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Apostolic Trip of the Holy Father Francis to Myanmar and Bangladesh (26 November – 2 December 2017) – Welcome Ceremony in Myanmar, courtesy visit to the President of the Republic and the Union of Myanmar, and Meeting with the State Counsellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Welcome Ceremony in Myanmar, courtesy visit to the President of the Republic and the Union of Myanmar, and Meeting with the State Counsellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs

This morning the Holy Father Francis, before celebrating Holy Mass in private, met with the religious leaders of Myanmar in the archbishopric. After lunch, the Pope transferred by car to Yangon International Airport where, at 14.00 local time (8.30 Rome time) he departed on board a Myanmar Airways International B737 destined for Nay Pyi Taw.

Upon arrival at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport, Pope Francis was welcomed by a minister delegate of the President. He then transferred to the Presidential Palace where, in the adjacent square, at 15.50 local time (10.20 Rome time) the ceremony to welcome him to Myanmar took place.

After the performance of the national anthems, military honours and the presentation of the respective delegations, the Holy Father Francis and the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Mr. Htin Kyaw, entered the Presidential Palace for the courtesy visit.

The Pope signed the Book of Honour. Then, in the Credentials Hall, on the ground floor, a private meeting took place which concluded with the presentation of family members and the exchange of gifts.

At the end, the President accompanied Pope Francis to the Hall of the Diplomatic Corps for the meeting with the State Counsellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize laureate in 1991.

The Holy Father then transferred by car to the *Myanmar International Convention Centre* for the meeting with the authorities, civil society and the diplomatic corps.

