

International Conference of JICA Alumni Associations (JAA) Inland Asia¹ at Osaka Expo 2025

Theme:

BUILDING BRIDGES – Results of Japan's Cooperation and Cultural Performance

Venue: Festival Station, Osaka Expo 2025

Date: Friday, May 30, 2025

Time: 10:30 – 18:30



Welcome to a Landmark Moment at Osaka Expo 2025

On May 30, 2025, the heart of Japan will beat with the energy of **changemakers, leaders, and innovators** from across the **Inland Asia—Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Mongolia**.

This International Conference is more than just an event — it's a celebration of **Japan's legacy of cooperation** and the real-world results achieved by **JICA alumni**. With gratitude to Japan and its people, we unite under one stage to spotlight how knowledge co-creation is **driving innovation, empowering leaders, and transforming communities**.

Powered by JICA's Vision - Leading the world with trust

This gathering is inspired by JICA's core programs:

- **KCCP – Knowledge Co-Creation Program**
A catalyst for sharing practical knowledge, building technical capacity, and strengthening human resources across borders.
- **LTTP – Long-Term Training Program**
Empowering professionals through immersive training and academic experiences in Japan, cultivating leaders for tomorrow.
- **JICA Alumni Associations (JAA)**
Active networks of returned trainees working together to implement Japanese expertise for sustainable local impact.

¹ - Inland Asia includes Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan.

Why You Should Attend

Make Connections That Matter

Meet policy-makers, industry innovators, and fellow JICA alumni making real change.

See Results in Action

Discover how Japanese methodologies — from **Kaizen** and **Lean** to **ICT** and **Disaster Management** — are transforming societies.

Be Inspired by Cultural Unity

Celebrate diversity through vibrant performances and storytelling across borders.

Create the Next Chapter

Explore future cooperation in business, technology, education, and diplomacy.

Conference Themes That Matter

1. Innovation & Technology Transfer

How Japanese knowledge is being applied in local infrastructure, IT systems, and urban growth.

2. Sustainable Development & Smart Solutions

Regional best practices in disaster prevention, energy, climate adaptation, and urban planning.

3. Entrepreneurship & Private Sector Growth

Successes rooted in Japanese values like Monozukuri and Kaizen — adapted for our unique realities.

4. Human Capital & Lifelong Learning

Stronger institutions through mentorship, digital literacy, and professional development.

5. Friendship Through Culture

Human connection is at the core of development. This forum celebrates people-to-people diplomacy.

Program

TIME	ACTIONS
10:30-11:00	Registration/Performance
11:00-11:15	Welcome speech & video clip about JICA and JICA Alumni Associations
11:15-11:25	Welcome speech (JICA Representative)
11:25-12:10	Tajikistan stage (Introduction, performances, lecture, QUIZ)
12:10-12:55	Kazakhstan stage (Introduction, performances, lecture, QUIZ)
12:55-13:55	Kyrgyz Republic stage (Introduction, performances, lectures, QUIZ)
13:55-14:30	Uzbekistan stage (Performance)
14:30-15:25	Mongolia stage (Introduction, performances, lectures, QUIZ)
15:25-16:20	Azerbaijan stage (Introduction, performances, lectures, QUIZ)
16:20-17:15	Georgia stage (Introduction, performances, lectures, QUIZ)
17:15-18:10	Armenia stage (Introduction, performances, lectures, QUIZ)
18:10-18:30	Official closing of the event and words of thanks.

A Shared Vision for Tomorrow

This isn't just a conference — it's a platform for lasting partnerships.

The JAA networks in the Inland Asia are committed to **co-creating solutions**, **mentoring new generations**, and **advancing sustainable growth** in harmony with Japan's development philosophy.

Join us as we celebrate the legacy of Japan's cooperation, honor the success of our alumni, and pave the way for future collaboration.

Be part of something bigger. See you in Osaka.

Cultural Stage: Echoes of Inland Asia!

A Festival of Traditional Instruments and Folk Dances

Experience the rich and profound artistic culture of vast Inland Asia, a world rarely encountered in Japan, through the captivating sounds of traditional instruments and vibrant folk dances from each country. The stage for each nation will be interwoven with talk session segments.

TAJIKISTAN

20-minute music performance during Tajikistan Stage (11:25~12:10)

Chalparsa

Formed in 2007 by Rabab player Keiichi Sato and vocalist Chisato Yagi, who sings in Dari and Pashto, this unique musical duo has been dedicated to sharing the rich musical heritage of Afghanistan and Central Asia.

In addition to performing across Japan, they have played at notable events such as the reception for former Afghan President Hamid Karzai, and memorial gatherings honoring Dr. Tetsu Nakamura.

For this special performance, they will be joined by dutar player Manshu Komazaki to present the beautiful sounds of Tajik and Afghan music.



Note: Dari and Tajik are essentially the same language, reflecting a shared cultural sphere. Songs by Afghan national singers are often beloved in Tajikistan as well.

KAZAKHSTAN

20-minute music performance during Kazakhstan Stage (12:10~12:55)



Inara Serikpayeva

A Dombra player from Astana, the capital city of the Republic of Kazakhstan. For over a decade, Inara Serikpayeva had been an active Dombra player with the Astana National Folk Instrument Orchestra, participating in numerous concerts. She has also performed at significant national events, including welcome ceremonies for state guests visiting Kazakhstan.

