

Article 99 of the UN Charter

December 8, 2023 • vajiramandravi.com



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- What is Article 99 of the UN Charter?
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Why in news?

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres used a rarely used power to warn the Security Council of a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.
 - He urged the members to demand an immediate humanitarian cease-fire.

- In this context, Guterres invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter, a diplomatic tool that allows the UN head to raise issues that may threaten international peace and security.

What is Article 99 of the UN Charter?

- Background
 - The UN Charter is the founding document of the United Nations. Based on the powers conferred through it, the UN can take action on a wide variety of issues.
 - The Charter is considered an international treaty, meaning UN Member States are bound by it.
 - However, in practice, there is little that member countries can be forced to do.
- Article 99
 - Article 99 of the UN Charter is a special political tool that allows the UN Secretary-General to call a meeting of the Security Council.
 - The Secretary-General can use this tool to bring to the Security Council's attention any matter that they believe may threaten international peace and security.
- Features
 - Article 99 is the only independent political tool given to the Secretary-General in the UN Charter.
 - It is seen as a discretionary power.
 - According to the UN, the President of the Security Council is under the obligation to call a meeting of the Council if the Secretary-General brings to the attention of the Council any matter under Article 99.

When has Article 99 been invoked in the past?

- The provision has been rarely invoked. It's only been invoked four times in the past — in the Congo (1960), East Pakistan (1971), Iran (1979) and Lebanon (1989).
- The article was initially designed as a preventative tool, a bit like a warning system. Its use was meant to deter conflicts from escalating.

Can Article 99 end the conflict?

- Article 99 gives power to the Secretary-General to call a meeting of the Security Council on the important issue may threaten international peace and security.
- However, it does not give the Secretary-General any powers to force the Security Council to adopt a resolution.
- Hence, he can force a discussion, he can bring the parties together and encourage them to reach some kind of compromise.
- But because of the veto, the only way the Security Council can adopt a substantive resolution on this issue is for each of the five permanent members to choose not to veto it.
 - To be adopted, a resolution needs at least nine votes in favour and no vetoes by the five permanent members.
 - China, Russia, the US, the UK and France – hold this veto power.

Has it brought peace before?

- The use of Article 99 has had mixed results in the past, though it has never really brought peace.
 - That's because the secretary-general's intervention does not "fundamentally change the political calculation of the Security Council's most powerful members".
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Q1) What is United Nations Security Council (UNSC)?

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six main parts of the United Nations. It was established in 1945. The UNSC is responsible for maintaining international peace and security.

Q2) What is UN Charter?

The United Nations Charter is a multilateral international treaty that establishes the rights and obligations of member states. It also establishes the United Nations' principal organs and procedures. The Charter was signed on June 26, 1945.

Source: [What is Article 99 of the UN Charter, invoked for the first time in decades as Israel attacks Gaza | United Nations | Aljazeera](#)

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