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Najib: Britain's ties with M'sia valuable

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We are ready to boost economic relations, says PM

LONDON: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his British counterpart Theresa May have reaffirmed the strong ties between Malaysia and Britain which pre-dated and have continued since our independence 60 years ago.

In a statement issued after their meeting at the British Prime Minister's Office at No 10, Downing Street on Thursday, Najib said, "In addition to our shared values and history, the United Kingdom is seeking a new relationship with friends and partners around the world as it leaves the European Union (EU).

"Malaysia is well positioned to add value, strategically located at the heart of South-East Asia, with strong links to the Muslim world and China," he said.

Najib said Malaysia welcomed the opportunity to have a closer economic partnership with Britain.

"I assured Prime Minister May that Malaysia will be happy to discuss setting up a trade arrangement between our two countries as soon as possible. We know that trade between our countries will benefit our economies and our peoples."

Najib also said that the United Kingdom and Malaysia were united on the need to fight terrorism and violent extremism.

"We mourn the deaths of those who died in the appalling attacks in the United Kingdom. Malaysia is ready to share its expertise and experience in combating the threat from those who blaspheme the name of Islam by falsely claiming that their atrocities are Islamic," he said.

He said they also discussed the

humanitarian catastrophe facing the Rohingya in Myanmar and both agreed that the international community must come together to find a solution to bring to an end to the crisis that has shocked both the region and the world.

"Britain and Malaysia are old partners.

"My discussions with Prime Minister May confirmed the depth of our friendship and we look forward to our countries working together to forge a prosperous and secure future for our peoples."

Speaking at a press conference later, Najib said they had also touched on a number of issues on bilateral relations and international issues.

"I stated as regards to the United Kingdom's post Brexit planning, that Malaysia was ready to consider whatever proposals they made towards further strengthening economic ties, especially boosting trade and investment with Malaysia.

"Since they will be exiting from the European Union, surely they will need a new formula in terms of economic relations with the world, and Malaysia is a country with its own strength and with this strength we can certainly add value to the United Kingdom's post brexit's future," he said.

Asked about the significance of his recent meetings with Prime Minister May and US President Donald Trump, Najib replied, "Very very significant because these superpowers recognise and accept Malaysia as a significant global player and our views are noted and given serious consideration, including by Donald Trump." — Bernama