

Background Information

The Kashmir conflict dates back to 1947, when India and Pakistan were formed from over 650 prince-led states in Southern Asia. These formerly sovereign states had the opportunity to choose which country they wanted to become a part of, either India or Pakistan. States that were predominantly Muslim became part of Pakistan while those that were Hindu became part of India. In the states of Kashmir and Jammu, their prince decided to stay neutral, siding with neither his personal Hindu beliefs nor his people's Muslim religion. This was met with massive backlash from both his people and the new-founded Pakistani government, causing the prince to flee and controversially cede his land to India with the Instrument of Accession, despite the obvious public disagreement.

Following the cede of power to India, fighting broke out between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. Fighting lasted until mid-1948, when the United Nations required that Pakistan remove their troops from Kashmir and that India remove most of their forces as well. Pakistan ignored this UN mandate and continued fighting until early-1949, when a ceasefire was agreed upon. By then, Pakistan had control of 35% of Kashmir, and the Line of Control was drawn by the United Nations, splitting villages and families. This line was supposed to be voted on in a referendum, but the vote never happened and the line remains today as the border between India and Pakistan. This line, as well as omnipresent conflict over the disputed land, created a large refugee crisis that still persists today.

Currently, only 45% of Kashmir remains under Indian control, and the Line of Control is constantly guarded by both Indian and Pakistani forces. It is known to be the most militarized part of the world, with hundreds of thousands of troops on either side of the border. Socially, the people of Kashmir favor independence for their state. They hold equal distaste for both the Indian and Pakistani governments.

Recently, India has been making serious steps to get back into Kashmir, planting more troops within the state not only to fight the Pakistani forces but also act as a police and peacekeeping force. In the last year, the Indian forces closed important mosques, arrested thousands of people, and blocked the state's internet and phone

services. In closing the mosques, the Indian government has essentially taken control of the church, regulating what is preached when, if at all.

On the Pakistani side, they have most notably taken away Kashmiri citizen's human rights, such as their freedom of expression and association. They have also been discriminating against certain minority groups and have exploited their anti-terrorism laws to target activists that don't agree with their opinion. The Pakistani government has also recently come under scrutiny for mass disappearances of groups of people in the state.

UN Involvement

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 39 (January 20, 1948)

- a. Set up a commission of 3 members: one chosen by India, one by Pakistan, and one by the other two members of the commission
- b. The commission's job was to draft a letter back to the Security Council with the best way to approach the Kashmir conflict

2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 47 (April 21, 1948)

- a. Increased the size of the commission to five members
- b. Said that the five countries in the commission should establish a presence in South Asia to oversee the upcoming plebiscite and moderate the conflict
- c. Recommended a 3-step process to end the dispute
 - i. Pakistan is asked to remove all the people they sent in originally to fight
 - ii. India is asked to slowly remove all people they put in before except for the minimum required to maintain law and order
 - iii. India is asked to appoint a nonpartisan plebiscite advisor to ensure a fair election

3. UNMOGIP (January 1949)

- a. A military observer group situated in both India and Pakistan, overlooking the Kashmir conflict

- b. Helped establish the Line of Control in 1972, a “military control” line on the border between Pakistan and India

4. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1172 (June 6, 1998)

- a. In response to both Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, the United Nations condemned these tests and called for both India and Pakistan to stop testing nuclear weapons immediately

Questions to Consider

- Where does your country stand in regards to Kashmir?
- Is your country an ally with either India or Pakistan?
- Does your country currently have military presence stationed in Kashmir?
- Is your country sending aid to either India or Pakistan to help with the conflict?
- What are your people’s religious beliefs? Islam or Hindu? Sunni or Shia?
- Is the solution to the problem a matter of stopping conflict or resolving it on a governmental level?
- If conflict is halted, how would the UN go about making sure conflict does not rise up again?

Works Cited and Useful Links

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Created by **Jacob Golden.**

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