



## MBZ College for Future Studies

### **Nahdlatul Ulama/UAE strategic engagement deepens: President Joko Widodo and Emirati leaders inaugurate MBZ College for Future Studies at NU University of Yogyakarta (UNU)**

***“UNU must be prepared to serve as a locomotive, inspiring and facilitating an extraordinary leap of progress within Nahdlatul Ulama’s institutions of higher learning throughout Indonesia”***

***~ H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia***

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia — On 31 January 2024, Indonesian President H.E. Joko Widodo, Nahdlatul Ulama Chairman H.E. KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, and United Arab Emirates Minister of Energy & Infrastructure H.E. Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei laid the foundation stone of a high-rise building that will house the Mohamed Bin Zayed College for Future Studies (CFS) on the campus of Nahdlatul Ulama University of Yogyakarta (UNU Yogyakarta).

Construction of the CFS facility represents a significant expansion of strategic collaboration between Nahdlatul Ulama, the Abu Dhabi-based Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities, and the Governments of Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Under the leadership of UAE President H.H. Mohamed Bin Zayed, Abu Dhabi has pledged \$100 million dollars for the development of UNU Yogyakarta and the College for Future Studies. A unique feature of CFS will be the integration of Islamic values such as *rahmatan lil alamin*, or universal love and compassion, into an educational curriculum focused on science, technology (including AI and robotics), and future studies, thereby contributing to the development of peaceful, inclusive, tolerant, prosperous, and sustainable societies.

The CFS facility will be the second high-rise building constructed on the UNU campus with UAE funding. In September 2023, the nine-story “Joko Widodo Building” was formally inaugurated in conjunction with a Nahdlatul Ulama Congress and National Conference of Religious Scholars held in Yogyakarta. H.H. Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, hereditary Governor of the Yogyakarta Special Administrative Region, donated the land upon which the UNU campus is situated, in a strategically accessible area of the city. Yogyakarta is widely renowned as Indonesia’s capital of higher education.

The January 2024 groundbreaking ceremony — which initiated construction of a second high-rise building designed to house CFS on the campus of UNU in Yogyakarta, Indonesia — was timed to coincide with the anniversary of Nahdlatul Ulama’s founding on 31 January 1926. Reminiscent of John D. Rockefeller’s seminal grant, which helped launch the University of Chicago in 1899, Abu Dhabi’s educational investment constitutes a key element of the deepening cooperation between Nahdlatul Ulama and the United Arab Emirates.

A few days later, the Government of Abu Dhabi hosted a senior NU delegation for a series of events held in conjunction with the [2024 Zayed Award for Human Fraternity](#), whose recipients included Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah organizations.

Participants in the UNU/CFS groundbreaking ceremony included H.E. Husin Bagis, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the UAE; Dr. Widya Priyahita Pudjibudojo, Rector of UNU Yogyakarta; H. Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, Minister of Religious Affairs, Republic of Indonesia; Dr. Khalifa Mubarak Al Dhaheri, Chancellor of MBZ University for Humanities; H.E. Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei, UAE Minister of Energy & Infrastructure; H.E. Joko Widodo; H.E. KH. Miftachul Akhyar, head of the NU Supreme Council; H.E. KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf; H.H. Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, Governor of Yogyakarta; H.E. M. Basuki Hadimuljono, Minister of Public Works and Public Housing, Republic of Indonesia; and H.E. Abdulla Salem Obaid Salem Al Dhaheri, UAE Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia.

For additional information about the MBZ College for Future Studies and UNU Yogyakarta, [watch this video](#).