

October 16, 2026

Opening Remarks by the Prime Minister of Thailand, Anutin Charnvirakul
at the Opening Session of the Plenary Meeting of the Board of Governors
of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank,
Thailand, October 16, 2026

2026 Annual Meetings Plenary
Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund
Queen Sirikit National Convention Center
Bangkok, Thailand

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Prime Minister Charnvirakul: Mr. Chair, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Heads of State and Government, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, the President of the World Bank Group, Distinguished Governors, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

Our country, Thailand, has long been the meeting place of people, cultures, and ideas. Centuries ago, Ayutthaya, our ancient capital, was a thriving center of international commerce and diplomacy, connecting east and west. The then-Siam prospered not by standing apart from the world but by being connected to it. That spirit of openness has endured.

In the year 1991, we hosted the Annual Meetings of this similar type at the time when the world was moving towards greater economic integration. Today, 35 years later, we welcome the world back to Bangkok and to this very convention center, originally built for this event back in 1991. But the world we are meeting in today is markedly different from the one we knew 35 years ago. Back then, the fax machine represented speed. Today, AI is transforming our activities and our way of life. The world was moving towards greater economic integration. Today geopolitical fragmentation is reshaping trade and investment. And while environmental protection was once an emerging concern, climate change has become one of our greatest challenges.

The world has changed profoundly, and challenges of this scale require us to respond together. And that is why our theme Thailand's New Horizon: Empowering People, Building Resilience speaks not only to Thailand's future but to the future of us all.

Resilience grows through trusted connections, open trade, access to technology and finance, and partnerships that help countries learn from one another. The Annual Meetings of 1991 left a lasting legacy. This convention center is one visible reminder, but the more important legacy was a commitment to international dialogue and cooperation at a moment of profound global change. Today the challenges may be different, but our responsibility remains the same. Meetings and legacies continue.

So what legacy should Bangkok 2026 leave behind? For Thailand, the answer begins with a role we know well, to connect. We can connect markets across regions, capital with opportunities, and technology with talent.

Through ASEAN, Thailand can bring regional partners together and connect them with the wider world. We believe regional cooperation and global engagement should reinforce one another, opening opportunities for trade, investment, and shared development. Most importantly, this connection must reach people, helping business grow, building skills, and creating opportunities that improve everyday lives. Empowering people means ensuring that more communities can take part in and benefit from economic transformation. Together with the IMF and the World Bank and our partners and all of us here, let us turn dialogue into partnerships and finance into opportunities. Let us ensure that the decisions taken here lead to stronger economies and better opportunities for people.

Ladies and gentlemen, centuries ago, Ayutthaya, our ex-capital, connected Thailand to the world. Bangkok can help connect countries around a shared purpose, making the global economy work for more people. Let us make this meeting count for people across our countries.

We will see each other again in the next 35 years here. Thank you very much.