia. She accompanied the Secretary-General of the American Communists, Gus Hall, many times. It was necessary not only to translate but also to be a guide: to explain and make everything clear to the guest.

At about the same time, Elena began to travel abroad on business trips. She came to London in 1967, only 40 years after her childhood trip. “At first we studied at English Summer School for a few weeks, and then we started going to universities, asking to be allowed to attend the classes and to be taught by our foreign colleagues. I remember one of them told me after the conversation: “We have nothing to teach you, you know everything.” Anyway, every day we learned something new. Every episode, even a curious one, could help us understand this country better. Once I accompanied the Soviet delegation to Glasgow and to Aberdeen, a city in Northern Scotland. We were met, the official part began, and the host of the meeting said something, but I did not understand a word. I looked at the Secretary of the Scottish Communist Party, who had come with us from Glasgow, in horror, and he laughed and gestured: “I don’t understand either!” So, I learned that Aberdeen has its dialect, in fact, another language.”

In 1979, Elena travelled to the United States, as the American-Russian Institute in San Francisco decided to organize a School of Russian language. There was need for an experienced teacher. However, it was necessary to teach Russian to the Americans. They called Ms. Zeltyn “The

English Lady” because of her pronounced British accent and jokingly asked her, “What is the weather like in London today?”

The English teaching tradition at MGIMO is a brand created by Elena and her colleagues. “We created such an educational system to give our students the maximum practice of the English language. They have to understand, speak, write, and translate correctly.

**In London, at one of the universities where I wanted to go, I was told after the conversation: “We have nothing to teach you, you know everything”.**

On the other hand, our students have a certain passion, the desire to know the language better, as they are going to become diplomatic workers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For 60 years of her work at MGIMO-University, Elena Zeltyn never climbed the academic hierarchy: “I have never wanted to hold ranks; I was a senior lecturer. Other things were more important to me: I wanted to be useful to MGIMO because I devoted my whole life to it; it was my home, and the English Department was my family”.

What is the most pleasant thing that



you remember over the decades of work at MGIMO? “Of course, it is when graduates thank you for knowledge,” – she says. “Once at the University I met Julius Vorontsov. He was a remarkably gifted and good-mannered student, a great intellectual. He has become a talented, great diplomat.” Julius told me: “When I became the Ambassador to India, Indira Gandhi was really impressed by my splendid English. And I answered that I had had a great teacher.”





# 12<sup>th</sup> RISA CONVENTION AT MGIMO

Last year’s Russian International Studies Association (RISA) Convention was a unique platform that brought together more than 1,500 Russian and foreign experts and scholars for over 70 sessions devoted to various issues regarding international relations.

Anatoly Torkunov, MGIMO Rector and RISA President, opened the first plenary session with a statement. Among the speakers were Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport of the Kingdom of Cambodia; María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the United Nations General Assembly for the 73rd session; Alexander Yakovenko, Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Andrei Melville, Dean of the Department of Social Sciences at the Higher School of Economics; and Caroline Janvier, Chairperson of the French-Russian Friendship Group in the French National Assembly.

The second plenary session, “Diplomacy: Experience and Legacy”, which Sergey Lavrov, Russia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, opened, was particularly remarkable. The



session was devoted to great Soviet and Russian diplomats. As the minister noted, a number of milestones of great Soviet and Russian diplomats are being celebrated this year, such as those of Andrey Gromyko, Anatoly Dobrynin, Oleg Troyanovsky, Evgeni Primakov and Yuri Vorontsov. These people made history not just in diplomacy but for Russia in general. They made an

invaluable contribution to ensuring the security of our country and creating the conditions for its progressive development.

“We are doing our best to make the names of our remarkable colleagues remain a part of our national heritage,” Lavrov emphasized.

In this respect, the opening of a monument dedicated to Evgeny Primakov will be a landmark event. An exhibition devoted to Andrey Gromyko, a former head of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, opened in September.

“Our goal is not only to pay tribute to our senior colleagues whose achievements are now in textbooks on diplomacy and international relations, but also to ensure intergenerational continuity, which is even more important”, Lavrov said.

Anatoly Torkunov, MGIMO Rector, also recalled the names of famous

colleagues, all of whom, to an extent, have a connection to MGIMO. “All of these people are not just names that we respect. It’s very important for us to continue working and keeping their memory alive”, the rector noted.

