

# GLOBAL.

NEWSLETTER

OUR WORLD IS COMPLICATED. YOUR NEWS SHOUDL'NT BE.

*Cultural Warfare is rising in our splitting world.*





## Nº3.

*This week on the GLOBAL. Newsletter there are many discussions on conflicts in majorly diverse regions over our GLOBE. From Western Sahara, Gaza, Kashmir, Bosnia, and the DRC, our world has grown more diverse but also more tense and isolationist. This movement has fueled cultural and ethnic hatred to spread into violent storms that sometimes lead to all out genocides. These conflicts present our GLOBE. with new challenges that have not been properly deliberated on yet.*

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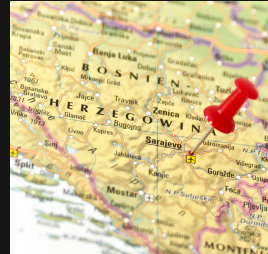
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# AFRICA'S MOST TUMULTUOUS REGION

BY: AUSTIN WALLACE



This past week, M23 rebels approached the Congolese city of Goma, seeking to destroy and capture valuable assets and resources from the weakened government centered in Kinshasa. (BBC, 2024). The ongoing ethnic violence in Eastern Congo has long extended to neighboring countries Rwanda and Burundi, becoming the scene of some of the most horrendous human rights violations on record. The story of how a region so resource-rich and culturally dense became the center of geopolitical humanitarian intervention and violence is one fraught with colonialism and Belgian aspiration to divide and reconstruct the people of the region into a Euro-centric perspective. (Dembour, 2001).

Before Belgian colonialism in the late 19th century, the Congo basin was a region controlled by various African kingdoms and tribes that fought over its various resources and agricultural zones. These kingdoms were often wealthy and locally notorious for their gold and military tactics; besides this, very little is still known of the various African kingdoms of the Congo basin. With the arrival of the Belgians in the late 19th century, much of the historical artifacts and culture were destroyed. (Dembour, 2001).

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*Belgium was much smaller than its other European colonial counterparts, yet it was given hold over Ruanda-Urundi and the Congo, the most significant singular colonial region in Central Africa. With a lack of resources and military capability, Belgium and King Leopold I came to determine that a racial and ethnic breakdown and mass fear campaign were necessary to keep the local people in line with Belgian policy. Under King Leopold's control of the region known as the Congo Free State, brutal tactics of segregation, forced labor, and mass mutilation were widespread. He and his government would break the Congolese, Rwandan, and Burundian peoples into Tutsi and Hutu categories. Those that did not fit were enslaved or mutilated, often by removing limbs.*





The Belgians considered the Tutsi superior to the Hutus and would utilize this to create a lack of unification between these peoples. These categories and ethnic groups existed significantly before Belgian colonial control but were manipulated to form a social hierarchy. The Hutus were placed as the lowest class forced to be extra labor and obey the Tutsi and Belgian Colonial Administration. Even after the Belgian complete takeover following the end of the Congo Free State, this colonial policy continued. It is estimated that this policy of ethnic classification and mutilation would result in the single worst European genocide against an African group. Numbers vary but range from 800,000 to 4 million; this variation is due to the Belgians often disposing of the bodies via fire or simply leaving them to die in the forests making recognition difficult. (Haskin, 2010).

This Belgian policy would last until the decolonization of the Congo in 1960; Rwanda and Burundi would leave soon after. The Congo, then Zaire in 1960, would become a new nation amidst turmoil on the continent. For these former Belgian colonies, the next 60 years would be met by political turmoil, genocide, and numerous wars. The worst of the violence occurred in the mid to late 90s. Two Congo wars, the Rwandan and Burundian Genocides, and the Rwandan and Burundian wars would occur, killing an estimated 3-7 million between them. This violence was often due to ethnic tensions that had been building since decolonization from Belgium and revolved predominately within the Tutsi and Hutu lens. The UN and other international organizations would struggle to control these unheard-of conflicts. International attention would never truly reach these conflicts until too late, and even today; most nations have reduced the region to "just another African conflict." (Forges, 1999). These issues in international support and ethnic complications have meant that these three nations have never been able to transcend their past. Belgium has started to work with these countries to repair the damage done, but for many, it is long overdue.

