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# Public Diplomacy in the News: Cross-Border Jazz, Climate Office Shuttered, & Disinformation in Romania <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.*

**Jazz Fest honors Mexican culture through music and shared heritage.** The 2025 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival’s Cultural Exchange Pavilion is celebrating Mexico, spotlighting deep cultural ties between Mexico and New Orleans through music, art, and shared histories. Featuring around 100 artists from across Mexico and curated by experts like Betto Arcos, the pavilion emphasizes the parallels in musical traditions, such as brass band culture and Afro-indigenous genres like Son Jarocho. Performers and organizers alike highlight music’s role as cultural resistance and connection, aiming to foster community through interactive events like Fandango. The vibrant showcase reflects a broader narrative of identity, resilience, and the fusion of traditions across borders.

Hannah Levitan / NOLA.com

**State Department dismantles Climate Office and reshapes Energy Bureau.** The Trump administration has shut down the State Department’s Office of Global Change, which had led U.S. participation in international climate negotiations, including the Paris Agreement and efforts within the aviation and maritime sectors, as part of a broader restructuring that also folds the Bureau of Energy Resources into the department’s economic office. The administration cited alignment with its agenda of “energy dominance” and criticized the dissolved office for supporting climate policies seen as limiting U.S. sovereignty. While work on critical minerals will continue, the move signals a significant rollback of American diplomatic engagement on climate issues.

Valerie Volcovici and Timothy Gardner / Reuters

**Romania battles disinformation ahead of presidential election redo.** Romania is grappling with a wave of disinformation ahead of a high-stakes presidential election redo, following the annulment of last year's vote due to evidence of Russian interference and online manipulation, particularly via TikTok. Far-right candidate Calin Georgescu, who praised Putin and criticized NATO, was banned from the upcoming election after violent protests by his supporters, sparking fears of further unrest and hybrid threats. The EU and Romanian authorities have responded with investigations, platform enforcement, and content takedowns, but coordinated fake accounts and emotionally charged false narratives continue to erode public trust. Critics argue that inadequate transparency and official silence over the annulment have only fueled confusion and suspicion, while foreign actors exploit these gaps to weaken Romania's democratic resilience.

Stephen McGrath and Nicolae Dumitrache / Associated Press

**World Cup 2026 brings global soccer spectacle to North America.** The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico from June 11 to July 19 of next year, featuring a record 48 teams competing across 16 cities, with all final rounds held in the U.S. and the championship match at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. Marking the tournament's return to American soil during the country's 250th anniversary, President Trump has launched a federal task force to support logistics and maximize economic and tourism benefits. Favorites to win include defending champions Argentina, Brazil, France, and England, while aging legends like Cristiano Ronaldo will aim for one last shot at the title. The expanded format introduces a new group structure, and U.S. fans can look forward to a Super Bowl-style final with Coldplay headlining the halftime show.

Callum Sutherland / Time

**Why caring for children with AIDS in Africa matters.** In response to the Trump administration's dismantling of USAID and cuts to global health aid, Holly Richardson of the *Deseret News* argues for the moral, strategic, and humanitarian imperative of supporting children with AIDS in Africa, highlighting the life-saving impact of programs like PEPFAR and the catastrophic consequences of defunding them. She warns that abandoning foreign aid not only endangers millions of lives—especially women and children—but also erodes decades of U.S. soft power, opening space for geopolitical rivals like China to expand their influence through humanitarian outreach. Drawing from religious, ethical, and historical perspectives, Richardson insists that caring for vulnerable global populations is not only right but vital to America's values and leadership.

Holly Richardson / Deseret News

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