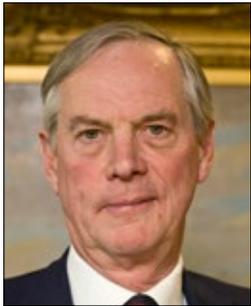


# Exciting prospects for cooperation

By RT HON LORD ASTOR OF HEVER PC DL

CHAIRMAN OF NEWWAVES SOLUTIONS LTD



**LORD ASTOR** is Chairman of NewWaves Solutions Ltd, a British company providing total solutions for the dredging, environmental and marine engineering markets. He is a Conservative Hereditary Peer and has sat in the House of Lords since 1986. Lord Astor was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence from 2010-2015. As a British Army Officer in The Life Guards, part of the Household Cavalry Regiment, he served on mounted ceremonial duties in London and, amongst other countries, in Malaysia and Singapore. He is a Prime Minister's Trade Envoy, a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, President of the British Motorsport Industry Association and a member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Thailand.

Lord Astor on an official visit to Thailand as Minister of Defence

I am delighted to welcome the Prime Minister of Thailand to the United Kingdom. His visit is testimony to the long lasting and continuing good relations between our two countries.

Like so many of my compatriots, my family and I have been regular visitors to Thailand for many years and the British people are very satisfied users of Thai goods and services as well as strongly welcoming Thai investment into the UK.

I was honoured to visit Thailand in an official capacity as a British Government Defence Minister in 2013. I was heartened by the new energy and mutual respect that came out of the visit across the whole security relationship between our two countries.

Last year, as Chairman of NewWaves Solutions Limited (NWS Ltd), I returned to Thailand where I was briefed on the exciting opportunities that Thailand's booming economy offers, such as the full implementation of the hi-tech Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). This area is set to be a pre-eminent commercial hub in ASEAN and will radically increase Thailand's GDP.

The expansion of the two key projects where NWS Ltd can offer unrivalled expertise, the Laem Chabang deep sea container port and the petrochemicals complex at Map Ta Phut, is of particular importance and will help Thailand raise the bar for modern regional transport links and logistics infrastructure.

Since my visit the company has been looking closely at these port developments and stands ready to help the Thai Government expand them. NWS Ltd, a British company and a member of the DEME Group,

the largest Western dredging and marine engineering holding, was responsible for the construction of the new London Gateway container port in the Thames Estuary and has been involved in the lion's share of offshore wind projects in British waters.

We could deploy our pioneering innovations developed in the United Kingdom to optimise the ports' construction methods, and set a benchmark in design, best practices and optimal engineering for future marine projects in Thailand and reduce the overall cost.

The DEME Group know these Thai ports very well. We have been involved there since the mid-1980s and carried out the first reclamations at both Laem Chabang and Map Ta Phut in the early 1990s, when the first ground was broken in the Eastern Seaboard area. As such, we know the challenging soil conditions of the area and the engineering requirements of these projects. In the years since, we have often returned to the area, executing projects for the oil and gas and petrochemical companies that have consolidated their presence there turning the area into bustling industrial zones.

The large reclamation projects the Group is carrying out in Singapore, where we are constructing an entirely new container terminal from scratch at the Tuas Peninsula, have further honed our knowledge of managing complex undertakings in the Asian context. More than 2,500 people are reclaiming land for future industrial use and putting our expertise to use in Singapore every day – a feat I would like to see repeated in Thailand!

Good design and project management is only one side of the story: we possess a fleet of 100 main dredgers and 200 purpose-built auxiliary vessels, many of which are in Singapore – and ready for deployment to Thai waters. Further enriching our offer and adding to the British dimension of our involvement, we are able and ready to propose United Kingdom export financing at very advantageous terms.

I am excited to see the prospects for industrial cooperation between the United Kingdom and Thailand, two countries that have a great deal in common. It would be particularly satisfying if British marine engineering could help make a difference shaping these vital high-profile projects, which I foresee will play a key part in generating economic productivity, wealth and international trade for the Kingdom of Thailand for decades to come.

