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# Joint effort to boost regional stability

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## Malaysia and Sri Lanka agree to focus on preserving peace and curbing extremism

**PUTRAJAYA:** Strengthening regional stability and tackling violent extremism are the two core issues that Malaysia and Sri Lanka have agreed to continue pursuing jointly.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena emphasised the need for concerted efforts to build confidence and mutual understanding, as well as strengthen stability both regionally and internationally.

"The two leaders agree that international issues are to be resolved through peaceful dialogue and diplomatic means," said a statement issued after the two leaders had a bilateral meeting.

Malaysia would continue to promote the moderation agenda and mediation approach, promote the enhancement of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and support peace building in countries emerging from conflicts.

Malaysia and Sri Lanka also maintained a common understanding on a number of regional and international issues and recognised each other's responsibility in pro-

moting peace, development and security of the region and beyond based on political and socio-economic interests and aspirations.

"Both leaders were unanimous in rejecting violent extremism and condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

"They called upon all states to reject terrorism and bring perpetrators to justice.

"Malaysia and Sri Lanka agreed to continue to share information and best practices to address the challenges posed by terrorism and other traditional and non-traditional threats," the statement said.

Najib and Sirisena were also satisfied with Malaysia-Sri Lanka relations and agreed to explore new areas of co-operation, including in the areas of politics, trade and investment, education, tourism, human resource, training and cultural relations as well as people-to-people contact.

Sirisena also informed the Prime Minister of the current status of the national reconciliation process, constitutional reform and economic development strategies undertaken



**Warm reception:** Najib welcoming Sirisena to the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya.

by the National Unity Government of Sri Lanka.

"The Prime Minister welcomed and appreciated the commitment

of the National Unity Government of Sri Lanka to good governance and reconciliation," the statement said.

On bilateral trade and investment, Sirisena assured Malaysian investors of a conducive investment climate and invited them to look at investment opportunities in Sri Lanka.

Five memorandums of understanding were signed in conjunction with Sirisena's three-day official visit to Malaysia – the recruitment, employment and repatriation of workers from Sri Lanka; cooperation on youth development; tourism; culture, arts and heritage; and scientific and technical cooperation in agriculture.

Earlier, Sirisena was given a red carpet welcome upon his arrival at Dataran Putra, with Najib on hand to greet the visiting President.

After inspecting a guard of honour mounted by 103 men from the First Royal Malay Regiment, Sirisena was introduced to Cabinet Ministers, including International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed and Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, as well as the diplomatic corps.