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## Brotherhood of Our Lady of Aránzazu

### Limako Arantzazu Euzkoetxea- Lima Basque Center

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**T**oday, Tuesday, July 27, the director of the Basque Community Abroad, Gorka Álvarez Aranburu, informed us that the Council of Government presided over by Lehendakari Iñigo Urkullu has officially recognized the **Limako Arantzazu Etxea – Lima Basque Center** Association as a Basque Center.

We want to tell the whole Basque Community, in the Basque Country and the Diaspora, that it is an honor for us to become part of the network of euzko etxeak, and we hope to live up to it, fulfilling, to the best of our ability, that which Lehendakari Aguirre asked of all the Basque Centers in the world: “to be the representation of our country.”

This euzko etxea was born out of the current components of a brotherhood, the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Aranzazu of Lima, which was founded in 1612 by the “children of the Basque nation” who lived in Lima. Those people from Álava, Biscay, Gipuzkoa, and Navarre who created it did so as a support structure, for both the Basques who already lived there and for the Basques who arrived later on. It was a key piece in the great inter-Basque support network created all over the world, supported in large measure by the guilds and brotherhoods that were founded throughout the Americas under the protection and patronage of Our Lady of Aránzazu. Moreover, it provided a great deal of support and solidarity to the most disadvantaged, and did so until its assets were seized by the government of Peru.

It was in 1865 when the government officially dissolved the brotherhood and seized all our assets, but a group of members of the same have kept it alive to this day. Despite the fact that, over the years, its members have moved on to different places throughout the Old and New Worlds, they have always kept their roots to Peru and to the Basque Country strong. They have also maintained their meetings, their archives, their officers, and all the activities an institution such as this should be doing.

It is from that brotherhood, which is still very much alive, even if not officially from the point of view of the Government of Peru, that the idea of creating this center, with the name Limako Arantzazu Euzko Etxea, was born and encouraged by members of the Brotherhood from all over the Americas in order to become an instrument that can help fulfill, in the 21st century, the key goals set forth at the foundation of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Aranzazu of Lima: mutual support, attention to the Basque Community, social commitment, and the creation of a network that would connect all other Basque groups in the world. That is what is laid out in the statement of principles that is a part of the founding agreement of this group, registered in Peru.

Today, the Basques of the Diaspora are grouped in euzko etxeak dotted across the New World and indeed the whole world. That is why it's natural that these relationships be woven together via a similar organization that meets the characteristics defined the Basque Government, which didn't even exist in the 17th century and, since its creation in 1937, to better fight for Freedom and Justice during the Francoist uprising, the Second World War, and the dark years of the Franco dictatorship, has gained the respect of the global Basque community.

So, this Brotherhood, whose spirit has remained constant for over four centuries, without losing its essence or original structure, is creating a new tool to help meet its founding principles in the 21st century.

It is being created in a spirit of collaboration with the Basque community in general and with the Basque Centers in particular. And today, as we receive this official recognition, we reaffirm this idea. We believe that one of the best things the Basques of the Diaspora created was a network of collaboration and mutual support. For centuries, we were one of the main axes in that network, and we are willing to work hard to become that again: a network made up of Basque centers that collaborate as free and equal brethren.

Being members of the network of euzko etxeak is an important responsibility, and we accept this mission in order to honor those who came before and to collaborate in the building of a future for the Basques, with pride and an ironclad commitment to dedication.

**Lima - New York, July 27, 2021**