



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office




Message from  
The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP,  
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

I am delighted to welcome Prayut Chan-o-cha, the Prime Minister of Thailand, on the occasion of his first official visit to Britain. The friendship between our two countries stretches back to 1608 when William Keeling, a sea captain from the British East India Company, met the ambassador of King Ekathotsarot of Siam.

Two years later, the directors of the Company sent a merchant vessel “The Globe” to the Kingdom of Siam. Our two countries signed the Bowring Treaty in 1855, serving as the basis for free trade in South East Asia.

Today, one million Britons visit Thailand every year and UK companies like Tesco, Marks and Spencer and Unilever have built a strong presence in the Thai market. Britain is home to the largest Thai expatriate community

outside Asia and North America: you can find Thai Temples as far away as Edinburgh and Petersfield.

But as we leave the European Union, I want to widen the horizons of a Global Britain and strengthen our friendship with countries across the world, including Thailand. I am sure we will press ahead with this important work during the Prime Minister’s visit to the UK. I look forward to many more years of fruitful cooperation. 

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Secretary of State  
for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs