

**PM: A past leader's confrontational foreign policy selfish, self-defeating**  
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In another salvo against his mentor-turned-nemesis, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who did not name anybody, said he decided to steer the nation along a different path with regard to its foreign policy.

"I chose to be different, and make a clear break with past approaches.

"Because I believe Malaysia's foreign policy should be about building partnerships that benefit the country and the people," Najib said in his speech at launch of the Biennial Conference of the Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management in Kuala Lumpur today.

Referring to the past, the prime minister noted that Malaysia had a leader who intentionally adopted confrontational foreign policy positions, perhaps for personal popularity.

'But the idea that this meant that Malaysia was standing up for itself was pretence.

"For it was not in the national interest. In fact, it was selfish, short sighted and self-defeating," he said, which is seen as an obvious reference to his predecessor and then mentor Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

However, Najib, who came into power in 2009, said he decided that national interest should always come before personal political interests.

"Developing relations and economic partnerships with other nations is what promotes peace, security and prosperity for our people.

"That has been our approach – and we have seen the benefits," he added.

### **Reaching out**

Najib said his administration believes in reaching out to other states, regardless of political ideology and system, while maintaining an independent, non-aligned and principled stance in regional and international affairs.

Malaysia, he stressed, did not believe in foreign intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries.

"We are firm that the days, when imperial powers could tell others how to behave, whether politically, economically or culturally, are over," he said.

Najib and his supporters have warned against foreign intervention after the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) filed civil suits related to the alleged abuse of 1MDB funds.

The DOJ suits led to renewed calls from detractors for Najib to step down as prime minister, since the court filings claimed that a person, who was referred to as 'Malaysian Official 1', benefited from the misappropriated funds.

Najib has repeatedly denied abusing public funds for personal gain, and blamed such allegations on Mahathir and those working with the former prime minister to topple him from power.

Attorney-general Mohamad Apandi Ali has also cleared the prime minister of any wrongdoing.

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