The future of the Congo Basin lies in the hands of new democratically elected leaders, the UN, and Belgium. Despite this, the situation is seemingly growing in insecurity. Issues with Rwanda's border with the DRC and the growth of ethnic rebel groups in Kivu have meant that the fragile region is once again heading toward a dangerous path. This resource-dense region's future has also come under mass international attention from China and Russia, who seek to carve it up for its resources, much as Belgium did 150 years ago. This pattern of history seems desperately destined to repeat itself. This leaves the Congo basin in one of the worst positions globally and brings to question what can be done for Africa's most tumultuous region. This question is yet to be answered (BBC, 2024). Civil Society groups in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC are trying new tactics on their democracies, but as of this moment, with violence erupting in the DRC, the future is very uncertain, and worst yet, it appears to repeat itself. (Reuters, 2022)

# A FAILURE OF TWO SYSTEMS

BY: AUSTIN WALLACE

On April 6th, 1992, the world would witness the start of one of the most complex and destructive conflicts in recent memory. In the small country of Bosnia, a war (and later internal ethnic conflict) would break out between former Yugoslav states and the still-collapsing Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It would kill around 100,000 people and would shock the Western World into creating a massive international NATO campaign to stop the violence (HRW, 1995).

On top of this was the UN Mission in Bosnia at the time. From 1992 to 1995, UNPROFOR was the protection force that the UN set up to assist in de-escalating hostilities. (UN, 2003, HRW, 1995). Following the war's end, UNMIBH was created to oversee the reconstruction and stable rebuild of the government. Neither UN system would succeed in stopping the Bosnian crisis, War, and later Genocide from devastating the entire region (Daalder, 1998). By 2002, UNMIBH would be concluded, and many countries worldwide would lose respect for the UN in the coming years. To make the situation worse for the UN, UNAMIR in Rwanda was dealing with at the same time, the Rwandan Genocide, which, similarly to the Bosnian Genocide, would end in a UN failure and massive tarnish to its record of peacekeeping and humanitarianism (Ahmad, 1998).



The UN, from the very beginning of the conflict in Bosnia, was warned of the volatile nature of the ethnic violence (Zekri, 2016). The Security Council ignored most of these issues and sent many soldiers and peacekeepers unarmed and without proper background checks. Leading to internal situations such as Kathryn Bolkovac's massive whistleblowing case on UN contracted peacekeepers raping, assaulting, and tracking women in Bosnia (WP, 1999). Externally, the UN failed to stop the Srebrenica massacre during the War and would not succeed in stopping the massive landmine campaign that would kill thousands (Zekri, 2016). To understand the issues and reasons the UN mission did not succeed, you must first look at its motivations and history.

The UN was amidst massive financial issues, multiple global crises, and a substantial humanitarian downfall in Rwanda, so operations in Bosnia were compromised by limited resources to start (WP, 1999, AP, 2023). One of the most prominent criticisms was the UN's lack of willingness to engage formally, as it meant directly involving them in the conflict and potentially causing it to violate its neutral position. "The cardinal lesson of Srebrenica," the report, "is that a deliberate and systematic attempt to terrorize, expel or murder an entire people must be met decisively with all necessary means." (NY Times, 1999). This lack of commitment would be the most significant accusation against the UN in Bosnia. The UN struggled to protect Srebrenica, Zepa, Bihać, Sarajevo, and numerous more cities (NY Times, 1999). "When the international community makes a solemn promise to safeguard and protect innocent civilians from ... then it must be willing to back its promise with the necessary means." (NYT, 1999). This promise would not be fulfilled until the final stages of the conflict, in which thousands would lose their lives before the Security Council and other NATO forces would substantially create a plan to end the mass murders (Brookings, 1998).

After the failure of UNPROFOR in the mid-90s to protect the people in Srebrenica and other cities in Bosnia and Serbia, the USA and NATO began to implement aspects of the "endgame" strategy, which sought to end the conflict in Bosnia and finally bring in the humanitarian aid needed with the UN and ICRC (Brookings, 1998). NATO and a combined effort with the later UNMIBH would finally end the conflict and bring relative peace to the region. Violence would continue well into the early 2000s, and the inability of the UN to react and defend and the general lack of will due to Security Council blockage later plagued the region with economic and social issues (Zekri, 2016). Whether its internal mishandling and potential cover-up of UN forces, lack of enforcement power, immovable Security Council, or inability to pressure forces in Bosnia to stop fighting were all the collective reasons it failed to stop the massacres, it is essential to remember that the UN was heavily underfunded and overstretched in the 90s resulting in its hesitancy and lack of quick response. It is also at the mercy of its member states, who deliberated for so long about the war that the situation on the ground got out of hand by the mid-90s (Kidwai, 2002, AP, 2023).

