

**Speech by Mr Masrur Zokirzoda, Deputy Head of the Department of
International Relations at the Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Tajikistan
21 June 2025**

Respected Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, and members of the Board of Trustees.

Respected Rector of the University, Professor Dr Christopher John Gerry.

Respected Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Professor Khomyakov Maksim Borisovich.

Faculty and staff of the University of Central Asia, dear graduates, and esteemed guests.

First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan and myself, I would like to sincerely congratulate the graduates of the Class of 2025 on the successful completion of their studies at the University of Central Asia, and wish them great success in their future careers and education. Congratulations, dear graduates!

Dear guests, as you are all aware, the University of Central Asia in Khorog was officially inaugurated on 14 September 2018 by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Leader of the Nation, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon.

At the official inauguration ceremony of the University, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and Leader of the Nation, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, stated: *“The University of Central Asia in the city of Khorog marks a new chapter in the system of higher professional education in our country... I believe that the activities of this newly established institution will not only benefit our nation but will also contribute to the development of multifaceted cooperation among the countries of the region in the field of education.”*

It is well known that, on the initiative of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Leader of the Nation, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, the year 2025 was declared the International Year of Glacier Preservation.

It is worth noting that universities and research institutes in the Republic of Tajikistan, following this initiative of the esteemed Leader of the Nation, have organised numerous seminars, conferences, and scientific studies. The University of Central Asia has also launched many scientific events on this issue, and I would like to highlight some of them:

- a) The “Environmental Protection and Rational Use of Natural Resources” programme organised the second traditional international scientific-practical conference titled “Development of National Industry and Tajik Geology in the Era of the Country’s Independence”, dedicated to the Day of Tajik Geology, in collaboration with the Tajik Mining and Metallurgy Institute on 9 December 2024.
- b) Within the “Environmental Protection and Rational Use of Natural Resources” programme, the second international seminar on mountain environments titled “Glaciers

of Central Asia” was held in the city of Khorog from 10 to 15 October 2024.

c) On 29 May 2025, the Mountain Societies Research Institute of the University of Central Asia, in collaboration with the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, organised an international conference on glaciers in Dushanbe.

d) Also on 29 May this year, students of the University of Central Asia actively participated in the Youth Forum on Glacier Protection: Opportunities for Future Generations – “The Voice of Youth for Glacier Preservation and Their Initiatives in Addressing the Challenges of Climate Change.”

The University of Central Asia was established in the year 2000 through the signing of an international agreement by the Presidents of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Ismaili Imamat.

It is a source of pride that the Republic of Tajikistan is one of the founding members of the University of Central Asia, and its Patron and Founding Supporter is the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Leader of the Nation, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon.

The University of Central Asia remains committed to its mission and makes a significant contribution to the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan to improve access to quality educational opportunities for students across various regions of the country.

To improve the quality of life of people in different regions of the Republic of Tajikistan, the University of Central Asia has implemented the following initiatives:

- a) Conducted a research project on the topic: “Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Biological Diversity of Endangered Plant Species in the Dashtijum Community of Shamsiddin Shohin District, Khatlon Region.”
- b) Conducted a research project on the topic: “Local Aromatic Plants as a Mechanism to Combat Harmful Crop Insects for the Improvement of Food Security and Human Health.”
- c) Organised a summer school on the topic: “Study of the Tajik Language, History, and Culture,” dedicated to the 33rd anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Tajikistan. The summer school was attended by 12 students from Germany, Italy, and Japan.
- d) In collaboration with the creative group of Tajikistan Television, the University filmed its second documentary in the Khatlon region. This film, titled “Natural and Historical Heritage,” features historical and cultural sites of Khatlon, particularly Chiluchorchashma, Khoja Mashhad, and Ajina Teppa.
- e) On 6 May this year, the School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Central Asia organised a research seminar on cultural heritage and tourism development, where a database of historical, cultural, and natural sites of Khatlon region and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast was presented.

It is my hope that the University of Central Asia will further strengthen its research initiatives so that it may serve as a valuable model for other institutions.

We are pleased to note that 76% of the students studying at this international University's Khorog campus are from the Republic of Tajikistan. Today, 28 talented students are graduating from the University, 23 of whom are from Tajikistan.

I congratulate the graduates and wish them success in their academic and professional endeavours. I also commend the University of Central Asia for preparing them well through its rigorous academic programmes.

The University of Central Asia is one of the few universities in the world that focuses on improving the quality of life in mountain communities.

Graduates who have sought employment have successfully secured meaningful positions and have applied their knowledge in fields such as economics, the environment, technology, media, and other areas, contributing to the prosperity and economic sustainability of Tajikistan.

The School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) of the University of Central Asia enrolled more than 662 government institution employees (32% of whom were women) in English and Russian language courses during the period of 2023–2024. Currently, the School operates in the cities of Dushanbe, Khujand, Khorog, and Bokhtar, and plans to launch its programmes in Danghara as well.

Dear guests,

I am fully confident that the University of Central Asia will continue to expand its cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan and with other educational and scientific institutions of the country, and that it will continue to make a significant contribution to the development of the education sector in Tajikistan.

In conclusion, I once again extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, the graduates of the Class of 2025, and to your parents on this special occasion, and wish you every success in your future careers and efforts.

Good luck!