

SHARED EFFORTS AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM

NAJIBRAZAK.COM

September 11, 2017

Trump, We Have Your Back In Fighting ISIS

By Najib Tun Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia

The world today faces turbulence on many fronts. From Harvey and Irma here in the United States, to the threats of nuclear proliferation, radicalisation and new and ever-more barbarous acts of terrorism around the globe, nations need firm partners and friends. Which is why when Malaysia recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of our independence, I was particularly pleased to receive this message from the U.S. embassy in our capital, Kuala Lumpur: “So proud to be your friends since the beginning!”

President Trump and I will be marking six decades of strong bilateral ties when we meet at the White House on Tuesday, but the relationship between our nations goes much further back in history. Our rubber, for example, was crucial for the growth of the American automobile industry, and that demand spurred our own economic growth — an early example of a mutually beneficial partnership between our countries.

The Malaysian-U.S. relationship, also goes far beyond trade. What underpins decades of friendly, productive and cooperative relations are the deep-seated values we share. Our commitment to the fight against radicalization and terror is something we feel in our hearts, as well as planning and implementing our policies coolly and rationally. Our belief in free and fair trade and inclusive economic development is in our blood, as we have always been a seafaring, trading nation, going back centuries.

And our adherence to stable, democratic governance is shown in our history since independence. Our elections are fiercely contested, just as they are in America, with different parties winning different states at different times. We also share the U.S.’s

commitment to a rules-based global order, such as North Korea abiding by U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

Taken together, these values are why our relationship was formally elevated to an even higher level in 2014 as an official “Comprehensive Partnership.” This means that both countries are committed to strengthening our cooperation on the political and diplomatic front, in trade and investment, education and people-to-people ties, security and defense, among others.

There is no better example of this partnership than our shared efforts against violent extremism. The world changed on September 11, 2001, and America has suffered further attacks on its soil that were inspired by that same false and poisonous ideology. My nation, too, has been forced to address the threat of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), known as Daesh in my part of the world. There has, so far, been only one successful Daesh-linked attack in Malaysia (and, thankfully, no fatalities), but that has not been for want of trying. Your enemy — those who blaspheme against the religion of a majority of Malaysians by claiming their terrorism is Islamic — is our enemy, too.

We have fought Daesh through the promotion of moderation, and through a deradicalization program that has had a 90 percent success rate. We have fought this through intelligence sharing and counter-terrorism measures in our region and beyond. I am proud to say that the Royal Malaysian Police has thwarted at least 13 major terrorist attacks since 2012.

And we have fought this through being a partner in the U.S.-led global coalition to defeat Daesh, and through the strategic dialogue between our Ministry of Defence and the Pentagon. Rest assured, Malaysia will always stand shoulder-to-shoulder with America on this vital mission to eliminate a terror group whose acts sicken all of civilized humanity.

On the economic front, the U.S. was Malaysia’s third largest trading partner in 2016, while Malaysia was the U.S.’s 18th largest. Over the past nearly 40 years, America has been our second largest foreign investor — and as a report from U.S. News and World Report and Pennsylvania State University’s Wharton School recently declared Malaysia to be top of its

“best country to invest in.” I hope to encourage even more Americans and U.S. firms to see our country as a destination of great opportunity, with an eager, educated, friendly and English-speaking workforce.

As any visitor to Malaysia will know, U.S. firms, banks, brands, food and clothes are found everywhere in our country. Malaysians are very familiar with the U.S. and, just as in America, we are a mix of ethnicities and faiths who celebrate our cultures while being united as proud Malaysians, just as every American is stirred by the sight of the Stars and Stripes.

On a personal note, it is always a pleasure for me to be in the U.S., a great country that I have visited countless times since my youth. I can still remember arriving in New York as a young graduate and marvelling at the music, the food, the architecture and the sheer vibrancy of the city. My affection for your country has never dimmed, and the same goes for the thousands of Malaysians who have lived, worked and studied in America.

In my discussions with President Trump and others, I hope to strengthen our ties even further. For if America wishes to find a partner for peace, for prosperity and for security in the coming decades of the 21st century, it will find a staunch and steadfast friend in Malaysia. Here's to the next 60 years.

[*This article first appeared in The Hill on September 11, 2017](#)

©2017 Copyright Reserved NajibRazak.com, Blog, Featured Articles

Source: <https://www.najibrazak.com/bm/blog/shared-efforts-against-violent-extremism/>