

Box 3.11.1 UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

In 2009, the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) continued to monitor a very intense and fragile situation in Kashmir. With instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Kashmir remains at risk of conflict. The intensified military operations in Jammu and Kashmir following the Mumbai attacks in November 2008 continued in the first two months of 2009 and aimed to disrupt the haven for the militant group Lahar-e-Toiba who perpetrated the attacks.

UNMOGIP was deployed by the Karachi Agreement of 27 July 1949 to supervise the cease-fire in Kashmir between India and Pakistan; however, compromise over the mission's mandate negated any operational role. Significant revisions to the mission have not occurred since 1949 and it continues to monitor the line of control. In 1972, India and Pakistan signed the Simla Agreement, which established the line of control separating the two armies. Increased prospects of nuclear confrontation in 2003 influenced a positive turn in political relations in January 2004, when an agreement was reached to commence a bilateral "composite dialogue" on a range of issues, including Jammu-Kashmir. As a result of confidence-building measures,

a mini-summit was initiated in April 2005 to discuss the fate of Jammu-Kashmir. Pakistan proposed a four-point plan for resolution of the disputed areas in December 2006; however, talks in 2007 were stalled by internal political turmoil in Pakistan. Pakistan attempted to take up the issue again in 2008, but talks were disrupted by terrorist bombings in Mumbai by Pakistani extremists.

The year 2009 saw increased tensions and various violations of the 2003 India-Pakistan cease-fire agreement, with instances of Pakistani border troops opening fire on their Indian counterparts. However, India came under increased pressure, particularly from the United States, to withdraw troops from its side of the line of control, while Pakistan cited a need to draw down and divert its troops in order to battle the Taliban elsewhere. In February 2009, Major-General Kim Moon Hwa, chief military observer for UNMOGIP, met with Pakistan's acting permanent representative, Farukh Amil, who reaffirmed Pakistan's support for and cooperation with UNMOGIP in promoting confidence-building and maintaining peace and stability in Jammu and Kashmir. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Pakistan that

same month to observe the signing of a comprehensive program between the UN Country Team and the Pakistani government to address poverty reduction, rural development, job creation, education, health, and the environment.

On 16 June 2009, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India and President Asif Ali Zardari held their first face-to-face meeting in Russia since the attacks in Mumbai, yet little substantive progress on the Kashmir question resulted. Dialogue was stunted again in September as India called for Pakistan to take a harder line on domestic terrorism. India adjusted its preconditions for talks, and during a meeting in the Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on 28 October 2009, Prime Minister Singh indicated willingness to engage with the parties to find meaningful and sustainable routes to peace. He claimed that the era of violence had come to an end in Kashmir and that people were ready for peace. The security situation remained stable throughout the rest of 2009, but limited progress toward a viable solution leaves the peace process ever-vulnerable to opportunistic extremists, as demonstrated in years past.