

**Firm support for Asem**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**5 November, 2012**

VIENTIANE: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's presence here for the Ninth Asia-Europe Summit (Asem) over the next two days lends credence to Malaysia's firm support for the 48-member grouping.

Asem serves as a forum for leaders from two continents to meet and deliberate on issues affecting them and the rest of the world, and the Prime Minister will want to make his views known.

Twelve heads of state and 23 heads of government will be taking part.

The economic and financial meltdown affecting several Asem members will be on the agenda, as it was during the last Asem meeting in Brussels in 2010.

Other issues to be discussed include food and energy security, sustainable development, climate change and natural disaster response.

Malaysian Ambassador to Laos Datuk Than Tai Hing said the Prime Minister's Global Movement of Moderates concept was also expected to be a highlight.

"The call for a movement of moderates is expected to be made part of the Asem Declaration. This is not surprising because when Najib made the call during the last summit, he received praise from other leaders.

"This will be another feather in his cap as during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth last year, the call for a Global Movement of Moderates was included in the leaders' joint statement," the envoy told journalists here.

Najib will also hold bilateral meetings with French President Francois Hollande, Norwegian Prime Minister Jen Stoltenberg and Pakistan Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf.

The Prime Minister will also open Maybank's first branch in Laos, located at Xang Avenue in Chantabouly district, and witness the signing of an agreement to build a 220km electrified double-track railway by Malaysian company Giant Consolidated Ltd.

Copyright © 1995-2012 Star Publications (M) Bhd

Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/11/5/nation/12273866&sec=nation>