

had drafted the Charter and the rules of procedures, had not hesitated to impose their views when they were the majority, and now were resisting change; the new majority group of the poor and the weaker nations, representing the majority of the people of the world, was trying, they declared, to achieve the objectives of the Charter and was being opposed by the developed countries, which were unwilling to implement the decisions of the General Assembly. The implication that member states had a duty to comply with decisions of the General Assembly that they had opposed was rejected by most developed countries, not only because it appeared to run counter to the principle of the sovereign equality of member states, which is expressly recognized in Article 2 of the Charter, but also because it is simply unrealistic to expect national governments and legislatures to implement policies that they have not accepted more or less willingly. Developing countries expressed dissatisfaction with the privileged position of the Security Council *vis-à-vis* the General Assembly, and especially with the Security Council veto, which, it was said, amounted to the tyranny of a very small minority. The contention of the developed countries that constructive decisions could best be reached through consultation, in a spirit of give and take, was vigorously rejected. Some delegations indicated that they viewed the United Nations primarily as a forum for the redress of long-standing and real grievances rather than as a "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations".

Institutional problems: universality and equality

The foregoing is a brief treatment of only part of a wide-ranging debate in which the pent-up emotions of many delegations were released. Among the questions of principle that were discussed were those relating to the pros and cons of universality – that is, whether membership in the United Nations should be open to all states – and the related question of whether