137 American Research University Presidents Endorse Expanding Partnerships With Indonesian Universities In Letter To President Barack Obama

Washington, DC (June 28, 2010) – One hundred thirty-seven American research university presidents and chancellors told President Barack Obama in a letter released today that they “strongly support expanded partnerships between United States and Indonesian universities on research and other matters.”

The letter, sent to the White House in May, was released today following the announcement during the G20 Summit in Toronto of an agreement with Indonesia to spend $160 million on programs to encourage educational exchanges and joint programs between the two countries.

In their letter, developed by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (A·P·L·U) and the Association of American Universities (AAU), the research university leaders applauded President Obama’s “commitment to a much deeper and closer relationship between U.S. and Indonesian institutions of higher education and with institutions across the Muslim world.”

Further, the letter states: “As presidents and chancellors of U.S. universities, we are very supportive of your goal to strengthen ties with Indonesia, its institutions and its people. We pledge our full and enthusiastic cooperation with this effort.”

The number of U.S. students who study in Indonesia is fewer than 250 annually. While about 7,500 Indonesian students came to the United States to study in the 2007-08 academic year, this is down significantly from the 1997-98 peak of 13,282. Indonesia has a population of nearly 250 million, making it the fourth most populous nation.

“Knowledge is truly the international language,” said A·P·L·U President Peter McPherson. “Through education exchanges and joint research initiatives, we can work on common areas of interest such as agriculture, energy, health and climate change.”
“Collaboration on education and science enhances our relationships with other countries throughout the world,” said AAU President Robert M. Berdahl. “It should play an especially important part in the President’s outreach to the Muslim world, and the nation’s research universities are essential to this effort.”

U.S. institutions have numerous initiatives underway with Indonesian universities, non-profit organizations and the government focused on research and training across a wide array of fields including: agriculture, communications, engineering, government, and health.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES
Founded in 1887, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (A·P·L·U) is an association of public research universities, land-grant institutions, and many state public university systems. A·P·L·U member campuses enroll more than 3.5 million undergraduate and 1.1 million graduate students, employ more than 645,000 faculty members, and conduct nearly two-thirds of all academic research, totaling more than $34 billion annually. As the nation’s oldest higher education association, A·P·L·U is dedicated to excellence in learning, discovery and engagement. For more information, visit www.aplu.org (Formerly known as NASULGC).

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES
The Association of American Universities (AAU) is an organization of leading research universities devoted to maintaining a strong system of academic research and education. It consists of 61 U.S. universities and two Canadian universities, divided about evenly between public and private. AAU member universities are on the leading edge of innovation, scholarship, and problem-solving, contributing significant value to the nation’s economy, security, and culture.