

UNITED KINGDOM

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Japan and the U.K.: Centuries of collaboration, cultural confluence and continued cooperation

Japan and the U.K. share a solid, strategic friendship built on hundreds of years of bilateral ties. It is a bond that, over centuries, has resulted in a profound sense of mutual respect and robust cooperation across a wide range of fields

Japanese-U.K. ties have flourished along a broad avenue of cultural exchange, which His Excellency Hajime Hayashi, Japanese Ambassador to the U.K., calls “a cornerstone” of the strong relationship between the nations.

Hayashi further noted that “the level of interest in Japanese culture among the British people is exceptional,” pointing to various aspects of shared cultural interests, including the Japanese people’s affinity with the British crown.

This rapport was especially evident when HM Emperor Naruhito and HM Empress Masako flew to the U.K. to pay their respects when HM Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest in September 2022. “Their Majesties’ presence at the funeral symbolized the deep-rooted bonds between the imperial family of Japan and the Royal Family of the U.K., as well as the ties between our two peoples,” Hayashi said.

To date, relations between Japan and the U.K. continue to thrive — of great importance, given



Hajime Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan to the United Kingdom

the current international climate. “This January, following his previous trip last May, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida visited the U.K. and had a bilateral summit meeting with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak; our two prime ministers signed the Reciprocal Access Agreement,” he said.

Among other pressing matters, Hayashi shared that the two heads of state discussed the U.K.’s accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement

for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which came to a substantial conclusion in March 2023; the situations in Ukraine and in East Asia; and the upcoming G7 Hiroshima Summit.

Aside from those major milestones, Hayashi also stressed the significance of the joint development of the next-generation fighter aircraft by Japan, the U.K., and Italy; and the Japan-U.K. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in 2020, the very first new EPA that the U.K. ratified after Brexit (the U.K. exit from the European Union).

Hayashi underscored that: “Japan and the U.K. have become global strategic partners that share fundamental values.

We, therefore, share the capacity and responsibility to work together to tackle global challenges. The Hiroshima G7 Summit will be the prime opportunity for Japan and the U.K. to demonstrate our determination.” ♦

Read the full article here: <https://bit.ly/UKJP23>

Enechange: Yohei Kiguchi harnesses the power of energy for change

It all began with a shaking — literally. The Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 compelled Yohei Kiguchi to found Enechange Ltd., an energy technology company that promotes efforts to achieve a decarbonized society with digital technology, guided by the noble mission of “creating the future of energy.”

The highly successful company started as a foundation in April 2015, made its initial public offering on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in 2020, and achieved a market capitalization of \$1 billion in 2021. Enechange is now the leading electric-vehicle-charging and on-line energy-switching company

in Japan, and among the top in the world.

Since its founding, Kiguchi has been hailed as one of the most innovative and successful climate-tech entrepreneurs. Born in Japan and educated in Cambridge in the U.K., Kiguchi splits his time between the countries, seeing the former as the market, and the latter as the inspiration. He is the embodiment, so to speak, of the dynamic U.K.-Japan synergy and spirit.

“I’m among the few, possibly even the only, CEOs of a Japanese public company who live in London. The U.K. is more like a hub for innovation inspiration, with

Japan being more like a market for expansion — in our early stages, for instance, we actually deployed a pilot project in the U.K., but then found it more scalable in Japan,” Kiguchi explained.

“The original ideas and technologies came from my studies at the University of Cambridge, where I obtained my doctoral degree in engineering,” he said. Enechange was born from his doctoral research, for which he mathematically modeled energy efficiency using smart meter data, and published two international journals. “When I came into Cambridge, in 2012, way before the Paris Treaty (the 2015 Paris



Yohei Kiguchi, founder of Enechange

Agreement), the green theme was not yet the fashionable theme, internationally — but Cambridge was already pushing hard to go for the green transition. The U.K., Cambridge and its strong academic and international background, and its improved green initiatives, established the foundation of my career,” Kiguchi shared.

“I am very grateful to the U.K. I’m going to be looking for even more opportunities to contribute as a green entrepreneur and in Japan-U.K. relations.” ♦

<https://enechange.co.jp/>

ENECHANGE

Kajima Europe: Spearheading Japanese investment in Europe’s real estate markets

As a major developer and investor, Kajima has had a significant presence in the U.K. for over 30 years. Grounded in its roots as a general contractor, the Japanese giant has notably diversified over time, investing, developing and managing assets across most U.K. and European real estate markets, with over £10 billion (¥1.7 trillion) in assets under management.

Kajima’s London-based team is at the center of a pan-European platform, investing and developing across key real estate markets, such as logistics, student housing, build-to-rent, social infrastructure, renewables and regeneration. Kajima likewise acts as a third-party manager for Japanese and international partners,



John Harcourt, Managing Director of Kajima Europe

providing core plus and value-add

strategies across the U.K. and European markets.

John Harcourt, the firm’s managing director, said: “The U.K. and London have traditionally been the jumping-off point for Japanese investors entering European markets. We’re incredibly proud of our track record, investing on behalf of our partners, and the expansion we’ve achieved across the continent.”

Key to Kajima Europe’s success is its unique blend of Japanese business ethos with the local expertise of its on-the-ground management team. Harcourt said: “It’s a winning combination. Our team is experienced at identifying the best opportunities that align with the strategies of our internal

funds and those of our co-investment partners, producing double-digit returns.”

While continuing to invest on behalf of partners in sectors such as logistics, developing over 1.4 million square feet (130,000 square meters) of warehouses in Europe and investing in sustainable office buildings in London, Kajima is looking to net-zero targets for 2050, growing its presence in the renewable energy sector.

“The U.K. and countries across Europe have some of the most ambitious climate targets in the world. To date, we’ve three platforms focused solely on renewable and sustainable energy solutions — from large-scale solar plants in

Europe to photovoltaic and wind energy solutions for SMEs (small and midsize enterprises),” Harcourt explained.

With the built environment contributing nearly 40% of annual global carbon dioxide emissions, Harcourt recognizes the property industry’s integral role in mitigating climate change. “At Kajima, we’re tackling the problem with a holistic approach. We’re actively contributing to the continent’s transition towards sustainable energy production and buildings by investing in clean energy solutions, hand in hand with developing new buildings and retrofitting old ones in line with best practices in construction technologies, retaining embedded carbon and whole-life consumption,” Harcourt said. ♦

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