

Let's share info to fight terrorism, says Abdullah

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MALAYSIA has suggested that Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) member countries establish a system of intelligence-sharing to enable exchange of information between national authorities, particularly on terrorist travel and financing.

The proposal was brought up by Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi during the first closed session of the meeting in relation to multilateralism and security threats. The meeting, on Sunday, was attended by other leaders.

The Prime Minister said the task of identifying and tracking down terrorists was more difficult than dealing with conventional enemies on the battlefield.

"It is possible to identify, disrupt, capture or kill individual terrorists, but new recruits will take their place. We must prevent the recruitment and training of new terrorists by removing the root causes.

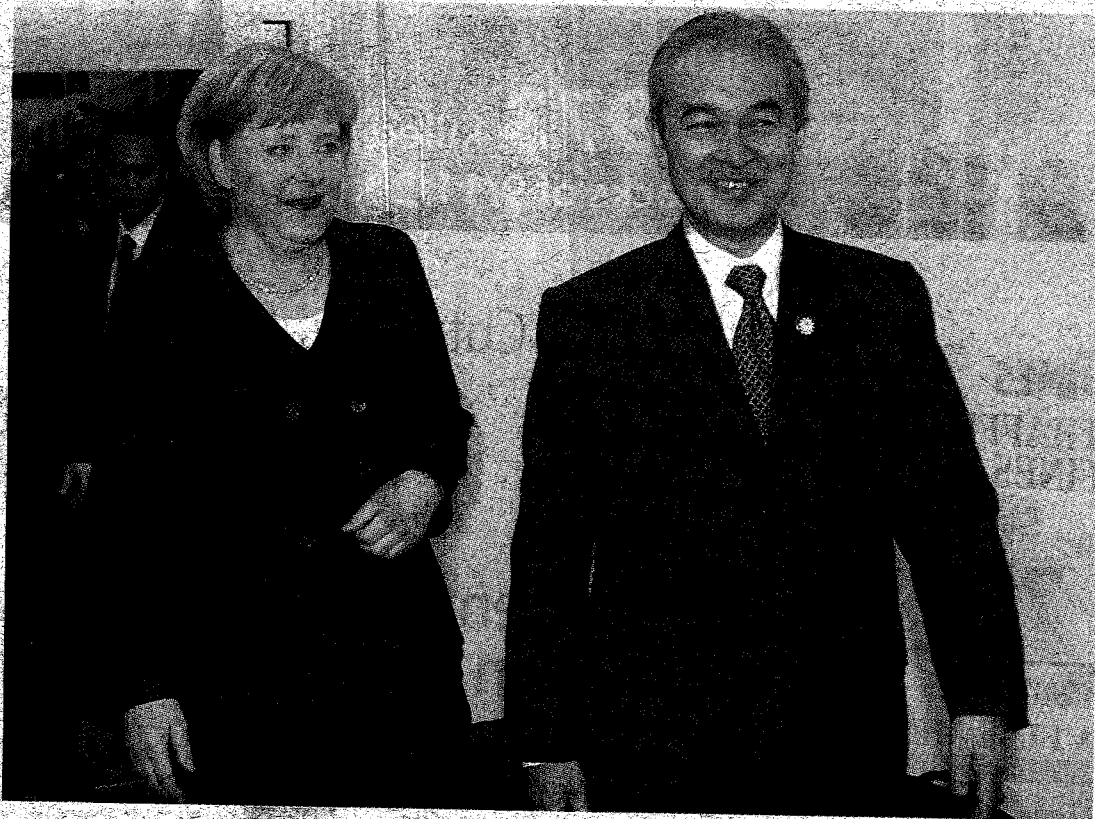
"There is no single solution applicable to all problems," he told Malaysian journalists.

Abdullah also said no amount of international condemnation would make any impression on the perpetrators of terror.

"We need an international conference which can come out with an appropriate definition of terrorism and terrorists.

"Only then will the international community be able to isolate the problem and deal with the scourge."

He also said that to support Asem's efforts in its fight against terrorism, Malaysia was prepared to host a seminar in Kuala Lumpur to discuss the issues relating to



Abdullah with German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the Helsinki Fair Centre.

terrorism.

Abdullah said the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-terrorism, formed by Malaysia, would follow up on Asem's proposal.

The two-day sixth Asem meeting ended yesterday with a declaration on climate change which, among others, called for an exchange of information and early warnings on natural disasters.

An eight-point Helsinki declaration on Asem's future, where the leaders reaffirmed their resolve to take the process forward, was also adopted.

The gathering of the 13 Asian

and 25 European countries also reaffirmed the Asem mission as a partnership between equals committed to multilateralism, and a fair, just and rule-based international order with a strong United Nations at the core.

Their other commitments dealt with varied areas — from organising policy dialogues and networking to accepting an enlarged Asem to enable better Asia-Europe partnership.

They also want future Asem summits and foreign ministers' meetings to determine, review and update the orientations for the relevance of the clusters, accord-

ing to the changes in the international arena.

The leaders were also unanimous that systematic and efficient monitoring, based on issue-specific leadership, was important to maintain the momentum from one summit to the next.

Regular contacts between embassies and the need for foreign ministers to create an Asem page on their website — including having links to the Asem infoboard and other relevant sites — were also passed as they were significant in developing the outreach among member countries, especially the less developed ones.