



Article 109 Coalition as a »Pressure Point« of the international order



Source: Connectas.

I. Introduction: The Forgotten Article

The Charter of the United Nations contains an article which, although little known outside specialized circles, was conceived as a »safety valve« to address situations in which the Charter might need to be revised and/or amended. Article 109 establishes the procedures for convening a General Conference of the Member States of the United Nations to reform or review the Charter itself.

For decades, Article 109 remained a largely forgotten legal provision. Today, however, it has re-emerged as a symptom of the crisis of adaptability, legitimacy, and fragmentation affecting global governance. The renewed discussion surrounding the article is largely the result of the efforts of the »Article 109 Coalition«, a civil society organization composed, among others, of former United Nations officials, whose objective is to mobilize Member

States to call for a Charter Review Conference.

It is essential to clarify that the implementation of Article 109 is far from a straightforward process. Although the article provides a mechanism for convening a Review Conference, any amendment would subsequently require extremely complex ratification procedures and a level of consensus among Member States that is difficult to imagine in the current international context.

II. Article 109 Coalition as a political tool

The existing bottleneck is neither legal nor procedural. It is political. One of the strategic strengths of the Article 109 Coalition is that its proponents fully understand this reality.

Its strategic value does not lie solely in the possibility of formally activating the mechanism provided for in the Charter. It also derives from its capacity to function as an instrument of political pressure and international legitimacy-building. In other words, the coalition seeks to generate a critical mass of international support. From this perspective, the Coalition operates as a »pressure point«. Not because it guarantees immediate reform, it would be a mistake to view it in those terms, but because it compels the international system to confront debates that for decades have remained in the background. Above all, it forces reluctant nations to contend with pressure emanating from the majority of the United Nations system.

III. Profound revelations and a barometer of the international system

The emergence and growth of this initiative can be interpreted as a symptom of deeper transformations. The Charter of the United Nations was born in a post-war world, under a distribution of power fundamentally different from today's. This point is particularly important, as the current system is now under pressure from artificial intelligence, hybrid warfare, systemic competition among nations, and the rise of private actors whose global influence in some cases surpasses that of states themselves.

The number of endorsements gained by the Coalition can therefore be interpreted as a

strategic barometer of the actual condition of the multilateral system based on the United Nations. What it reveals is that actors have begun to lose confidence in the United Nations and that international governance is already evolving, even in the absence of large-scale formal reforms. This helps explain the increasing emergence of coalitions among states that previously did not exist, the rise of minilateralism, the growing strategic value attributed to private diplomacy, and the expansion of transnational networks.

The remaining question, and perhaps the most difficult one to answer, is what kind of international architecture can continue to remain legitimate, representative, and functional in a world marked by technological fragmentation, geopolitical competition, and the growing dispersion of power.

That discussion extends far beyond the content of Article 109 itself. And it will likely constitute one of the great strategic debates of the coming decades.

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Bibliographic Information

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