

Najib Attends ICGMM Luncheon Talk By Former Us Director Of National Intelligence
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today attended the luncheon talk by former United States Director of National Intelligence Admiral (Rtd) Dennis C. Blair at the International Conference on the Global Movement of Moderates (ICGMM) here.

Blair, in his talk moderated by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, said moderates cannot simply criticise radicals who express the legitimate anger of oppressed people.

"Moderates cannot simply counsel them to remain reasonable and restrained. Moderates must offer an alternative means by which the oppressed can do something about their grievances, by which they can change their condition," he said.

He believed that moderates could offer the oppressed and the angry a positive way to improve their lives, that is true to the principles of moderation.

Blair said it includes respect for human dignity and freedom, realism and faith worth fighting for, adding that it matches the appeal of extremism for action, for the total commitment of courage, sacrifice and sustained effort.

"It is superior to extremism in both its moral foundation and its chances of success in bringing a better life to those who are suffering," he said.

He said this positive moderate way was extracted from the events of Arab Spring, the latest in a line of triumphs from non-violent resistance movements that stretches back through Mahatma Gandhi in India, Martin Luther King in the United States and Nelson Mandela in South Africa.

He said a study showed that 70 per cent of 67 transitions of power in autocratic countries had succeeded with generally non-violent means.

"Of those 47 countries in which non-violent means had been successful, 66 per cent were free years later, whereas of the 20 that had involved major violence, 20 per cent were free. Non-violence works, and brings sustain success, much better than violence," he said.

Thus, he said, the moderates should and could offer practical assistance to those who wish to improve their condition through non-violent means.

"I believe that we moderates have an agenda for action that is more heroic, realistic, respectful of others and more appealing than any of the extremists," he said.

Earlier, representatives from three Indonesian organisations -- Baitul Muslimin, Mohamadiyyah and Nadhatul Ulama -- headed by Prof Hamka Haq, the head of Baitul Muslimin, and Prof Masdar Mas'udi of Nadhatul Ulama called on Najib.

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