

FORUM: Security Council (SC)
TOPIC: The Issue of Kashmir
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POSITION: Assistant Chair

General Overview

Kashmir is located in the northernmost state of India as a part of the Indian subcontinent, in proximity of the Himalayan mountain ranges. The region has been subject of India, Pakistan, and China's armed disputes since 1947.

Kashmir is currently the most militarized territory in the world and the number of **casualties** in the region **since 1989** is estimated to be around **100.000**, according to the latest available Indian government data, due to separatist violence, whilst the number of Pandits (Kashmiri Hindus) who have fled the region is estimated to be around **100.000**.

The Line of Control's length is 435 miles (700 km) and it separates Indian-controlled (Jammu and Kashmir) and Pakistani-controlled parts (Azad Kashmir, Gilgit and Baltistan) of Kashmir. China claims ownership of circa 20% of Kashmir (the region of Aksai Chin).

Kashmir relies on a predominantly agrarian economy. The tourism sector in Indian-administered Kashmir has been radically affected by post-1989 political crisis.

Introduction (and Key Terms)

The Kashmir issue officially dates back to 1947, the year **India** and **Pakistan** gained independence from the British Empire. The aforementioned countries began the dispute over the ownership of **Jammu and Kashmir** in the early 20th century, when the 86.000-square mile region of the Indian subcontinent was considered a freely accessible area from both sovereign states.

Due to its closeness to India and Pakistan, the princely state of Kashmir became a highly contended zone over the decades, and in **1947** *maharaja* of Kashmir **Hari Singh** was forced to opt for an alliance with either one nation or the other. The Hindu ruler declared the region's neutrality, hoping his decision would diminish the growing conflict potential; nevertheless, in the aftermath of intra-national socio-economic tensions, violent tumults led by the Muslim population and the armed intervention of Pashtun tribesmen on Kashmiri soil, the **Instrument of Accession to the Indian Union** was signed in **October 1947**, causing the eruption of a **first** two-year **war** between Pakistani and Indian forces.

In **1948**, India's request to involve the **United Nations** in the resolution of the conflict was accepted and an "immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of Pakistani military presence" was proclaimed by the **Security Council's 47th Resolution**. The Council additionally clarified: "The final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will be made in accordance with the will of the people expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations."

A temporary **suspension** of the war came into force in **1949**: all troops were evacuated and a mutually agreed **partition** defining Kashmiri borders (later known as the **Line of Control**) became effective.

Many proposals to end the conflict were made throughout the following years, but the dispute between India and Pakistan took a turn for the worse following **China's** sudden attack to **Ladakh** (a region of Kashmir) in **1962**. Tensions broke out in a second warfare at the heart of the Indian subcontinent in **1965** due to the Chinese incursion and a new imminent ceasefire in **1966** led Pakistan and India onto their previous positions.

The years **1971-1972** were characterised by a third Indo-Pakistani war. Pakistan's defeat led to the **Simla Agreement**, stipulated in **1972**. Said Agreement proposed two main objectives: the conversion of the ceasefire line into the **Line of Control** between Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and Indian-controlled Kashmir and the beginning of **new peace-oriented negotiations** between India, Pakistan and China.

During the **second half of the 1980s**, the dispute regarding Jammu and Kashmir was still ongoing and the point of conflict became crucial for the Indian Union's domestic policy in **1987** when popular anti-India protests and riots, caused by lack of democracy, religious discrimination and political interference, tore Indian-owned Kashmir apart. Islamic militants began an **armed insurgency** subsidized by Pakistan in the name of nationalism and independence, which was soon suppressed by Indian police and army. In **1989**, with the ending of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Pakistan fueled foreign and Kashmiri militant groups by providing them **weapons and further training**.

