

**Petronas intends to be 'a true partner'**

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Prime Minister Najib Razak assured Turkmenistan today that Malaysia's national oil corporation Petronas intends to be "a true partner" to Turkmenistan.

Petronas intended to be a good corporate citizen in that country, as well as to cooperate closely as a true partner in Turkmenistan, he promised.

"We will work closely together, we'll do things together, and we will abide by the laws and policies of your country," Najib said at the joint press conference with Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov after both leaders held bilateral discussions at the Presidential Palace in Ashgabat.

By doing so and by being sensitive to the local aspirations, Najib said, he was confident that the joint venture between Petronas and its counterpart in Turkmenistan would proceed very smoothly and would benefit the two countries.

Malaysia, through Petronas, is offering students from Turkmenistan opportunities to study at Petronas University in Malaysia as well as provide places at the technical level through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MCTP).

"So we are going to place a lot of importance in terms of what we can contribute to your country especially in terms of capacity building," he said.

With respect to trade, Najib said the volume was small but with the support of the private sector, trade volumes between the two countries could be brought to a higher level.

Najib said both countries should develop people-to-people ties between them as they share similar cultural traits.

"Both peoples are friendly and the people of Turkmenistan should feel at home in Malaysia," he said.

Najib said as testament of Malaysia's commitment and desire to further enhance and consolidate its relations with Turkmenistan, Malaysia had decided to establish a diplomatic Mission in Ashgabat to be headed by a resident ambassador before the end of the year.

- Bernama