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Najib: Nations must work for peace

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PUTRAJAYA: The challenge faced now by the international community is to collectively work together to find peace not merely for this generation but for all times, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said constructive engagement and dialogue should be preferred over armed conflict to resolve issues if lasting global peace was to be achieved.

"It is imperative that we achieve a peace premised upon a covenant of the willing, not one enforced by hegemony or secured through coercion," he said at the Mahathir Award for Global Peace ceremony here yesterday.

The Prime Minister said that peace could only be achieved if people were willing to constructively engage each other and substitute dialogue in place of conflict.

Despite advancement in civilisation, he said



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mankind had yet to turn its back on its most primitive pastime – waging war.

Najib praised the non-violent approach taken by leaders such as Nelson Mandela who chose reconciliation over retribution following the end of apartheid in South Africa.

"Faced with a choice between settling scores and healing wounds, he demonstrated that peace begins at home," he said.

To this end, he said the country had played an instrumental role in helping dismantle 300 years of apartheid in South Africa when the first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman registered his opposition to apartheid.

It was Dr Mahathir who did the most in terms of working with the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Zambian administration and African National Congress to help end apartheid, he said.

Earlier in his speech, South Africa president Jacob Zuma, who attended the event on behalf of Mandela, said he was honoured that South Africa had produced such a global icon.

He said Dr Mahathir and Mandela shared a personal friendship that extended back in 1990 when the Malaysian leader was amongst the first to greet the African leader in Zambia following his release from prison.