In **1990**, the Indian central government took strong action on Kashmir, imposing its rule on the region by campaigning militarily against the rebellious groups. The government's **full violation of human rights** (such as, but not limited to, shooting of unarmed demonstrators, civilian massacres, and summary executions of detainees) caused a great counter-effect among Kashmiri Hindu residents, officials and civil servants, victims of militant groups' consequent **attacks and massacres**. The Indian government has accused Pakistan of training religious terrorists or **mujahedeen** for use in the Kashmir conflict.

The **escalation** of the newly-nuclear-equipped states' conflict led to **1999's war**, when India broke the relations with its neighbour country because of Pakistan's crossing of the Line of Control into the Kargil district.

The Indian subcontinent during the years **2001-2004** kept suffering the perpetuation of violence with talks facing a set back, particularly during **2001's** Pakistani blitz against the Indian government residing in Kashmir.

India and Pakistan's opening of a trade route along the Line of Control in **2008** (for the first time in six decades) gave birth to diplomatic hope; nevertheless, new protests in Indian-administered Kashmir burst in **2010**.

Jammu and Kashmir's **elections** in **2015** and subsequent **political turmoil** brought further instability to the region, fueling clashes between civilians and the governments that last until today.

Major International Organisations involved

Campaign Against Arms Trade

CAAT works to end the international arms trade, promoting progressive demilitarisation and ending government financial and political support for arms export.

Work in Kashmir: CAAT provides data on UK and EU arms exports to India and Pakistan.

Conciliation Resources

Conciliation Resources works on cross-border conflict, engaging armed groups, developing governance, facilitating dialogue, strengthening public participation and integrating women properly into all areas of peacebuilding.

Work in Kashmir: Conciliation Resource's aim is to develop the peacebuilding capacities of people on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir and contribute to informal peacebuilding processes by facilitating shared analysis, dialogue and practical engagement at regional and cross-LoC levels.

International Crisis Group

The International Crisis Group conducts independent research and analysis on conflicts around the world.

Work in Kashmir: The ICG has a range of reports and publications on the conflict in Kashmir.

International Peace Bureau

The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a world without war. Its current main programme centres on disarmament for sustainable development.

Work in Kashmir: The IPB has a large number of partner organisations in India and Pakistan.

Previous UN documents

Res. April 1948

Res. August 1948

Res. Jan 1949

Res. March 1950

Res. Nov 1951

Res. Dec 1952

Res. Jan, Feb, Dec 1957

Timeline

1947: India and Pakistan become independent. Instrument of Accession to the Indian Union signed by Hari Singh.

1948: Security Council resolution regarding the topic.

1949: Line of Control established.

1962: China gets involved in the conflict.

1971-1972: Simla Agreement.

1987: Anti-India protests and riots.

1989: India accuses Pakistan of fueling terrorism. Both nations become nuclear power countries.

1990: Full violation of human rights.

1999: Indo-Pakistani war.

2001: Pakistani blitz against Indian government.

2008: Opening of trade route along the Line of Control.

2010: New protests.

2015: Elections and political turmoil.

Ideas for Resolutions

In April 2004, Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Consumer Affairs declared that: "(Regarding) the current situation, the debate ought to focus on the experiences and aspirations of the people in the Kashmir valley". According to the Indian Secretary, the ethnic persecutions and the Pandit exodus, the years of insurgency, growing religious intolerance, cross-border terrorism and little to no assistance (e.g. psychological assistance) for the victims of the conflict consist in deeply concerning issues that must be resolved as soon as possible, given that the conditions in which the Kashmiri people are living at present are unbearable and intolerable.

Possible solutions: Revitalizing the economy in the valley, a more open private sector to provide Kashmiris with a greater stake in their future, finding remedy to the crisis of high unemployment (any effective comprehensive approach would need to have both an economic and political component).

Conclusion

As the future of Kashmir remains uncertain, it is the International Community's responsibility to elaborate an effective and highly diplomatic solution to the conflict whilst bearing in mind both the delicate bilateral relations between India and Pakistan and the Kashmiri population's state of emergency. The ultimate goal is to improve the human, economic and political situation of Kashmir and to promote peace and non-violence while focusing on the needs of all parties.

Sources

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