

ACU strengthens ties with partners in Indonesia

Australian Catholic University (ACU) has signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) that further deepens engagement with Indonesia on human flourishing.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis met with senior representatives of MORA in Jakarta this week to sign the agreement and conduct high-level discussions around opportunities for joint education, research and research training.

The special ceremony was hosted by Indonesia's Secretary General for MORA, followed by a meeting with the Minister of Religious Affairs Prof. Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, M.A, paving the way for significant collaboration across cultural and faith traditions.

Professor Skrbis said the MoU reflected ACU's commitment to respectful engagement with Indonesia and the vital role that research and education play in strengthening regional relationships.

"This agreement reflects ACU's commitment to rigorous scholarship, intercultural understanding and meaningful engagement across the region," Professor Skrbis said.

"Indonesia is an important partner for Australia and for ACU, and our discussions with the Ministry of Religious Affairs reinforced the value of research and education as a bridge between communities."

The ACU delegation also visited some of Indonesia's most significant religious and interfaith landmarks, including the Jakarta Cathedral, Istiqlal Mosque and the Tunnel of Friendship.

"The opportunity to visit Jakarta Cathedral and Istiqlal Mosque, and to walk through the Tunnel of Friendship between them, was a powerful reminder that dialogue is built through relationships, shared purpose and respect," Professor Skrbis said.

"As a Catholic university, ACU has a responsibility to contribute to the common good by forming graduates and communities capable of engaging across difference with knowledge, humility and purpose."

The visit builds on ACU's growing engagement with Indonesia, including the launch of the Indonesia-Australia Human Flourishing Centre with Universitas Gadjah Mada in April 2026.

During his visit, Professor Skrbis also met with representatives of Indonesia's Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology for discussions about research capability, academic workforce development and scholarship pathways.

Professor Skrbis spent time with the Archbishop of Jakarta, Cardinal Ignatius Suharyo, to discuss the contribution of Catholic education to formation, service and interfaith understanding across the region.

"It was a privilege to meet with Cardinal Suharyo and to reflect on the enduring mission of Catholic education in strengthening communities and supporting human flourishing," Professor Skrbis said.

"For ACU, these conversations matter because universities have a role in educating people who can serve the common good and build trust across cultures, communities and faith traditions."

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