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Najib: Stand up against IS

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Denounce false representation of Islam, PM urges Muslims



LEANNE GOH
in New York

STAND up for true Islam and denounce the false representation of the religion by the violent extremist group Islamic State (IS), Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak urged Muslims around the world.

In a speech delivered at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on Thursday, he made an impassioned plea for the rejection of IS and for the *ummah* to take decisive action against those who seek to hijack Islam.

"This is the message we must spread to Muslims and non-Muslims. And I call on the *ummah* to rise with one voice and let the world ring when we say to IS: You do not represent us," he said to applause from the international delegates present.

The Prime Minister made it clear that the terror perpetrated by IS was contrary to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and a perversion of the holy religion.

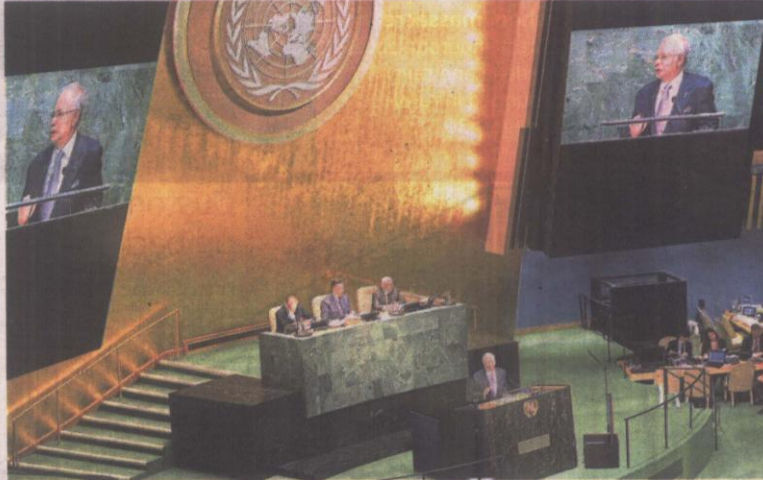
"The so-called Islamic State knows nothing of Islam's noble ideals, of its compassion, or of the solemn duty to care for and learn about our fellow man.

"They are violating the Divine will. They are desecrating the name of our religion through their self-proclaimed caliphate—to which no true Muslim will pledge."

He added that a genuine Islamic State was one that defended all its citizens, irrespective of race and religion.

On Malaysia's part, Najib said the Government had helped develop an important body of scholars – an international group of Sunni and Shia scholars representing a cross-section of the global Muslim community – to address this issue.

The mission of the grouping, which was convened in Kuala Lumpur, was to define an Islamic State, based on the continuity of



Making a statement: Najib delivering his statement at the General Debate at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. — Bernama

Islamic religious thought through the past 14 centuries.

"The scholars concluded that it is nothing like the entity in Syria and Iraq that usurps that name. The scholars unanimously emphasised that it must be based on the objectives of Shariah, or Maqasid Shariah, which is to protect and enhance life, religion, intellect, property, family and dignity.

"An Islamic State must defend the different peoples under its rule, and preserve their religions, languages and historic sites," he said.

Najib said Malaysia too was susceptible to security challenges from the extremist groups and had taken various measures to prevent terrorist attacks in the country, including the arrest of more than 100 citizens suspected of links to IS.

"We have identified 39 Malaysians who have travelled to join IS. And we have arrested over 100 of our citizens suspected of links to IS. These threats are real.

There are people who want to bring terror to our streets. We will not stand for it, neither will they succeed.

"But we must strive harder to combat this threat together. Militaries and intelligence services need to share information and countries need to collaborate more, daring to pre-emptively arrest as necessary," he said.

The prime minister also condemned Tel Aviv for its aggression in the occupied territories and called for a permanent end to injustice against the Palestinians.

He said courage was needed to permanently address the injustice that the Palestinians had been suffering since 1948.

"Decades of impunity and the systematic dehumanisation of Palestinians have culminated in increasing violence, increasing illegal settlements, and increasing violations of rights. The frustration and anger felt by Palestinians reso-

nates with Muslims worldwide.

"If the world continues to turn a blind eye to the Palestinians' sufferings, we risk another catastrophe in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We will also fail to uphold the right to self-determination, which was at the very basis of the United Nations when it was created 70 years ago," Najib added.

On the Rosh Hashanah violations of Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem and aggression against worshippers three weeks ago, he urged the Israeli government to do the right thing.

In recent weeks, clashes between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli forces have been reported almost daily at the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In a landmark development on the sidelines of the UNGA on Wednesday, the Palestinian flag was raised at the United Nations headquarters, after the Palestinian Authority obtained non-member observer status at the UN in 2012.