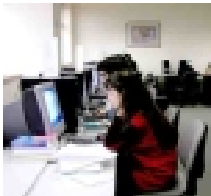
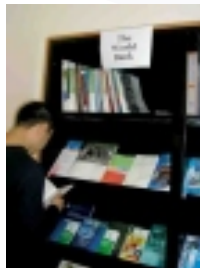


Uzbek Students Discuss James D. Wolfensohn's brochure "Securing the 21-st Century. Protecting the Planet"



On December 14, 2004 a group of students of Westminster International University in Tashkent gathered at a discussion room to exchange opinions on the brochure "Securing the 21-st Century.

Protecting the Planet". It was an initiative of the World Bank Public Information Center (PIC Uzbekistan). The brochures were suggested to the students for home reading and further discussion. The initiative was supported by the teaching staff and welcomed by the students.



Why Westminster University? PIC Uzbekistan has established partnership relations with the University library. The university is in the World Bank dissemination list and obtains major WB publications. A permanent stall with World Bank publications was arranged in the university library, PIC bulletins and World Bank newsletters are regularly sent to the library and displayed on the News Board. Some joint events have been planned and included in the action plan of PIC Uzbekistan.

The agenda of the Discussion included a brief presentation on the World Bank made by Matluba Mukhamedova, PIC/communications associate. After that the students watched a film based on "10 things you never knew about the World Bank in Uzbekistan". This



preliminary information made the discussion easier as on the one hand, the presentation and the film were a kind of icebreaking exercise, and on the other hand, the students obtained introductory information to avoid basic questions about the WB activities.

It was not just the discussion of the brochure content. Many facts, figures and citations were translated to Uzbek environment. The students were really impressed by the figures of IBRD and IDA commitments and asked for information about the WB projects implemented in Uzbekistan. They were interested in the share of IBRD and IDA funded projects.



Terrorism became the most hot topic when discussing the challenges for coming years. The students

recalled the terrorist attacks in Uzbekistan and Russia and agreed that in globalised world nobody could feel secure. The brochure chapters "Protecting the Planet: Environmental Sustainability" and "Scaling Up the Fight against Poverty" caused intense disputes.

The problems of youth and education were considered to be most urgent. The students mentioned the demographic situation in Uzbekistan with about 50% of population being under 16. They also discussed the problems in finding adequate jobs. In his brochure Mr. Wolfensohn suggests to engage young people in finding the solution. In response to that it was suggested that the Westminster University students would take part in the round table discussion in Uzbekistan CAS consultation process.

At the end of the discussion the students were briefly informed about the information resources of the World Bank including the WB external web site, country office web site and PIC .