

**#ASEAN: ASEAN Should Be Guided By Its Principles In Settling South China Sea Disputes - Najib Bernama**  
**April 28, 2015**

LANGKAWI, April 28 (Bernama) -- ASEAN should be guided by its principles of settling dispute in an amicable manner and based on international laws when dealing with the disputed South China Sea claims, said prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Tuesday.

He said parties involved in the dispute should not engage in activities that would increase tension.

"There are concerns expressed by ASEAN as a group but nations should be guided by the principles enunciated in settling disputes in a very amicable and negotiated manner, (they) must adhere to the international law such as UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea).

"They should not increase tension on the issue," he told a media conference at the Langkawi International Convention Centre (LICCC), here.

The prime minister urged ASEAN members staking claims to uphold to its principles and remain steadfast to its commitment when confronted with the issue on the contested South China Sea claims.

Four ASEAN countries namely Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, as well as Taiwan and China have staked overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea, which is believed to be rich in natural resources.

The prime minister was also asked about the reclamation activities carried out by China on several disputed reefs in the South China Sea and said, there were several views expressed on the matter.

He reiterated that ASEAN's actions on the reclamation issues, as well as in its conduct in bilateral relations with China and other powers in the region should be guided by its stated principles.

"Some views were expressed (on the reclamation) and we will still continue to maintain our position in the stated principles and should be our guiding principles in conducting relations with China and other powers," he said.

Najib was also asked on the delay in issuing the Chairman's Statement and whether it portrayed there was a split in the grouping.

The prime minister stated otherwise and said, it had not caused disunity in ASEAN member states and that the grouping remained united.

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