

## Media release - 30 January 2020



### **Bilateral research team and policy-makers to discuss transport, commodity and community opportunities along the Makassar-Parepare railway line**

On Wednesday 5 February, the Australia-Indonesia Centre (AIC) will host a one-day PAIR Policy Dialogue in Makassar between the Indonesian Government and South Sulawesi Provincial Government policy-makers, Australian Government representatives, and AIC researchers.

Presentations from the Vice-President's Office, the Ministry of Transport, and the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment will address President Joko Widodo's policy priorities on transport connectivity, seaweed and poverty reduction (focusing on young people). These topics are areas of focus for the recently launched [Partnership for Australia-Indonesia Research \(PAIR\)](#), which is currently underway in South Sulawesi.

After the event, PAIR researchers from 11 leading Indonesian and Australian universities will begin co-developing research projects centred around the Makassar-Parepare railway line and explore how to ensure that the railway line benefits local communities.

Executive Director of the Australia-Indonesia Centre and PAIR Program Director Eugene Sebastian said: "The PAIR Dialogue brings together researchers and policy-makers to meet, learn and explore potential opportunities the new railway line presents to the province of South Sulawesi."

The Dialogue will also explore central-provincial policy alignment and ways in which researchers and policy-makers can collaborate and share ideas, information, data and resources in support of the PAIR research program.

"The dialogue also gives our researchers an opportunity to listen and gain insights into issues from a national policy perspective. It is part of our demand-driven approach where we partner with government, business and local communities in defining the problem and co-creating solutions," Eugene added.

Governor of South Sulawesi Professor Nurdin Abdullah is an academic himself and a strong supporter of the AIC and the PAIR program: "Research is very important [for policy making]... so that we are not just estimating," he explained. "I believe that universities can be the lab for government, and also for business."

**Contact details and more information on next page**

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## About PAIR

PAIR is an AIC initiative supported by the Australian Government, the Indonesian Government and 11 leading universities to advance the research linkages between the two countries and improve the impact of that research.

Over four years (2019-2022), PAIR is exploring the western coastal region of South Sulawesi where a new 145-kilometre railway line is being built. The line will connect cities, towns and regencies and provide much-needed transport for people and goods. It will also help stimulate the local economy, boost commodities and transform communities. Our research will explore how the local communities can take advantage of the new railway line to improve their livelihoods, develop new skills and create new enterprises.

Visit the [PAIR website](#) for more information.

## About The Australia-Indonesia Centre

The Australia-Indonesia Centre is a consortium of 11 leading research universities in both countries. Its mission is to advance people-to-people links in science, technology, education and innovation.



Visit the [AIC website](#) for more information.