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IA-CEPA
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Go8 Submission on the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA)

The Group of Eight (Go8) thanks the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT) for the opportunity to comment on the IA-CEPA. Please note that this submission represents the views of the Go8 network. Member universities may also make their own, more detailed submissions.

The Go8 represent Australia's eight leading research-intensive universities. As a collective, we:¹

- Are consistently the highest ranked Australian universities across the major international ranking systems (Academic Ranking of World Universities; the Times Higher Education World University Rankings; and the QS World University Rankings);
- Educate one in three international students who choose to study higher education onshore in Australia;
- Account for more than half of all Australian papers with international collaboration; and
- Attract industry research funding that is twice that of the rest of the sector combined.

Much of this success rests on the Go8's capacity to engage extensively with international partners, both in our region and around the globe.

International engagement builds Australia's reputation for high quality research and education; connects Australia's best minds with those from around the world; helps our students to develop the intercultural skills necessary to the 21st century's global workforce; and builds soft power capacity by demonstrating our commitment to being an engaged and active regional partner. This will only become more important to our national success and prosperity as the focus of the world continues to shift towards the Indo-Pacific region.

As we noted in our submission to DFAT regarding the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) earlier this year, government level agreements provide a strong signal of Australia's willingness to engage internationally and in our region. For this reason, the Go8 supports the development of mutually beneficial trade agreements that facilitate the development of stronger relationships.

¹ Go8 Facts of Distinction, <https://go8.edu.au/go8-publication-facts-of-distinction-2019>



Indonesia is one of Australia's closest neighbours and is identified in the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* as one of the countries in the Indo-Pacific region with whom Australia should be looking to work more closely.² For example:

- As of May 2019, Indonesia was the 8th largest source market for international higher education students studying in Australia, and the 5th largest source market for the Go8 universities;³
- Also as of May 2019, nearly half (4,064; 49%) of the higher education enrolments from Indonesian nationals in Australia were at a Go8 university; as were 50% (312) of enrolments from Indonesian nationals studying at Higher Degree Research level in Australia;
- Australia has educated a number of prominent Indonesian alumni, including Muhamad Chatib Basri, former Indonesian Minister of Finance (May 2013-October 2014); Dr Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana Natalegawa, former Indonesian Foreign Minister 2009-2014); and Dr Mari Pangestu, former Indonesia Minister of Trade (2004-2011) and Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy (2011-2014), all alumni of ANU.

In our submission to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) during the development of the IA-CEPA, the Go8 suggested the following areas for consideration:

- Measures to help increase Indonesian access to Australian higher education services, including through a new accreditation framework;
- Measures to allow universities of both countries to establish offshore campuses;
- Measures to increase research ties, including simplified visa processes for Australian researchers in Indonesia, and creating incentives to encourage research collaboration and partnerships; and
- Measures to facilitate skilled worker exchanges.

We were pleased to note that the importance of the education relationship between Indonesia and Australia was featured in the *Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia*, released on the 31 August 2018. It states:⁴

Generations of Indonesians and Australians, particularly our students, have enjoyed the rich experience of getting to know each other. We recognise that people-to-people links and contacts are critical to a strong bilateral relationship... We commit to strengthen educational and academic cooperation between our two countries, particularly through the expansion and deepening of Indonesian and Australian studies as well as academic exchanges and joint research to promote innovation and find solutions to shared challenges.

² FPWP, p.4, file:///C:/Users/sally.nimon/Downloads/2017_foreign_policy_white_paper.pdf

³ AEI data, YTD as at May 2019.

⁴ <https://dfat.gov.au/geo/indonesia/Pages/joint-declaration-comprehensive-strategic-partnership-between-the-commonwealth-of-australia-and-republic-of-indonesia.aspx>



We also note that the signed version of the IA-CEPA contains the following:⁵

- Mechanisms to ensure that current higher education access will be maintained, ensuring no loss of access for Australian universities; and
- Australian universities will be able to retain majority ownership of any campuses they establish in Indonesia.

In addition, increased work opportunities have been negotiated to allow up to 200 Indonesians a year to access skills development through workplace based training, in sectors including education.

While these measures may not address all of the issues raised in our submission, we are confident they will help to build stronger relationships between our countries in the education sector.

The Go8 therefore supports the ratification of the IA-CEPA.

If you wish to explore any of these issues in more detail, please contact the Go8 office via email (chief.executive@go8.edu.au) or phone (02 5123 6701).

Yours faithfully

VICKI THOMSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

⁵ <https://dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/not-yet-in-force/iacepa/Pages/ia-cepa-key-outcomes-for-australia.aspx>