Relatives, diplomats, scholars and politicians came to the event to share their memories about their colleagues and mentors. Alexey Gromyko, Director of the Institute of Europe and a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, spoke about his grandfather, Andrey Gromyko, a Soviet and Russian diplomat. Sergey Krylov, an MGIMO professor and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, shared his memories of the elder Gromyko as well. Suzanne

**S**ergey Lavrov noted that great Soviet and Russian diplomats “made an invaluable contribution to ensuring the security of our country and creating the conditions for its progressive development”

Massie, Special Advisor to the President of the United States (1984-1988), and Alexander Bessmertnykh, President of the MGIMO Alumni Association, President of the International Foreign Policy Association, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, shared stories about Anatoly Dobrynin. Alexander Panov, Head of the Department of Diplomacy at MGIMO and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, told the audience about Oleg Troyanovsky and his family. Dobrynin and Primakov told Torkunov about their experience working

with distinguished diplomats. Leonid Slutsky, Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, also recalled his colleagues. The speakers were accompanied by unique photographs that captured moments from the lives of those being commemorated.

At the end of the session, Polad Bülbüloğlu, Azerbaijan’s Ambassador to Russia, congratulated MGIMO on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and presented Anatoly Torkunov with a medal dedicated to “100 Years of the Republic of Azerbaijan’s



Diplomatic Service” in accordance with an order by Elmar Mammadyarov, Azerbaijan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The convention’s cultural program was remarkable for all attendees, as well as for MGIMO faculty and students. MGIMO students prepared a special show, Grigory Leps performed a concert in the Conference Hall and Nikas Safronov, an Honored Artist of the Russian Federation, opened an exhibition titled “The World Through the Eyes of MGIMO Students and Alumni”. In the atrium of the new building was a personal exhibition by Igor Lilejev, a senior teacher in the department, called “A Circle Squared: Unusual MGIMO”.

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Within the frameworks of RISA Convention MGIMO hosted “Academic



Diplomacy: The Place and Role of Leading Russian Universities”, which was organized by the Russian Association of Leading Universities and the Russo-French Trianon Dialogue.

The main topic of discussion was the role of the academic community in improving dialogues in international civil society. The conference included three sessions.

The opening session, “Track Two Diplomacy and Dialogue in Civil Societies”, brought together

Rector and Program Coordinator for the Trianon Dialogue, moderated the session.

The discussion focused on the place of dialogue mechanisms in Track Two diplomacy and their efficiency, the objectives of existing dialogues and the role of universities in their agenda.

The second session, “Beyond University: The New Role of the University and the Experience of Russia and France”, brought together representatives of leading universities and educational experts.



representatives of five dialogues. Among the speakers were Anatoly Torkunov, MGIMO Rector and Co-chair of the Trianon Dialogue; Ernesto Ferlenghi, President of Confindustria Russia and Co-chair of the Russian-Italian Civil Society Dialogue Forum; Nobuo Shimotomai, a professor at Hosei University and a co-author of Russian-Japanese Relations as Parallel History; Inna Tsoi, Head of the Directorate of the Russia-Republic of Korea Dialogue Forum; Thomas Spazier, Counselor at the Embassy of Austria in Russia; Olivier Kempf, Founder of La Vigie, an analytical publication, and a researcher at the Foundation for Strategic Studies (France); and Caroline Galactéros, Director of Geopragma, a think tank. Artem Malgin, MGIMO Vice

**The “Track Two Diplomacy and Dialogue in Civil Societies” session focused on the place of dialogue mechanisms in Track Two diplomacy and their efficiency, and the role of universities in their agenda**

The participants shared their vision of the role of universities in the modern international context. Presentations were given by Sergey Andryushin, Vice



Rector for International Affairs at St. Petersburg State University; Sébastien Leoncel, Director of European and International Development at the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM); Boris Zhelezov, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education’s Department of International Cooperation; Caroline Lehni, Deputy Director for International Relations at the Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po Strasbourg); Viktoria Panova, Vice Rector for International Relations at the Far Eastern Federal University; Marina Petrova, Director of the MGIMO Endowment; Anne de Tinguy, Professor Emeritus at the Center for International Studies of Sciences Po (CERI Sciences Po); Igor Bartsits, Director of the Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service at RANEPa; and Vera Vishnyakova, Head of the School of International Regional Studies at the Higher School of Economics.

The final session, which was organized



by RANEPa and the ASEAN-Russia Forum on Education, was a platform for discussing international cooperation in the education sector, which often serves as a mechanism to iron out differences between countries.

