



Committee: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Committee Topic: The Indo-China Border Dispute

Written by: Manuel Lazo, Avilash Jayakumar, Ege

## 1.ASSEMBLING ON THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE

The United Nations Security Council was established in 1945 as one of the four principal bodies of the United Nations. The UNSC was created to maintain international peace and security, develop positive

relations

among nations,

and to promote

cooperation in

resolving

international

concerns. The

council has 15

seats,

composed of 5

permanent

member states:

the Russian

Federation, the Republic of France, the United Kingdom, the

People's Republic of China, and the United States of America. The

10 non-permanent members, elected by the U.N. General

Assembly for two-year terms, consists of Albania, Brazil, Gabon,



Security Council  
United Nations

Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, and the United Arab Emirates. For the purposes of this committee topic and its far-reaching implications of neighboring states, the delegations of Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Taiwan, and Japan have been admitted as observer states.

The United Nations Security Council has the capacity to conduct peacekeeping operations, enact international sanctions, authorize military action against a nation, and is the only committee within the United Nations with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.

## 2.HISTORY OF TOPIC:

Between 1913 and 1914, leaders from Tibet, in addition to representatives from the Chinese and British governments, assembled in Simla (located in present-day India) to reach an agreement on the status of Tibet and establish the borders between China and British India. This meeting, known as the Simla Convention of 1913/14, took place approximately one year after the conclusion of the Xinhai Revolution (February 1912) and establishment of the Republic of China (ROC) that same year.

The Chinese refused to sign a potential deal with the other states due to a clause that granted Tibet its autonomous status under

Chinese rule. Despite China's resistance, British India and Tibet officials both managed to agree on the McMahon Line on March 24-25, 1914, in Delhi. (Parshotam Mehra, 1982) As of today, the Republic of India acknowledges the McMahon Line, 550 miles in length through the Himalayas, as the official boundary between India and the People's Republic of China. However, it is still renounced by the People's Republic of China – which is the root of the conflict.

By 1947, the partition of British India into two dominions – India and Pakistan – resulted in the establishment of the Republic of India soon thereafter. China was not far along; two years later, Chinese revolutionary Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic of China. Consequently, border disputes were almost immediately sparked between the two countries; multiple attempts at peaceful reconciliation throughout the 1950s ultimately failed.

In 1962, the culminative tensions that had been building for the past few decades came to their climax as war between the two countries broke out. Chinese troops infiltrated the McMahon Line and took up positions for about a month before the war ended. Though not long lived, the travesty resulted in well over 3,000 Indian soldiers captured and approximately 1,000 Indian deaths – the Chinese military suffered less than 800 deaths. After Premier Zhou of China declared a cease-fire in November of that year, a

“Line of Actual Support” was drawn - an unofficial marker of the new borders to where the Chinese had invaded to. Naturally, this was met with indignant pushback from the Republic of India. The tensions emerged in another clash in 1967 on two mountain passes (Nathu La and Cho La) along the region of Sikkim, resulting in over 340 Chinese and 150 Indian deaths.

The Republic of India fought back against China’s pressures; they successfully forced the opposing military back to Chinese territory near Cho La. Notwithstanding, the movement of the “Line of Actual Support” created confusion between the two countries and the location of the real border line became subjective and blurred. This conflict is deeply connected to its extensive history; the historical border disputes only contribute to the modern-day conflict.

### 3.CURRENT ISSUES:

This committee has assembled to address the existing border contention between the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China. These two nuclear-armed member states of the United Nations Security Council are home to 36% of the world’s population (Statistics Times, 2020).

On May 5, 2020, Chinese and Indian troops engaged in violent battles along the Sino-Indian border near the disputed Pangong Lake in Ladakh and the Tibet autonomous region and on the border between Sikkim and the Tibet autonomous region. According to Indian sources, the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers also came as a result of additional conflict on June 15-16, 2020 in the Galwan Valley. Media reports suggest that both Indian and Chinese soldiers were taken captive and released in the coming days while sources on both sides denied these acts. On September 7, 2020, for the first time in 45 years, shots were fired along the LAC (Line of Actual Control) with both sides accusing each other of the violence. After this incident, the Indian government had stated that they'd plan to urge higher and stricter trade barriers and raise import duties on around 300 Chinese products. Currently, India has a \$59.3 billion (about \$180 per person in US dollar) trade deficit with China, while 11% of India's imports are arriving from China. After the Galwan Valley skirmish on June 15, some Indian campaigns on boycotting Chinese goods and products had commenced. This included the cancellation and additional inspection of certain contracts with Chinese firms. Later calls were also made to block the entry of Chinese companies into strategic markets in India. By November 2020, 200 Chinese apps, including



Alibaba, Sina, and Tencent, were banned by the Indian government.

There is also a question whether climate will affect the rivalry between the two nations. This is due to the decrease of extremely chilly and windy days, and a rapid increase in warm days. This will benefit both sides by giving the troops a rise of opportunities to battle and continue the ongoing violence. However, both sides also have concerns whether climate change might also be a liability. An increase of melting snow on the Himalayas which contains the risks of avalanches and melting of ice lakes can seriously impact the course of this violent situation.

China's dam-building activities in Pakistani-held Kashmir are also putting the Indians on immense pressure. The construction of 60 GW dams by the Indus River, which flows through India and Pakistan, is a massive concern for the Indian troops since China is building dams over a territory that India claims, and where 3 quarters of the Indian-Pakistan wars have been fought. With the melting of glaciers that increase the flow of the rivers, these dams are considered to be applicable, leading to a long-term project. If the planning is successful, this can build-up the already strong relationship between Pakistan and China, resulting in a possible escalation of the China-India conflict.

## POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA:

Border disputes between India and China over regions such as Ladakh, Aksai Chin, and Arunachal Pradesh have come to heavily influence Sino-Indian relations and policies for more than 80 years and heading into the next phase of 21<sup>st</sup> century geopolitics, arguably no nation poses more of a threat to India's foreign (and domestic) policy ambitions than China. In the past, India and China have managed to string together some crucial bilateral diplomatic efforts, stretching all the way back to trade agreements such as the 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement, all the way through to modern, border-centric treaties such as the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement in 2013. Today, China and India retain crucial trade alliances (China has been India's leading trading partner since 2008) and from India's perspective, the withering of relations could prove catastrophic. That being said, as India undergoes mass reforms, modernizes its military, industrializes its economy, and aims to cement its status as a regional power and world player, it is clear to see how much of an issue Chinese influence really is for India. In a June 2021 interview, Indian Chief of Defense Staff, Bipin Rawat declared China the Indian military's biggest threat, and for good reason. Many of China's policies have been labeled by India as a means to diminish its sphere of influence, whether it be its military operations along



the Sino-Indian border, its funding for Indian separatist groups, the undermining of Indian infrastructure projects, its bilateral treaty and alliance with Pakistan, the development of missiles and additional technology to counter India's aerospace and nuclear programs, and its 'suppression' of Indian policy in multilateral organizations such as the G20, and the UN. India is walking a tightrope to simultaneously neutralize its relations with the PRC, whilst enabling it to achieve its full potential as a regional and world power, free from many of the issues currently inflicted directly or indirectly by Chinese influence and its government's policies.

#### POLICY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA:

Chinese media have given little to no attention to the dispute and have downplayed the clashes. In the first month of the standoff, there was only a single editorial piece in the *China Daily*. The *People's Daily* did not cover the Galwan clash. The state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) carried the official military statement on social media with no further coverage. Despite this, China has continued to pursue its agenda regarding the disputed Sino-Indian territories, upholding their importance within China's overarching infrastructure projects (such as the DSDBO Road project), whilst simultaneously aiming to reach

resolutions between both parties. For instance, the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (a mechanism established in 2012 to deal with such border disputes and skirmishes) held 8 rounds of diplomatic talks over a one year period between June of 2020, and June of 2021. A specific meeting between the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the Indian Army on July 31<sup>st</sup> caused controversy within China, relating to the location of the meeting, which was initially disclosed as being the town of Moldo on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control, but in a statement released by India, it was instead stated to be Chushul-Moldo on the Indian side. Within China, this has simply led to mistrust regarding the Indian media and press, which has in turn become a new fighting ground for both sides amidst their current disputes. The central government, along with numerous entities such as the Publicity Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, have utilized the media, journalism, and paid publicity as a means to proliferate an overwhelmingly pro-China stance, and to engulf the people of these disputed territories such as Ladakh within this cultivated Chinese persona.

#### 4. PREVIOUS ACTIONS/STATEMENTS BY THE UNITED NATIONS:

On May 27, 2020, Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the Secretary-General, stated that any mediation of the conflict should be “decided [by] the parties involved” and that “we would urge all parties involved to avoid any action that would make the situation even more tense.”

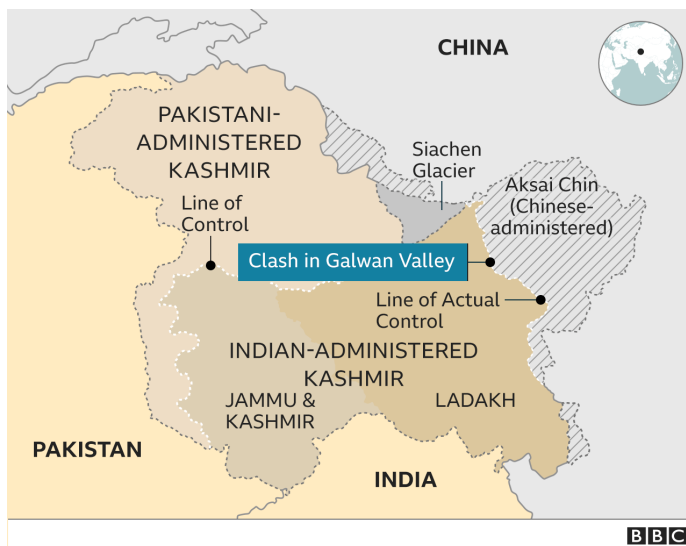
Following a military conflict on June 15, 2020 at the Indo-China border, the United Nations delivered a statement urging “maximum restraint.” “We are concerned about reports of violence and deaths at the Line of Actual Control between India and China,” Eri Kaneko, a U.N. spokesperson, remarked.

Following a military conflict on January 20, 2021 in Naku La, North Sikkim, the spokesperson for the Secretary General, Stephane Dujarric remarked, “We hope that, through dialogue, the tensions that may exist along the border could be dialed down.” (The Indian Express)

## 5. ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the Indo-China border contested?
2. What is the significance of the region contested and countries involved?
3. What were the outcomes of the 1962 Sino-Indian War and 1913/14 Simla Convention?
4. What is your country's position on the Sino-Indian border dispute?
5. What implications could this dispute have on 21<sup>st</sup> century World Order?

## ADDITIONAL IMAGES:





Galwan Valley.

Credit: Planet Labs, Inc.

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