Naoki Takahashi

Naoki Takahashi embarked on a journey to Central Asia in 2002 to study its rich traditional music. In 2006, he achieved first prize in a professional-level singers' competition in Kazakhstan. He has been working on introducing Kazakh music to a wide range of audiences, mainly by playing traditional songs on the Dombra.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

25-minute music performance during Kyrgyz Republic Stage (12:55~13:55)

Kalyiman Umetbaeva

Born in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Kalyiman Umetbaeva is a performer of various Kyrgyz traditional instruments, including the Komuz (a three-stringed lute), Temir Komuz (metal jaw harp), and Jygach Komuz (wooden jaw harp).

After graduating from the Department of Folk Instruments at the Kyrgyz National Conservatory, she came to Japan in 2007 and entered the Graduate School of Tokyo University of the Arts, where she obtained her doctoral degree in 2014.

Currently, she is a lecturer of the Komuz at the Research Center for World Music, Tokyo College of Music. Through private lessons and concerts, Kalyiman Umetbaeva actively promotes Kyrgyz music in Japan.



Former JICA Volunteers etc.

Also joining her on stage are former JICA Volunteers, JICA Kyrgyzstan Office staff and graduates of the internship program at the Kyrgyz-Japan Center who previously lived in Kyrgyzstan and learned to play traditional instruments, including the Komuz.

UZBEKISTAN

25-minute music performance during Uzbekistan Stage (13:55~14:30)

Mashu Komazaki

Dutar player. In 2015, Mashu Komazaki served as a music teacher with the JICA Volunteer program in Uzbekistan.



There, she became fascinated by the traditional instrument Dutar, mastered it, and now performs beautiful music from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, singing in the local languages.

She has received numerous awards at international music festivals and, in January 2025, was appointed as a Cultural Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Through her energetic performances, Mashu Komazaki actively serves as a bridge between Central Asia and Japan.

Former JICA Volunteers etc.

Former JICA Volunteers and former international students who learned and played the Dutar during their time there will also participate in the stage performance.

MONGOLIA

20-minute music performance during Mongolian Stage (14:30~15:25)



Yumiko Furuhashi & Takeshi Takeuchi

Morin Khuur player and singer-songwriter, Yumiko Furuhashi performs traditional Mongolian music on the Morin Khuur and sings Ortindo (Mongolian long song and singing method), alongside her own original compositions. She is the first prize winner of the 4th Jantsannorov Japan Morin Khuur Competition.

Her composition was selected and published in the Mongolian National Morin Khuur Professional Composition Competition. Yumiko Furuhashi has passed the Advanced-Level Performance and Instruction Certification Examination for the Morin Khuur in Mongolia.

With extensive overseas performance experience and numerous awards, she has also appeared on many Mongolian TV programs. In this performance, Yumiko Furuhashi carefully presents traditional Mongolian tunes, accompanied by the Bass Morin Khuur played by bassist Takeshi Takeuchi.

JICA Volunteers etc.

A JICA Volunteer and a former JICA Volunteer who are learning or have learned to play the Morin Khuur will also join the stage performance.

AZERBAIJAN

20-minute music performance during Azerbaijan Stage (15:25~16:20)

Kiyoshi Ohira

While studying the Turkish traditional instrument Saz in Istanbul, Kiyoshi Ohira also immersed himself in Azerbaijani music. He studied Azerbaijani folk songs with the esteemed Azerbaijani pianist Gulara Safarova.

Later, in Baku, Kiyoshi Ohira furthered his studies in traditional Mugham and folk music under Ruslan Zargarbayev, a Tar teacher at the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts.

Kiyoshi Ohira also participated as a performer in 'TURKCAN - The Brotherhood of Turkish Descendant Nations 2019,' produced by Azerbaijani musicians.



GEORGIA

20-minute dance performance during Georgia Stage (16:20~17:15)



Noguchi Masafumi

A former stage actor with the renowned Shiki Theatre Company, Masafumi Noguchi has appeared in numerous musicals including The Lion King and Aladdin. After leaving the company, he traveled to Georgia, where he performed on traditional Georgian dance stages and spent six years as a member of a local folk dance troupe.

Now recognized as Japan's leading expert in Georgian dance, Noguchi is actively involved in performances, musicals, and choreography.

Notably, he choreographed the Georgian dance scenes for the Takarazuka Revue's Star Troupe production Dimitri – The Purple Flower That Fell at Dawn. In this special performance, Noguchi leads his Georgian dance team, Ensemble Iaponelebi, in a dynamic showcase of this powerful and expressive art form.

What is Georgian Dance?

Originating in Georgia, a country in the South Caucasus between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, Georgian Dance is a vibrant and athletic folk tradition that reflects the soul and spirit of its people.

Each region in Georgia has its own unique style, and the dances portray themes such as courtship, wedding rituals, and heroic tales – brought to life through captivating stage performances.

ARMENIA

20-minute music performance during Armenia Stage (17:15~18:10)



Kento Suzuki (Duduk JAPAN)

During his high school studies abroad in Armenia, Kento Suzuki encountered a Duduk player and subsequently trained in the most prestigious traditional school of the instrument in its homeland. He has performed at events such as those hosted by the Embassy of Japan in Armenia and at Armenian music festivals. In Japan, he established Duduk JAPAN in 2020, an organization specializing in the Duduk.

Duduk JAPAN's performance video "Armenian Dance" has garnered significant attention within Japan. As a leading performer of Duduk JAPAN, Kento Suzuki takes the stage for this performance.