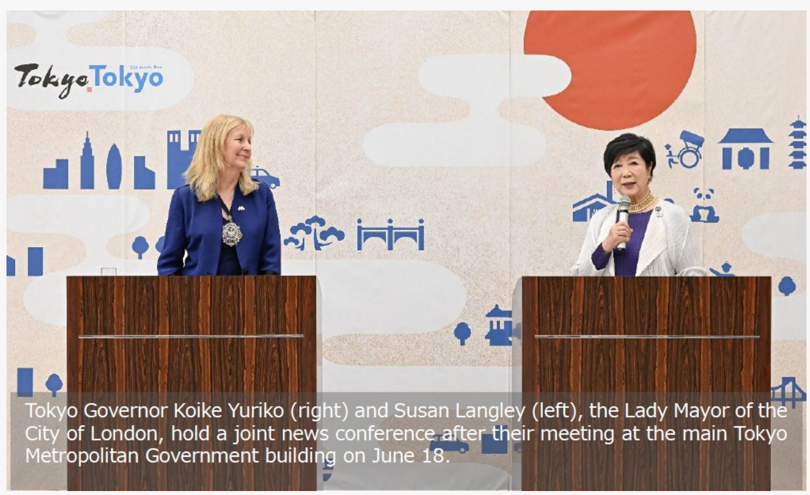
Tokyo Gov., London Leaders Boosting Ties on Climate, AI and Finance

TOKYO, JAPAN, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko and London's city leaders have reaffirmed they will further deepen cooperation between the two leading global hubs—particularly on climate action, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and their evolving financial partnership.

Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko (right) and London Mayor Sadiq Khan (left) speak during a meeting at the main Tokyo Metropolitan Government building on June 18.



Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko (right) and Susan Langley (left), the Lady Mayor of the City of London, hold a joint news conference after their meeting at the main Tokyo Metropolitan Government building on June 18.

The commitment was made when the governor separately hosted Sir Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, and Dame Susan Langley, the Lady Mayor of the City of London, who serves as the ambassadorial head of the "Square Mile" financial district.

The meetings took place at the main Tokyo Metropolitan Government building on June 18, and only the beginning of each was open to the media.

"We're looking forward to working with you very closely on how we deal with the issue of AI," Mayor Khan told Governor Koike. "And the issue of how we address the challenges of climate change and air quality. And in relation to culture, fashion and tech."

Governor Koike, noting that London was to organize a climate action awareness event in the following week, said she hoped that the two cities “can cooperate going forward in the area of climate change as well.”

Watch highlights from London Mayor Sadiq Khan’s meeting with Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko
YouTube:
https://youtu.be/KJAElVxSHmA

Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko (left) guides London Mayor Sadiq Khan (right) through the south observatory of the main Tokyo Metropolitan Government building on June 18.

Susan Langley, the Lady Mayor of the City of London, delivers a keynote speech at the Tokyo-London Financial Innovation Seminar 2026 at Tokyo Innovation Base on June 18.

[Looking for ‘Tangible Outcomes’ of Financial MOU]

Emerging from a separate face-to-face meeting, Governor Koike and Lady Mayor Langley told a joint news conference that they will continue to strengthen ties between their financial centers on the basis of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in 2017 by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the City of London Corporation.

The MOU, aimed at supporting the growth and development of both cities in global financial services, was updated last September to enhance financial innovation and promote increased investment between Japan and the UK.

Governor Koike said, “Our exchanges and cooperation in the financial sector are very strong.” “We have revised the MOU to further strengthen cooperation between our two cities.”

Lady Mayor Langley said: “Today, we had a wide-ranging conversation including talking about mobilizing finance to global energy transition, which is perhaps one of the most pressing issues of our time.” “We look forward to delivering tangible outcomes on the back of the MOU,” she added.

[Exploring Ways to Use AI in a ‘Positive Way’: Gov. Koike]

Mayor Khan wrote on social media later that he and Governor Koike discussed “how our cities strengthen our ties, tackle the climate emergency and lead the AI revolution.” The mayor’s press office also tweeted, “The two discussed the shared challenges posed by AI to both London and Tokyo, and what approach is needed for these new technologies to benefit the people of both cities.”

The Tokyo governor told a regular news conference a day later that she had discussed AI with Mayor Khan. “AI is truly advancing by leaps and bounds, and now beginning to clearly transform our society.”

Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko (right) receives a gift—a glass paperweight—from Susan Langley (left), the Lady Mayor of the City of London, during a meeting at the main Tokyo Metropolitan Government building on June 18.

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Mayor Khan visited Tokyo after Singapore on a two-city Asian tour leading trade missions from the British capital. In Singapore, he attended the biennial World Cities Summit.

His arrival in the Japanese capital coincided with the annual Group-of-Seven summit held this year in the French city of Evian, where the heads of major industrial nations discussed with top tech executives how to control powerful AI systems that could pose dangers to global security.

Both Governor Koike and Mayor Khan are founding members of the Mayors AI Forum, which was launched in April by the U.S. foundation Bloomberg Philanthropies and Johns Hopkins University to shape how AI is developed and deployed. Other founding members include mayors of Bogota, Boston, Buenos Aires, Kyiv, Madrid, Nairobi, San Antonio and San Francisco.

“Since both the positive and negative aspects of AI represent new phenomena that are unfolding right before our eyes, there is a growing trend to thoroughly share the insights gained in each city,” Governor Koike told the weekly news conference. “Through these efforts, we hope to deepen cooperation among cities.”

She added that, for example, AI can be utilized to guide what is taught in education, inform citizens about proper and careful AI use and streamline metropolitan administration procedures and internal work. “I also hope to explore ways to utilize it in a positive way going forward.”

[Harnessing 'Huge Potential Positives' of AI: London Taskforce]

Based on its 2025 AI Strategy, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has been making efforts to utilize AI to improve administrative operations and services for residents.

In April, Mayor Khan announced the establishment of new London AI and Jobs Taskforce, which reviews AI's impact on jobs in the UK capital. "The Mayor has been clear that London needs to be at the forefront of harnessing the huge potential positives of AI to ensure it benefits society, rather than allowing it to shape us to our detriment," according to a press release from his official website.

Koike and Khan, both former members of national parliament with ministerial experience, were first elected to their current posts 10 years ago in 2016. They are in their third four-year term. They previously met in London in 2018 and 2023. In 2023, they exchanged views on energy and climate action, educational exchanges and other topics. They agreed to promote the Tokyo-London ties as friendship cities.

['Proud' of Women Heading Global Financial Hubs]

Koike, elected in 2016 as Tokyo's first-ever female governor, and Langley—the third female chief of the historic City of London, but the first to be styled as Lady Mayor instead of Lord Mayor—also exchanged views on women's empowerment. "I'm proud that Tokyo and London, two leading financial centers, are now both led by female leaders," Langley said.

Langley, who started a one-year tenure as Lady Mayor last November, previously visited Tokyo in mid-2024 as Sheriff, or a principal deputy to the Lord Mayor of the City of London, alongside the Lord Mayor Michael Mainelli. She met the Tokyo governor in person at that time.

Her latest meeting with Governor Koike was followed by a financial seminar co-hosted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) and the City of London corporation under the MOU. The latest edition was titled the Tokyo-London Financial Innovation Seminar 2026.

Langley told the joint news conference that exchanges of information including the seminar and the secondment of TMG staff members to the City Corporation have boosted the Tokyo-London bond.

"In these uncertain and critical times, I think it is important for partners, which share business approaches, regulations and values, to work together," she said. "With the ties between us, I can think of no better cities than Tokyo and London."

The latest seminar featured Koike, Langley and a dozen other international speakers including

Greg Gardner, Director of Trade and Investment at the British Embassy in Tokyo, Shimazaki Masao, a senior official at Japan's governmental Financial Services Agency, and representatives of various fintech companies.

One-on-one business meetings, fintech pitches and a networking session were also held at the seminar's venue, Tokyo Innovation Base (TIB), operated by the TMG as a hub for domestic and international startups, investors, and local governments.

['Strong Momentum' to Deepen Japan-UK Ties in Finance]

"There are clear opportunities for the UK and Japan to deepen collaboration, especially in capital markets and transition finance," Langley wrote on social media, recalling her visit to Tokyo.

Noting she was proud to continue to champion inclusive leadership in financial services, she said: "Diversity is key to long-term competitiveness."

"There is a strong momentum to build on, and I look forward to continuing to strengthen ties between Japanese companies investing in the UK and UK businesses operating in Japan."

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