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Najib mingling with religious leaders at the "Religion and Peaceful Co-Existence" seminar at Ikim in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

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## Moderation can stem extremism, says PM

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The spirit of *wassatiyyah* (moderation) can help stem the tide of radicalism such as the Islamic State (IS), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak.

Najib said by adopting the concept *otwassatiyyah*, religion can serve as a bridge between those of different faiths and beliefs.

"The *wassatiyyah* approach is

very important, because it means 'balanced' and 'the best'. Without *wassatiyyah*, society will easily fall into extremism that would result in radicalism like the IS or extremism," he said.

Najib said this in his opening speech at the "Religion and Peaceful Co-existence" seminar at the Institute of Islamic Understanding of Malaysia (Ikim)

here yesterday.

Also present at the event were Ikim chairman Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom.

Najib also called for all parties to stop focusing on religious differences to justify political importance.

"We should embrace these

(differences) in the interest of all, rather than quibble and magnify the differences to serve political and strategic agendas," he said.

He also admitted that it was not easy for Malaysia to establish peaceful co-existence among its different religious communities.

"But it is something that we have always strived to do, and will continue to do," said Najib.