

Keynote Speech
H.E. Dr. Ekniti Nitithanprapas
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
International Public Procurement Conference 2026
Hosted by the Comptroller General's Department,
the World Bank Group, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Monday 27th April 2026, 09.30 - 10.00 A.M.
at Millennium Hilton Bangkok

1. Opening & Global Context

Ms. Lalita Moorthy, Regional Director, World Bank

Mr. Aaron Batten, Country Director, ADB

Mr. Kofi Awanyo, Manager of Fiduciary Governance, AIIB

Mrs. Patricia Mongkhonvanit, Director General of The Comptroller General's Department,

Distinguished participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- **A very good morning and a warm welcome to Thailand.**
- **We are meeting at a time when the global economy is becoming more uncertain, more fragmented, and more complex.** In such an environment, policymakers around the world are rethinking the role of the state and increasingly, public procurement is moving to the center of that discussion.
- **What was seen primarily as an administrative function is now being recognized as a strategic policy tool**—one that can stabilize economies, shape markets, and drive long-term transformation, through public procurement.
- **To put it simply, public procurement is no longer just about buying goods. It is about shaping the future of the economy.**

2. Scale and Strategic Importance of Procurement

- **The importance of procurement is rooted in its scale.**

- **Globally, public procurement accounts for approximately 10 to 12 percent of GDP, and in some advanced economies, it may reach up to 20 percent.** This means that government spending decisions have a direct and significant impact on market behavior and economic structure as a whole.
- **At the same time, improving procurement efficiency can generate savings of up to 10 percent of total project value.** This extra savings means that we can redirect these extra resources towards supporting resilient and inclusive growth, with people at the center.
- In this context, the policy question is no longer simply how much governments spend—but how effectively they spend.
- **Because scale may give governments power, but impact depends on how wisely that power is used.**

3. Policy Direction: The 4T Approach and Procurement in Practice

- To respond to today's challenges, Thailand is aligning its policy direction around what we call the **4T approach: Target, Transition, Transformation, and Together.**
- **At its core, this approach is about targeting public resources more effectively so that spending is directed toward areas where it can truly impact** such as small businesses, local communities, and vulnerable groups.
- **At the same time, policy must actively support an ongoing economic transition,** as sustainability become the new economic standard. Especially in times of oil price crisis like this, transition towards renewable resources is a necessity, not only for sufficiency.
- **Beyond this transition, there is also a need for deeper transformation.** This includes improving productivity through upskilling and reskilling our human capital, upgrading industries, building new growth engines to sustain long-term competitiveness.
- **And importantly, achieving these objectives requires collaboration, together,** bringing together the public sector, private sector, and society.
- In sum, these principles ensure that public spending is both efficient, forward looking, and inclusive.

- **Public procurement plays a central role in translating this vision into reality.** In the context of limited fiscal space, it enables governments to direct spending in a precise way. This helps lay the groundwork for supporting the economic transition and driving structural transformation, while fostering collaboration across sectors.
- **So, if policy sets the direction; procurement is what helps that turns that direction into reality.**

5. Operational Pillars: Digital, Green, and Innovation Procurement

- To put this into action, we are advancing procurement along three connected routes.
- **First, digital procurement is being strengthened through enhanced e-Government systems and greater use of data.** This allows for better decision-making, improved transparency, and more efficient use of public resources.
- **Second, green procurement is being expanded to put sustainability at the heart.** This ensures that procurement decisions reflect not only short-term costs, but also long-term environmental and fiscal impacts.
- **Third, innovation procurement is being promoted by focusing more on outcome-based approach, rather than just the lowest price.** This allows for new technologies, new startups, and new innovations to solutions to flourish.
- **Together, these pillars help ensure that procurement systems remain relevant, effective, and aligned with future economic trends.**
- **In short, modern procurement is not just digital, green, or innovative—it is all three, working together.**

6. Inclusive Growth: SMEs and Made in Thailand

- **At the heart of Thailand's approach is a strong emphasis on inclusivity.**
- **Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the economy, like in many other countries, and the largest source of employment. In 2025, SME participation in public procurement increased by almost 10 percent, reflecting improved access and engagement.**

- However, more can be done.
- We are working on simplifying procedures and removing unnecessary red tape so that we can leverage procurement as a powerful tool to drive income distribution and promote economic inclusion.
- For example, by using digital transformation via electronic Government Procurement or **eGP platform**, we are able not only making the process leaner, but providing access to finance for SMEs by connecting the platform to the banking industry's supply chain financing platform, called **PromptBiz**.
- Additionally, our **"Made in Thailand" policy for public procurement** aims to drive innovation and digital transformation with local contents. Through this program, the benefits truly reach local industries and people, giving them more incentives to innovate.
- **At the end of the day, when procurement works for SMEs, it works for the whole economy.**

7. Outcomes: Jobs, Innovation, and Impact

- **Moreover, when procurement is aligned with policy objectives, it delivers outcomes that extend far beyond cost efficiency.**
- **It creates jobs** by supporting local businesses and economic participation for all.
- **It drives innovation** by opening doors of opportunities for new technologies and new ideas.
- **And it generates lasting impact: economic, social, and environment**, ensuring that public spending contributes to long-term development goals.
- **This is why value-based procurement is so important, because its value is not only measured by the number of "Baht" we save, but the broader benefits delivered to society.**
- **So, the true value of procurement is not just about cost saving—but value creation.**

8. Looking Forward: Toward Greater Cooperation

- **Looking ahead, we need to strengthen cooperation in public procurement across countries.**
- This means making procurement work better in practice, whether through aligning our standards or increasing transparency through shared frameworks.
- **That is why this conference is important. The institutions represented here today can play an important role in facilitating this collaboration, serving as platforms for knowledge exchange and coordination.**
- **Because, in an increasingly interconnected world, no country can optimize procurement alone—the future is built through cooperation.**

9. Conclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- **Public procurement may not always be the most visible policy tool—but it is one of the most powerful.** When used effectively, it can help build economies that are more competitive, more inclusive, and more sustainable.
- **Thailand stands ready to work with all partners to move this agenda forward together.** I hope that over the coming days, this conference will serve not only as a platform for discussion, but as a way we can advance public procurement to be key driver of sustainable development across the Asia–Pacific region.
- **Because in the end, procurement is not just about how governments spend it, it is about how nations grow, and how our peoples stand to benefit.**
- **Finally, I encourage you to take this opportunity to experience the unique beauty of Bangkok and the vibrant charm of the Chao Phraya River.**
- **I wish you all a pleasant and memorable stay.**
- Thank you very much.