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Address of the Substitute for General Affairs of the Secretary of State at the ceremony for the inauguration of the Apostolic Nunciature in Quito, Ecuador

The following is the address given by Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra, Substitute for General Affairs of the Secretary of State, on the occasion of the inauguration of the renovated premises of the apostolic nunciature in Quito, Ecuador:

Address of Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra

His Excellency the President of the Republic, Mr. **Guillermo Lasso Mendoza**,

Your Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. **Juan Carlos Holguín Maldonad**

Ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Your Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio,

Dear Brother Bishops,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am grateful for your presence in this important act of blessing of the Apostolic Nunciature, after the completion of the renovation work. This moment gives us an opportunity to think about the opening words of Psalm 127: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain". It is indeed the Lord who inspires our actions, accompanies them and brings them to completion. This does not refer only to spiritual actions, but also to our poor material work, because none of our situations is foreign to the Lord, nor is it outside his provident gaze. As sons and daughters of the heavenly Father, all our being, acting and doing have their beginning in Him and reach their perfection only in Him.

This inauguration offers me the opportunity to express, on behalf of the Holy Father, a cordial greeting and his gratitude to the civil authorities present here, the members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Episcopal Conference and, in particular, those who have worked hard at this task, the benefactors and all those who have made its realization possible.

Rebuilding the Pope's House in Ecuador means highlighting the privilege and duty of safeguarding and preserving what we have inherited from the previous generations, so as to bequeath it to the future. We have inherited a building, this nunciature, whose mission is to cultivate and foster good diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Republic of Ecuador, and also to make the figure of the Holy Father visible and close to the local Church. But we have also inherited the high vocation of protecting, within the renovated space of this Diplomatic See, the culture of dialogue and encounter, as well as the tireless search for the common good and for peace. For this reason, before imploring God's blessing on this material work and its delicate mission, looking to the future, I wish to reaffirm, before the civil authorities present here, our commitment to continue to strengthen diplomatic relations, so that we will be able to respond jointly to the major challenges the current international situation presents to us. The path was prophetically indicated by Pope Francis in his first address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, a few days after his election, in which he invited all nations to fight against poverty, both material and spiritual, to build peace, and never to tire of building bridges through dialogue (cf. Audience with the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 22 March 2013).

We are happy with the blessing we are now offering, and with the happiness this event rouses in our hearts, we likewise hope that other buildings belonging to the Catholic Church in this beloved nation, especially the temples and historic convents, be the object of this type of renovation and conservation, and that they may serve to enable all society to see in them a reflection of the resplendent beauty of the Risen Christ.
