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*Press release:*

*Belgian Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka Breaks  
Ground in Ceremony on Yumeshima Island*

*Tuesday 16 January 2024*

*Osaka, Kansai*

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## **1. BelExpo, the Belgian Commission General for International Exhibitions**

The Belgian Commission General for International Exhibitions, also known as BelExpo, is responsible for Belgium's participation in World Expos and other international exhibitions. Among the most recent projects completed by BelExpo are the Belgian participations in Expo 2020 Dubai and Floriade Expo 2022 in Almere.

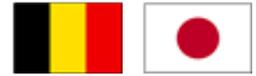
BelExpo oversees the entire operation from start to finish for each expo, led by Commissioner General, Pieter De Crem, with the support of a Technical committee and the Belgian Federal and Regional authorities. When a project includes the construction of a full pavilion, we work very closely with the Belgian Buildings Agency.

## **2. Ground-Breaking Ceremony**

Osaka, 16 January 2024 - Belgium proudly celebrated the successful Ground-Breaking ceremony for its pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka, signifying a momentous achievement in the country's dedication to innovation, sustainability, and cultural exchange on the global stage.

The ceremony, which took place on 16 January 2024 on the Belgian plot on Yumeshima Island in Osaka, was a serene event that brought together distinguished guests, dignitaries, and stakeholders to witness the initiation of the construction of Belgium's cutting-edge pavilion.

Designed to reflect Belgium's know-how, as well as its forward-thinking approach to technology and sustainability, the Belgian Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka is a symbol of creativity and innovation. The Ground-Breaking ceremony was a pivotal moment, highlighting Belgium's commitment to showcasing its contributions to the world in areas such as life sciences, medical research and of course, 'Saving Lives'.



Key dignitaries, including government officials, representatives from the Belgian governments, and esteemed members of the diplomatic corps, came together to symbolically break the ground for the construction, blessing the site and emphasizing the collaborative spirit that defines Belgium's participation in Expo 2025 Osaka.

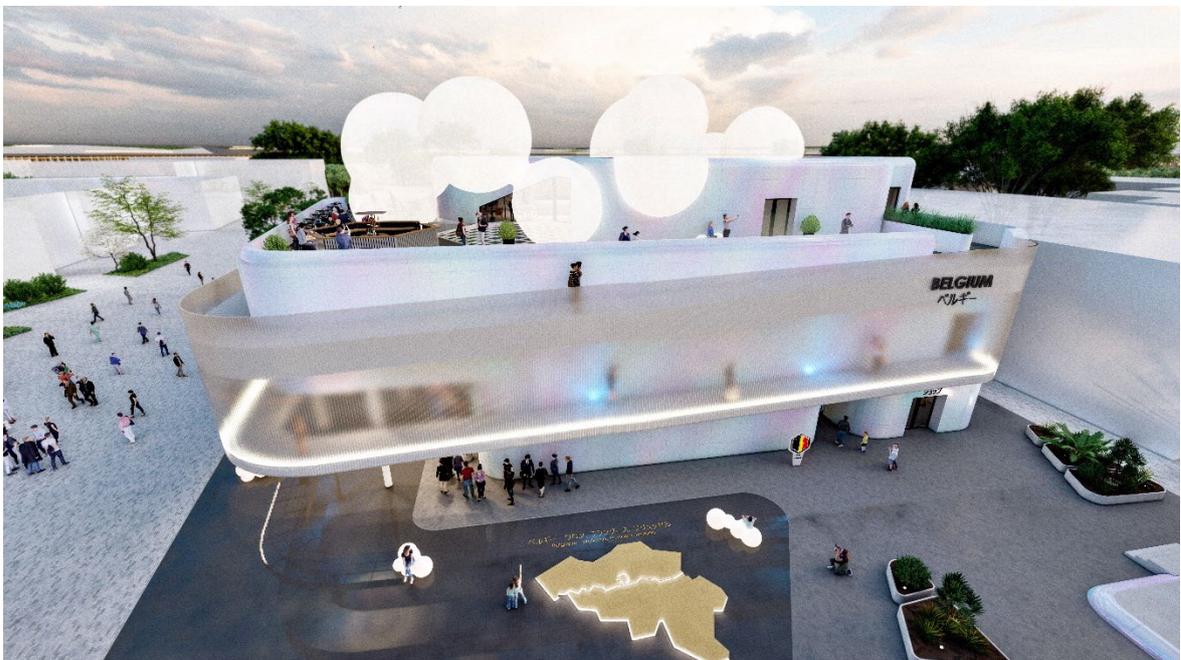
"We are thrilled to have celebrated this momentous occasion as the Kingdom of Belgium embarked on this exciting venture towards the opening of Expo 2025 Osaka," said Mr. Pieter De Crem, Commissioner General. "Our pavilion stands as a testament to Belgium's commitment to innovation, technical advancement and research. Through this global platform, we look forward to fostering meaningful connections, sharing our achievements, and contributing to the collective dialogue on shaping a better future for all."

