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Jun 11, 2024 by [Andrew Dubbins](#)

## **Public Diplomacy in the News: D-Day Diplomacy, Hip Hop Diplomacy, & Election Disinformation** <sup>[1]</sup>

*“Public Diplomacy in the News” is a CPD Blog series by Andrew Dubbins that spotlights noteworthy stories on public diplomacy topics such as cultural diplomacy, nation branding, exchange programs, international events and conferences, digital diplomacy, and strategic global communications.*

**Global leaders gather for 80th Anniversary D-Day commemoration.** D-Day commemorations have evolved into significant diplomatic and geopolitical events, attracting

numerous world leaders to Normandy. On June 6, 2024, French President Emmanuel Macron led an international ceremony at Omaha Beach to mark the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings, continuing a tradition that has gained global attention over the decades. Initially, these commemorations were small, locally-focused military events, but since the 1980s, they have transformed into large-scale international gatherings that reflect contemporary political climates. The observances have been pivotal in showcasing transatlantic ties, promoting peace, and addressing global conflicts, such as the ongoing tensions between Russia and Ukraine. This year's anniversary notably excluded Russian representation due to the war in Ukraine, highlighting the event's ongoing relevance in current geopolitics.

France 24

**Hip hop diplomacy initiative seeks to foster international cultural exchange.** A group of 22 hip hop artists from various countries, including Cameroon, Mongolia, and Costa Rica, visited the United States as part of the State Department's Global Music Diplomacy Initiative. During their two-week stay, they toured Washington, D.C., New York, and North Carolina, where they engaged with American music professionals, learned about hip hop's role in civic engagement, and explored innovative ways to use music for education and cultural preservation. This initiative aimed to foster international cultural exchange and empower the artists to enhance their local creative economies. The visit had a profound impact on participants like Cameroonian artist Mimie, who returned home with a renewed understanding of music's societal impact and plans to inspire her community through education and artistic expression.

Karin Zeitvogel / The Washington Diplomat

**EU struggled to counter Russian election disinformation ahead of Parliament elections.** The European Union struggled to combat Russian disinformation campaigns ahead of the European Parliament elections, June 6-9. Despite efforts by Stratcom, the EU's disinformation-busting team, to debunk false narratives such as those claiming Polish citizens are fleeing to Belarus, the spread of pro-Kremlin content challenged the bloc. Russian disinformation has targeted multiple EU countries, particularly Poland and Germany, and is believed to amplify voter grievances that support nationalist parties. While individual EU nations have varying levels of resources and strategies to address this issue, the overall European response remains fragmented. The new EU Digital Services Act aims to increase Big Tech's responsibility in countering harmful content, but the rise of generative AI complicates these efforts.

Julia Payne / Reuters

**NATO Ambassador highlights its continued relevance.** NATO remains a vital and relevant alliance even after 75 years, according to Julianne Smith, the U.S. permanent representative to NATO. Her listening tours in the U.S. Midwest revealed a need to educate younger generations about NATO's contemporary relevance and historical importance. Smith highlighted that despite some public confusion and skepticism, two-thirds of Americans support NATO. Addressing concerns about burden sharing, Smith emphasized that more NATO members are meeting defense spending targets, demonstrating Europe's commitment and enabling the alliance to address global security challenges effectively.

Jim Garamone / U.S. Department of Defense

**Liz Allen named among 2024's "Women of Distinction."** Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy Liz Allen was honored at PRWeek's 2024 "Women of Distinction" event in New York. In a Q&A with PRWeek, Allen reflected on the influential mentors in her career, such as Josh Earnest and Jen Psaki, and emphasized her commitment to mentoring the next generation through open dialogue and inclusive practices. Engaging with young leaders is central to her work at the State Department, where initiatives like the Young African Leaders Initiative foster global youth leadership. She remains passionate about advocating for women's issues globally, and recognizes the need for practical approaches over perfectionism.

PRWeek

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