

M'sia to call for fairer trade at Asem summit
Malaysiakini.com
October 4, 2010

Malaysia will call for fairer world trade at the Eighth Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) Summit in Brussels, as well as better financial supervisory measures and governance, as the way forward for the global economy, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said.

Fair trade should be free of protectionism while a more effective governance will create balanced development and spur global recovery, the prime minister said.

Speaking to Malaysian journalists in Brussels, Najib said Malaysia would also call for more effective regional and inter-regional cooperation.

"The lesson learnt from the global crisis requires us to rationalise our fiscal and financial policies, so that what we do collectively, will be more effective than if we did it individually.

"The world financial architecture should therefore be revamped in a holistic and comprehensive manner," he explained.

Najib, who arrived in Brussels late Sunday afternoon, will speak at the first plenary session of the two-day summit this afternoon.

On the call for stricter regulatory supervision, Najib said, it is important to put in place, pre-emptive measures to prevent a crisis that could cause the collapse of financial institutions and affect the world financial system.

"We should give due attention to this because we cannot afford to see a crisis affecting financial institutions, or a sovereign debt crisis, which hampers global recovery," he said, adding countries should ensure such a crisis did not plunge the world into a double-dip recession.

Stricter supervision is required, particularly in the secondary financial market, which Najib said has no previous regulatory functions and was among the contributing factors to the crisis last year.

Najib said Malaysia would also stress the need to proceed with regional and bilateral free trade agreement negotiations because, "this is something which can help countries like Malaysia."

He said: "We are a major trading nation and anything that can help us open the market for a better opportunity, will have a positive impact on our economy."

On the inclusion of Australia, New Zealand and Russia into Asem this year, Najib said it showed that the grouping subscribed to open regionalism.

"Australia, New Zealand and Russia are members of the East Asia Summit, so, it won't be something awkward for them to be also involved in Asem," he added.

The inclusion of the three countries will increase Asem's membership to 48.

Asem, established in 1996, is the main platform for dialogues and engagements between

Asian and European leaders on various topics.

Najib said that at the Asem Summit, he would also update Asian and European leaders on the latest developments in Malaysia, particularly on the government's initiatives to transform the economy such as through the New Economic Model.

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