The Belgian Pavilion showcases a harmonious blend of traditional and contemporary elements, providing visitors with a captivating experience that reflects Belgium's diverse and dynamic identity. From interactive exhibits highlighting technological advancements to immersive displays celebrating Belgium's achievements, the pavilion promises to leave a lasting impression on Expo 2025 Osaka visitors.

The Ground-Breaking ceremony featured speeches by H.E. Pieter De Crem, Belgium's Commissioner General of for Expo 2025 Osaka, and Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige, Secretary General of the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition and, a symbolic ground-breaking by H.E. De Crem, accompanied by H.E. Antoine Evrard, the Belgian Ambassador to Japan, as hosts for H.E. Koji Haneda, the Commissioner General of Expo 2025 Osaka, Mr. Ishige, Mr. Cyril Rousseaux, the Belgian architect of the pavilion, and Mr. Tomonori Nakamizo, representing the Japanese contractor of the pavilion.



© Sébastien Stocq, (from left to right): Cyril Rousseaux (Carré7), H.E. Antoine Evrard, H.E. Koji Haneda, Mr Hiroyuki Ishige, H.E. Pieter De Crem, Tomonori Nakamizo (OneDesigns)



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### 3. Expo 2025 Osaka

The theme "Designing Future Society for our Lives" underscores Expo 2025 Osaka's commitment to addressing the pressing challenges of our time and collectively envisioning a sustainable, inclusive, and technologically advanced future. The participating countries will come together to showcase their best practices, innovations, and solutions, contributing to the global dialogue on shaping a better world for generations to come.

Expo 2025 Osaka has made remarkable progress since its inception, with the participation of over 150 countries. The diverse array of pavilions, each a unique representation of its nation's identity, will highlight the convergence of making connections and showing off innovation, offering visitors a rich tapestry of experiences and technological advancements.

The sub-theme "Saving Lives" takes centre stage, signalling a collective commitment among participating nations to address global health challenges and pioneer innovative solutions. The Belgian Pavilion commits itself to this sub-theme.

"Saving Lives" serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of healthcare and the shared responsibility of nations to collaborate on advancements that enhance the well-being of people worldwide. Expo 2025 Osaka provides a platform for participating countries to showcase breakthroughs in medical science, healthcare infrastructure, and emergency response systems.

Throughout the expo, visitors will have the opportunity to explore exhibits that highlight advancements in medical technology, disease prevention, and emergency response strategies. Additionally, interactive displays and educational programs aim to raise awareness about health-related issues, fostering a global conversation on how innovation and collaboration can save lives.



#### 4. The Belgian Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka: state of affairs

On Tuesday 18 July 2023, the design of the Belgian pavilion was unveiled. On 15 September 2023, the Belgian submitted the Temporary Building Permit to Osaka Municipality. Belgium was the 7th country to introduce its Temporary Building Permit.

5 weeks after submitting the Temporary Building Permit for our Belgian pavilion to the city of Osaka, that permit for the Belgian pavilion for Expo 2025 Osaka was approved. This announcement came a week ahead of schedule. Belgium was the 3rd country whose permit was approved.

On 19 October 2023, it was announced that Belgium was the very first country to get its temporary construction permit and also appointed a Japanese contractor for the project.

As for the construction of our pavilion, we submitted the General Design Plan to the Expo organisers on 20 October 2023 and received the final approval thereof on 27 December 2023. Even after this submission, we continue to work hard on the deadline: Detailed Design Submission.

The Belgian plot was officially handed over to the contractor of the Belgian pavilion 15 January 2024, one day before the Ground-Breaking Ceremony on 16 January 2024. This means the team can start working on Yumeshima Island as of this moment.

Meanwhile, BelExpo has launched a second, large public tender for the Belgian pavilion on 30 June 2023. That second public tender will take care of the visitor journey of the Belgian pavilion. This includes the interior design and most importantly the exhibition scenography of the pavilion. The selection phase for the second public tender was recently completed. Three consortia consisting of several key figures and experts for the visitor journey are also being sought for this. The attribution phase, the second stage of the procedure, is ongoing. We hope to be as successful in finding a group of dedicated professionals as we were in the first public tender.