

Najib: Global moderation only way to combat extremism
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 17 — Embracing moderation and rejecting all forms of extremism is the only way for the world to move forward and for all countries to co-exist in peace, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

The prime minister said all countries today faced new challenges — wars, the global financial crisis and natural disasters — which could not be solved by “animosity” or “suspicion” but through tolerance and understanding.

“The real divide is not between Muslims and non-Muslims, or between the developed and developing worlds, it is between moderates and extremists,” Najib (picture) said after launching the Global Movement of Moderates international conference here.

Touting Malaysia as an example of a country which embraced moderation, he said that it was testament to how the country’s independence was achieved back in 1957 and how international relations with Indonesia were restored in 1965.

“Malaysia had long been synonymous not with extremism but with moderation, inclusivity and tolerance. In a predominantly Muslim country with substantial communities of Hindus, Christians, Taoists and Sikhs, we know well the dignity of difference.

“We have many ethnic groups, religions but we strive to be a harmonious and united nation predicated on the values of moderation and the spirit of 1 Malaysia,” he said.

He also pointed out that extremism existed in many forms, and that there was a current misconception that terrorist actions were the only form of extremism.

“Extremism isn’t always violent, and I believe we literalise it at our own peril,” said Najib, adding that one of the most extreme yet non-violent events in recent history was the global financial crisis.

“Yet without a single bullet fired, the extremes and excesses of Wall Street would be in a matter of days take the world as we knew it to the brink.

“Four years later, no end is in sight. The eurozone is still in crisis, countless millions have lost their jobs... in addition to the human cost, some US\$14 trillion (RM43.3 trillion) has so far been spent on a rescue plan — 10 times the cost of the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq combined.”

The PM said that Islam and extremism were wrongly perceived as being “two sides of the same coin, and that this view needed to be changed.

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/najib-global-moderation-only-way-to-combat-extremism/>