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A group of men in black cassocks sits at long tables in a U shape with Pope Francis, without h

Pope Francis meets with the members of his renewed Council of Cardinals at the Vatican April 24, 2023. Pictured, clockwise from the left, are: Cardinals Gérald C. Lacroix of Québec; Juan José Omella Omella of Barcelona; Seán P. O'Malley of Boston; Fridolin Ambongo Besungu of Kinshasa, Congo; and Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state. Continuing, to the right of the pope are: Bishop Marco Mellino, council secretary; and Cardinals Sérgio da Rocha of São Salvador da Bahia, Brazil; Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India; Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, president of the commission governing Vatican City State; and Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



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Seven weeks after announcing the new composition of his international Council of Cardinals, Pope Francis led a two-day meeting of the council focused on situations of conflict in the world and on progress in implementing his reform of the Roman Curia.

The pope and the council members met April 24-25 at the Vatican, said a communiqué from the Vatican press office.

"At the center of the conversations were the situations of war and conflict affecting many parts of the world and the need for a united peace-building effort on the part of the entire church," the statement said. And each of the cardinals, who represent

different parts of the world, also spoke about the "socio-political and ecclesial situation" in their regions.

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The group also discussed "the preparations for the synod assembly in October and the implementation of the apostolic constitution 'Praedicate Evangelium,'" which was published in March 2022 and ordered the reform of the Roman Curia. Reviewing the work of each Vatican office and drafting the reform document was a major part of the Council of Cardinals' role for the first nine years of the council's existence.

Francis renewed the council's membership in early March, adding five new cardinals and renewing the membership of four others.

The council now consists of: Cardinals Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state; Sérgio da Rocha of São Salvador da Bahia, Brazil; Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India; Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, president of the commission governing Vatican City State; Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg; Gérald C. Lacroix of Québec; Juan José Omella Omella of Barcelona; Seán P. O'Malley of Boston; and Fridolin Ambongo Besungu of Kinshasa, Congo.