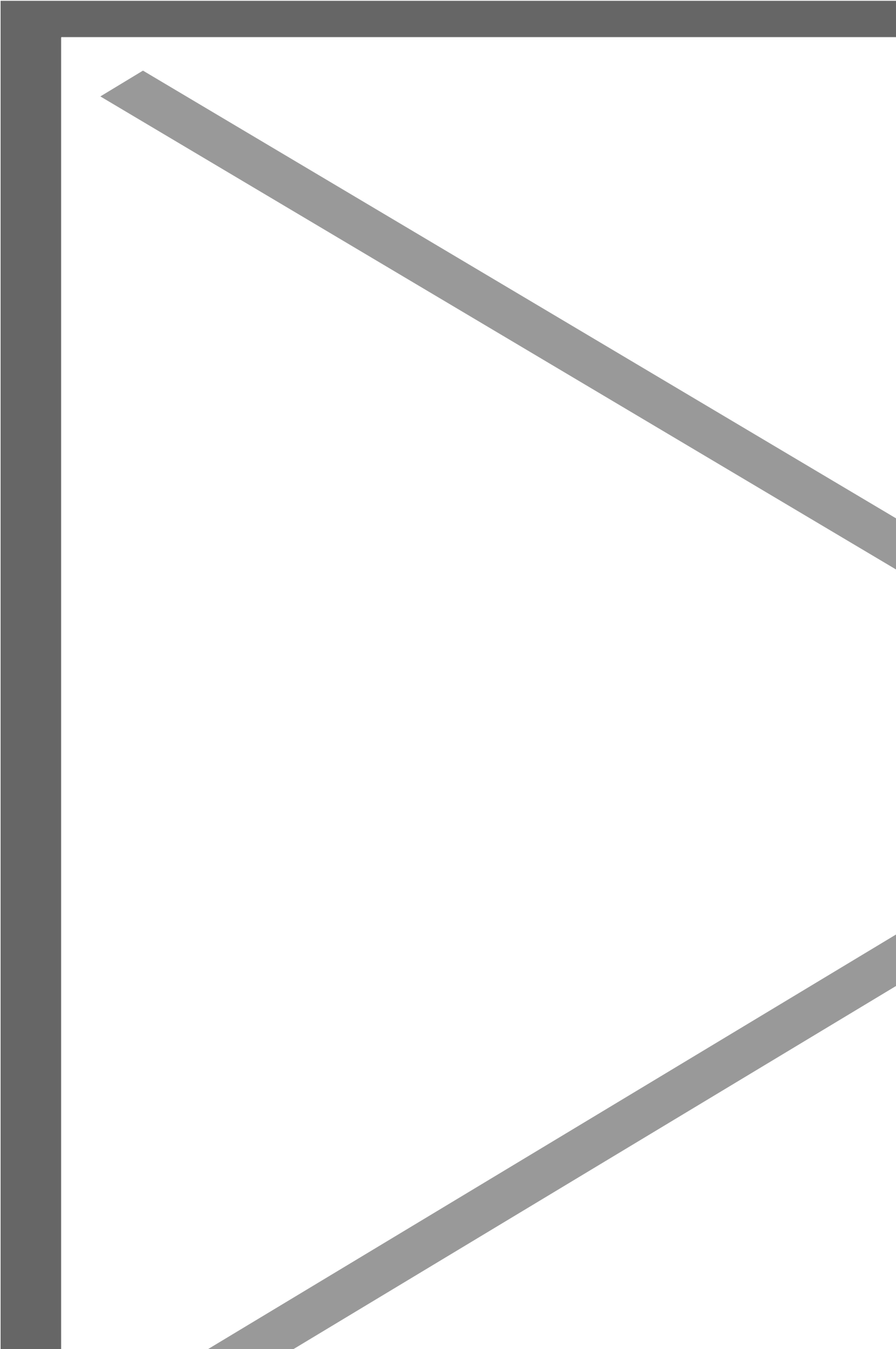


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Public Diplomacy in the News: Expo 2025 Edition ^[1]

“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.

Osaka Expo 2025 opens with global unity and futuristic vision. Expo 2025 opened in Osaka with a rendition of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the participation of over 160 countries showcasing futuristic innovations amid ongoing global conflicts. Held on the reclaimed Yumeshima Island, the event emphasizes creating a future society focused on unity, sustainability, and technological advancement. Highlights include robots, flying cars, and national pavilions reflecting both heritage and progress, such as the U.S. display on space travel and Ukraine's emotionally resonant exhibit on war and resilience. Despite slow ticket sales and international tensions, organizers remain hopeful the Expo will foster global cooperation and inspire peace.

Malek Fouda with AP / EuroNews

Architecture innovation and global sustainability at Expo 2025. Expo 2025 Osaka showcases a bold vision for a sustainable and interconnected future through its theme “Designing Future Society for Our Lives,” featuring over 150 architectural pavilions from countries around the world. Highlights include Sou Fujimoto's timber Grand Ring, the world's largest wooden structure, and immersive national pavilions such as Qatar's sail-inspired exhibit, France's three-act nature journey, and Switzerland's ultra-light, recyclable spheres. Cultural programs, sustainability showcases, and interactive technologies reflect global priorities, from climate resilience to women's empowerment. The event is animated by art installations, advanced tech demonstrations, and the vibrant mascot Myaku-Myaku, all staged on the artificial island of Yumeshima.

Designboom

Japan's Prime Minister and Emperor look to Expo to heal global divides and inspire youth. Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba opened the 2025 Osaka Expo with a call for global unity amid ongoing wars and trade tensions, emphasizing the expo's theme of life, the world, and the future. The six-month event features 180 countries and organizations showcasing futuristic technologies and cultural exhibits. While symbolized by the massive wooden "Grand Ring" meant to evoke unity, the expo has faced setbacks including rising construction costs, slow ticket sales, and incomplete pavilions due to international conflicts and logistical delays. Emperor Naruhito shared nostalgic memories of the 1970 expo and expressed hope the event would inspire a new generation.

Ayaka McGill and Mari Yamaguchi / AP

Soft power and spectacle in Osaka. Despite construction delays, cost overruns, methane

gas concerns, and social media criticism, the Expo deploys Japan's cultural charm—from giant Gundams to the once-ridiculed mascot Myaku-Myaku—in an attempt to use soft power and spectacle to foster international dialogue before the site transitions to a casino, writes Just McCurry in an editorial for *The Guardian*. Amid global instability and lukewarm domestic enthusiasm, Expo 2025 in Osaka aspires to offer a hopeful vision for the future with exhibits ranging from Martian meteorites and androids to artificial hearts and virtual conflict zones, all anchored by Sou Fujimoto's wooden skywalk inspired by ancient shrine architecture.

Justin McCurry / The Guardian

Expo 2025 in photos. In a photo gallery published by *The Atlantic*, Expo 2025 Osaka is captured in stunning detail—from flying car demonstrations and humanoid robots to the towering wooden Grand Ring promenade. National exhibits like France's poetic architecture and Ukraine's "Not for Sale" pavilion reflect both beauty and resilience. With playful elements such as the five-eyed mascot Myaku-Myaku and drone light shows, the six-month expo aims to attract over 28 million visitors.

Alan Taylor / The Atlantic
