

**Malaysia-Philippines Stand Shoulder To Shoulder on Peace, Security Matters - PM Najib
Bernama
Nov 10, 2016**

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and the Philippines stand shoulder to shoulder on matters of peace and security, with both countries recognising the need to ensure stability within and outside.

In making this stand, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Philippines was not only Malaysia's neighbour but also a friend in strengthening ties between both countries in recent times.

"While the relationship, like any other, has faced strains at times, our common interests far outweigh any points of disagreement," said Najib in a statement issued following his bilateral meeting with visiting Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte here today.

Duterte is on a two-day official visit to Malaysia beginning yesterday.

Najib said he hosted President Duterte in Malaysia for the first time to discuss a wide range of issues, ranging from bilateral ties between Malaysia and the Philippines to the Mindanao Peace Agreements in the southern Philippines.

Najib in the statement announced the signing of an Exchange of Notes between Malaysia and the Philippines governments on establishing a Framework for Cooperation in tackling the issue of kidnap for ransom and other security issues along our sea borders.

Najib said they also discussed the progress that had been made since the launch of the Implementing Phase of the Mindanao Peace Agreements between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which Malaysia hosted in August this year.

"I welcome President Duterte's signing of the Executive Order enabling the reconstitution of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission. This will, in turn, lead to the drafting of an enabling law for the eventual formation of a Bangsamoro Government," he said.

Najib said this was another significant milestone and a manifestation of President Duterte's strong commitment to the Bangsamoro peace process, which started 15 years ago.

"President Duterte acknowledged the strong support that Malaysia has extended to this process and I am confident that, with his clear roadmap to peace, the remaining long standing issues too can be resolved," he said.

In Malaysia, Najib said, President Duterte would find a steadfast partner in his quest to achieve peace in the southern Philippines.

"We look forward to working closely with him and the Filipino people to strengthen even further, the close ties that bind our two countries," he said.

On the international stage too, Najib said Malaysia and the Philippines share similar beliefs, including that of an Asian Century, where both countries could play an increasing role in the global economy.

The Philippines is Malaysia's fifth largest trading partner in ASEAN, and tenth largest globally.

"We are delighted to host hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who make a meaningful and much valued contribution to our society," he said.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 216 BERNAMA

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1300997>