

**Moderation Triumphs Over Extremism In The Philippines - Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- The framework agreement between the Philippine government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that brought to an end decades of conflict in southern Philippines stands as a testament to the force of moderation over extremism, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Proud of Malaysia's role in helping to bring about peace there, the prime minister said both sides should be praised for putting aside their differences and choosing peace over violence.

"This belief in moderation, tolerance and understanding is something we hold dear in Malaysia and, through the Movement of the Moderates, we must continue to promote these values globally," he said in his latest post on his 1Malaysia blog.

On Monday, the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) signed a historic agreement, which Malaysia helped broker, to end a four-decade-long conflict in the southern Philippines.

The Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro was signed by the Philippines' chief negotiator Dean Marvic Leonen and MILF's lead negotiator Mohagher Iqbal in the presence of Philippine President Benigno Aquino III and Najib, in Manila.

Najib said the framework peace agreement which also ushered in a new era of peace in southern Philippines, was an historic basis on which a lasting peace could be built.

"There is still much work to be done and many challenges lay ahead. But today, we should rejoice that in moderation, the people of the Philippines have also found peace," he said.

He said Malaysia had been working hard to bring about such an agreement for over a decade.

"In 2001, we became the facilitator for the talks and in 2004 we led an International Monitoring Team in the Philippines.

"The path to peace has not been easy: much blood was spilled before ink was finally put to paper, but now, as both sides work to draw up a final agreement, we can be optimistic," he said.

Najib said the two sides were committed to protect the rights of the Bangsamoro people, while also preserving the sovereignty of the Philippines, and had ensured that the people of Mindanao, whether civilian or soldier, could finally look forward to a brighter future.

"Over the coming years, we stand ready to assist in the development of Bangsamoro.

"By doing so, we can help the Bangsamoro people enjoy opportunities that they never thought possible. And by ensuring stability and success in the southern Philippines, we will reduce the flow of migrants who leave each year in search of a better life in Sabah," he said.

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