The UN, as is the common criticism of the organization, requires a significant overhaul of its peacekeeping and Security Council division. Due to its failures in Rwanda, Bosnia, Libya, DRC, Mali, Haiti, Burundi, and more, the UN has slowly lost its prestige and international standing globally. Struggles in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti, West Africa, and Myanmar have also shown that the UN has been heavily weakened in recent years. Whether or not the UN is to blame for the issues in stopping violence, it is clear the organization needs to adapt to the rapidly changing conflicts of today in order to stop another Bosnia or Rwanda from happening in the near future. Change is the apparent way forward for the tired organization, and the member states of the world need to support its mending into a more enforceable organization on top of its already successful food, medical, and development divisions. The future of the UN and its many friends like the ICRC/IFRC and Doctors Without Borders are constantly in question, creating an uncertain future for global humanitarianism.





# THE UNHEARD OF DESERT WAR

BY: AUSTIN WALLACE AND  
TAYLOR WALLACE



The Sahara is one of the most brutal and inhospitable places on Earth. Its environment is extremely warm and cold, barren from water, and enormous. It makes for a difficult place for humanity and civilizations to thrive. Amongst this labyrinth of humane existence is the Western Sahara. A strip of land on West Africa's coast that is almost entirely barren. The region experiences droughts regularly, horrific desert storms, and mass agricultural struggles. It is a complex region in which to survive in (NewScientist, 2024).

Pre-colonial rule in Western Sahara is relatively scarce in terms of detailed knowledge. Tribal groups such as the Gaetuli, Balfour, and Serer were thought to inhabit the area. However, for most of the region's history, it was under the occupation of large and powerful Arabic and Muslim empires such as Morocco and the Umayyad Caliphate, and the Ottomans even claimed it. It was not until colonial rule that outside interest in the region began to spark. It was strategically placed in an area facing the "new world" meaning the Spanish from the early 18th century had intensified interest in its use as a slave port (HRW, 2024). These plans never grew to fruition until the period known as the Scramble for Africa.



As European interest in Africa exploded, so did the power and significance of its means, people, and resources. Spain saw the region as a trade path and a valuable position for its new stage of empire. This mistake would soon be followed by a lackluster rule of a colonial region that did not profit Spain. In the shadow of France's grand West African empire, Spain's colonial rule in Western Sahara appeared underwhelming. As Spanish instability grew during the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, the region of Western Sahara began to unravel. Local leaders and rulers of Arabic and Islamic backgrounds preferred independence and reintegration with Morocco or neighboring states. However, Franco (Spanish Fascist Dictator) believed this was not to be allowed and that Spain would defy decolonization. This defiance lasted until his death and the collapse of his regime. Following a brief period of conflict between Spain, the local Polisario Front, Morocco, and Mauritania, the UN and other bodies pressured Spain to give up the land officially (Reuters, 2023; Forbes, 2024).

The Green March in 1975, Franco's Death, and Morocco and Mauritania moving troops to fend off the Polisario Front and establish control meant Western Sahara had entered its modern status. Today, Western Sahara is divided by claims. Morocco has built a giant sand wall designed to prevent the Polisario Front from advancing and achieving a Sahrawi nationalist state of their own. With tensions with Mauritania and now Algeria mounting against this, the situation has grown unsettlingly violent, with the UN mission MINURSO having to send troops regularly to monitor the borders and towns. Since the mid-90s, UN and international attention on the region has waned (HRW, 2024). James Baker, a UN envoy, attempted to settle the problem in the early 2000s (UN, 2024). While well thought out and potentially viable, his plan did not agree with Moroccan or Polisario desires.

