

approaches universality, was not anticipated by the drafters of the Charter. The Third World is not represented in the Security Council by any recognized permanent voice. The current forms of confrontation between industrialized and developing countries were not foreseen. The initial conceptual and institutional equilibrium within the United Nations is tending to break down, and pressures for an eventual revision of the system are gradually building up.

Nowhere in the Charter of the United Nations is any conception of universality defined. The Charter neither specifies that membership is a right of all states nor that universal membership is an objective. Rather, membership "is open to all peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations". The conception of universality has developed over the years in relation to specific debates on membership and participation. The attitudes of member states towards universality, a question of principle, have frequently been influenced by their positions on the political issues involved in the particular cases being discussed.

When the question of South Africa's participation in the work of the United Nations was being discussed at the General Assembly in 1974, proponents of universality (comprising in general the Western group and certain Latin American countries) argued that the United Nations, in order to achieve its primary objective of maintaining international peace and security, should embrace states of all political, social and economic systems; that member states should not be suspended or expelled simply because their policies or practices were abhorrent to the great majority; that the object of retaining such states in the organization was to expose them to constant and vocal criticism and to sensitize them to world public opinion; and that questions of membership, suspension or expulsion and, by implication, participation, were, under the Charter, the prerogative of the Security Council. It was pointed out that, according to the Charter, a member might legally be deprived of the exercise of its rights and privileges only in accordance with the specific provisions