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Najib pledges to be at event in support of Rohingya

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UNBOWED by Myanmar's warning not to attend today's gathering to highlight the plight of the Rohingya, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak confirmed that he will be there to represent Umno's solidarity with the plight of the persecuted community.

In his wrap up speech at the Umno assembly, the Prime Minister and Umno president told delegates that the President's Office of Myanmar had issued a statement saying that if he were to attend the gathering, it would be regarded as interference in Myanmar's internal affairs.

"I want to tell him, this is not about interfering in Myanmar's affairs, this is a question of us

defending humanity and universal values."

Najib then asked the delegates three times what he should do, to which they chanted, "*hadir*" (attend).

"God willing, Najib Tun Razak will be there," he said, to cheers.

The gathering, known as Perhimpunan Solidarity Ummah Untuk Rohingya (The Rohingya Solidarity Gathering of the Ummah) will be held from 8am today at the Titiwangsa Stadium in Kuala Lumpur and will also be attended by PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang.

Najib vowed that he would not budge an inch on the issue because

his presence was to represent the stand of Umno's 3.5 million members.

He said the murder and rape of men, women and children in Myanmar does not represent what Asean is about.

"It will not be an Asean Community that we can accept. Asean cannot tolerate such uncivilised and brutal behaviour."

Wisma Putra had earlier issued a statement to rebut the demand made by the deputy director-general of Myanmar's President's Office, U Zaw Htay.

The Foreign Ministry said that as a responsible member of the international community, it was

Malaysia's obligation to ensure that its Asean colleague took proactive steps to prevent the situation from further deteriorating.

"Malaysia need not remind U Zaw Htay of the 2015 boat people crisis which eventually became a regional issue with Myanmar's neighbours taking the brunt of the burden," the Wisma Putra statement said.

"It is with this in mind that Malaysia has repeatedly offered its assistance to the Myanmar government in finding a solution for a just and durable immediate solution to the persecution of the Rohingya in Northern Rakhine."

Najib, when asked at a later

media conference whether Malaysia will cut diplomatic ties with Myanmar, said that it has not reached that stage.

"It is true that we cannot interfere in the internal issues of any member nation but if it goes against the Asean charter ... definitely this will be a problem for us if the abuse continues."

Najib said the persecution of the Rohingya can cause a flood of refugees to other Asean countries.



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