The session was opened by MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov and his counterpart from RANEPa, Vladimir Mau. The speakers included Zoya Zaitseva, Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia at QS; Anna Kuznetsova, Children’s Rights Commissioner for the



President of the Russian Federation; Kyi Shwin, Rector of Yangon University of Foreign Languages; Pierre Clive Agius, Ambassador of Malta to Russia; Javier Torres, Education Adviser at the Embassy of Spain in Russia; Boris Zhelezov, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education’s Department of International Cooperation; Oleg Ziborov, First Deputy to the Head of the Kikot Moscow University of the Ministry of the Interior of Russia; Ekaterina Beresneva, Deputy



Executive Director of the Alliance of Russian and Spanish Universities; Walter Ferrara, First Counselor for Cultural Affairs at the Embassy of Italy in Moscow; Igor Sinyatkin, Director of the Moscow Office of CampusFrance; and other experts in international educational cooperation. The moderators were Igor Bartsits, Director of the Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service at RANEPa, and Tamara Shashikhina, Director of MGIMO’s European Studies Institute. 





# ASEAN–RUSSIA FORUM ON EDUCATION AT MGIMO

The ASEAN–Russia Forum on Education was held at MGIMO last October within the framework of the 12<sup>th</sup> Russian International Studies Association (RISA) Convention with more than 60 ASEAN officials from the ministries and educational institutions taking part in the event.

The first plenary session was opened with a statement by MGIMO Rector Anatoly Torkunov. Among the participants of the opening ceremony were Robert Matheus Michael Tene, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN; Pavel Zenkovich, First Deputy Minister of Education of the Russian Federation; Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport of the Kingdom of Cambodia; and Leonor Briones, Secretary of Department of Education of the Republic of the Philippines. The session was moderated by Viktor Sumsky, Director of MGIMO ASEAN Centre.

In his welcome speech Anatoly Torkunov noted that “in 2018 Russia and ASEAN agreed to elevate their Dialogue Relations to a Strategic Partnership. Ironically, global and regional contexts contribute to a new understanding between Russia and ASEAN that they need each other amid growing tensions in international relations”. The Rector also stressed that Russia and South-East Asia face an important challenge to renew and strengthen relations, to make them more substantive through joint practical actions. MGIMO’s Rector also spoke about the Forum on Education which aims to







Asqolani, Senior Project Officer at ASEAN Foundation; Gerald Rybkin, Deputy Director of the All-Russian Children’s Centre “Ocean”; Chea Vuth, Deputy Director of the Department of General Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Kingdom of Cambodia; Elena Zelenina, Deputy Director of the Boarding School for Gifted Children named after N. N. Dubinin; Chotima Nooprik, Educator at the Department of Basic Education of the Kingdom of Thailand; and Larisa Tokareva, Deputy Director of Stavropol School №45.

The moderator of the second session entitled “Best Practices in Student Mobility” was Andrey Baykov, Vice-

**A**natoly Torkunov: “In 2018, Russia and ASEAN agreed to elevate their Dialogue Relations to a Strategic Partnership. Ironically, global and regional contexts contribute to a new understanding between Russia and ASEAN that they need each other amid growing tensions in international relations”

inventory ideas and notions about the top areas for cooperation and coordinated efforts as well as about the MGIMO ASEAN Centre, the ASEAN–Russia University Fora, the Youth Summits, and the ASEAN Kid’s Summit.

The first session of the Forum was devoted to the best practices in basic education and moderated by Roman Kotov, MGIMO Gorchakov Lyceum. Among the speakers were Nepomuceno Malaluan, Undersecretary of the Department of Education of the Republic of the Philippines; Dmitry Savin, Deputy Head of the Sirius Educational Centre; Ilan



**T**he participants discussed cooperation in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and in teaching STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)

Rector for Graduate and International Programs at MGIMO. The list of speakers included Dmitry Korotkov, Founder of the International Scientific Communication Consortium; Ludhini Volva, Programme Support Officer at ASEAN Foundation; Olga Yaroshenko, Vice-Rector for International Affairs at South Ural State University; Baiduri Widanarko, Chairperson of ASEAN University-Network–ASEAN Credit Transfer System; Alexander Tamitskiy, Director of the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and

International Communication at Northern (Arctic) Federal University; Somkiat Kamolpun, Educator at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation of the Kingdom of Thailand.

The afternoon RISA plenary session entitled “Diplomacy: Experience and Legacy” was opened with a statement by Sergey Lavrov, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The work of the ASEAN–Russia Forum on Education would continue on October 22d. The participants discussed cooperation in technical and vocational education

and training (TVET) and in teaching STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). One of the sessions was to be organized by the Association of Leading Universities and deal with the features of cooperation in education in the modern international context. The programme of the second day also included a Thailand–Russia roundtable on the peculiarities of raising gifted children.

The Forum was organized under the sponsorship of the Russian Ministry of Higher Education and Science and Ministry of Education. 







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