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A United Nations fit for purpose: Towards a Charter review conference

*Motion adopted by the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs
(Arusha, 7 October 2026)*

A more open and representative United Nations is needed to advance peace and development for all people in the face of mounting global challenges.

At the 152nd IPU Assembly in Istanbul, Türkiye, in April 2026, the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs held a first consultation regarding Article 109 of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for a review conference to be held within ten years of the founding of the Organization. Such a conference has never been held. Several decades later, as calls for UN reforms are growing louder, the time has come to activate this mechanism to review the original Charter, which less than one third of the current membership of the United Nations helped to draft in 1945. A new multipolar world has emerged since then, which renders some of the provisions in the Charter, including the composition of the Security Council, no longer effective in the face of today's unique challenges. A repositioning of the UN in this new world order through a Charter review conference is essential to make the Organization more efficient and better equipped to defend its founding principles.

This Committee welcomes the current UN80 Initiative of the UN Secretary-General as an important step towards making the UN more effective. However, this Initiative is not sufficient to ensure a UN fit for the current times. Essentially aimed at reducing costs and simplifying the UN system, the UN80 Initiative does not get to the root of the problem, which is political in nature and can only be fixed through a careful review of the Charter in order to update it and make it more representative of current social and geopolitical realities. At the same time, the Committee recognizes that any changes to the Charter should not tamper in any way with the fundamental values, purposes and principles that are expressed in it, which must remain the bedrock of multilateralism for generations to come.

As changes or additions to the Charter will require parliamentary ratification in almost all countries, the Committee calls on all IPU Member Parliaments to advocate for a Charter review conference within the next five years following a preparatory process led by Member States.

In particular, the Committee encourages each IPU Member Parliament to undertake the following actions:

- Organize an in-depth debate together with the Government to familiarize parliamentarians with the key elements of the Charter of the United Nations and consider possible reform proposals;
- Review the outline of a possible preparatory process leading up to a Charter review conference;
- Take stock of the specific legal requirements for parliamentary ratification of any amendment to the Charter;
- Request that the Government submit a report from the aforementioned parliamentary deliberations to all Member States of the UN under cover letter to the President of the General Assembly;
- Advocate for the establishment of a UN Working Group to put forward possible proposals for a Charter review conference;
- Inform the IPU Permanent Observer at the United Nations of key parliamentary debates and other initiatives that may help advance the process towards a Charter review conference.