Vatican
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A Black man standing and wearing a white-tie tuxedo hands a seated Pope Francis a piece of

Joseph John Mpinganjira presents to Pope Francis his letters of credential as Malawi's ambassador to the Holy See during an audience in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Dec. 7, 2023. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

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The peaceful means of diplomacy must be used to seek global solutions to the serious injustices that cause so many conflicts in the world, Pope Francis said.

This "urgently demands a reconfiguration of multilateral diplomacy, with the aim of providing effective responses to emerging problems and devising global mechanisms to address the environmental, public health, cultural and social changes presently in course," Francis told new ambassadors to the Vatican from New Zealand, Kuwait, Malawi, Chad, Guinea and Sweden.

"The noble and patient work of diplomacy to which you are committed must not only seek to prevent and resolve conflicts, but also to consolidate the peaceful coexistence and human flourishing of the world's peoples by fostering respect for

human dignity, defending the inalienable rights of each man, woman and child, and promoting models of integral economic and human development," he said.

Welcoming the diplomats to their new posts Dec. 7, the pope said the Vatican is especially concerned about "the future of our common home and specifically the effects of climate change and the devastation of the natural environment on the most vulnerable members of our human family."

The U.N. Conference on Climate Change underway in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from Nov. 30 to Dec. 12, he said, represents "an historic step forward in responding with wisdom and foresight to these clear and present threats to the universal common good."

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The pope, who had wanted to attend the conference but canceled his trip due to health concerns, still addressed the gathering through an envoy, telling the ambassadors he insisted "the future of us all depends on the present that we now choose."

"Let us pray that the leaders of nations will join in adopting concrete measures that will enable us to hand on to future generations a world which more fully resembles the fruitful garden that its Creator entrusted to our care and stewardship," he told the ambassadors.

The Vatican is present and active within the international community, he said, as part of its desire to advance human fraternity and that peace which is "the fruit of justice."

Recognizing the ambassadors were beginning their new mission during "a particularly troubled time, marked by major outbreaks of armed conflict," Francis told them that "the international community is challenged, through the peaceful means of diplomacy, to seek global solutions to the grave injustices that so often are the cause of those conflicts." he said.