Western Sahara is a war-torn, ideological split, endlessly claimed desert in West Africa. It is surrounded by unstable nations, violent aggressors, and an internally violent conflict for recognition and true independence. The Sahrawi, Moroccan, Mauritanian, and various other groups that live in this region have no international recognition, no free home, and, at this point, no peace for the foreseeable future (UN, 2024). As the UN desperately continues looking for new peace agreements, most of the world has started to recognize Morocco's claims, such as the US, Israel, and now Spain (Reuters, 2023). The Spanish government says it is the "most serious, realistic, and credible basis for resolving the dispute." (Espana, 2022). The future of this desert region is unknown, but judging by current trends, Morocco's sovereignty appears to be in that future, and whether the people will ever gain independence seems to be a dying dream from a bygone past.





# KASHMIR'S FUTURE

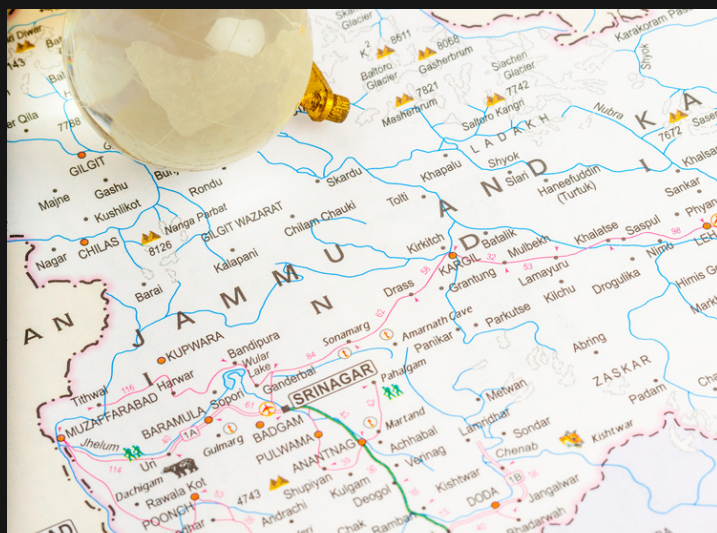
*BY: AUSTIN WALLACE*

Very few regions on earth have been so defiantly split and cut into unrecognizable pieces as British India was after the partition. One of these regions is the now controversial and divided Kashmir in Northern India/Pakistan. It has been claimed by China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India and technically under the control of the UNMOGIP since 1949. It was a region divided under colonial rule, and now, it is even in its "freedom." It is an example of one of decolonization's significant failings. The lack of foresight into cultural and geopolitical instability that thrusting many cultures into a small, unrecognized region could do to the local population was a devastating oversight.

Since the fall of the British Raj and the independence of the Muslim-led Pakistan and Hindi-led India, Kashmir has been a region at the forefront of both nations' supremacy over one another. Throughout much of the 20th century, Kashmir was destabilized by conflict. From the Indo-Pakistani wars to terrorist insurgency and even armed occupation, this small region has played out the geopolitics of the region and has been a symbol of the more significant issues of the area.



These issues were exemplified in the late 80s when "A virtual insurrection among Kashmiri Muslims in the Valley, and in Srinagar, the largest city in the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir-created a serious crisis between New Delhi and Islamabad." (Brookings, 1995). This significant upsurge in violence was against the ruling Indian government, which had control of the region since the 40s. As violence spread, it began to strengthen tensions in the area, causing a significant split in international support and national mood towards the people of Kashmir. For India, it was maintaining superiority; for Pakistan, it was for taking what was "theirs"; and for Afghanistan and China, it was to destabilize the region further and take valuable resources. For none of these nations did the peoples' security and well-being come to mind when violence erupted in that fateful year in 1989 (Brookings, 1995, AP, 2024). The tensions in the region had run so high that threats of nuclear war were often on the horizon. "In a refinement of the scenario, it has been argued that even the suspicion of escalation might lead to a nuclear strike, presumably by the weaker or more vulnerable of the two countries (in this case, Pakistan) since it would not want to risk having its small nuclear forces destroyed in an Indian preemptive attack." (Brookings, 1995). This fear of nuclear escalation was carried out throughout the 90s and early 2000s but never came to fruition. In reality, the region has cost thousands of lives, and the UN mission has had to maintain a delicate balance. "UNMOGIP has remained in the area to observe developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of 17 December 1971 and report thereon to the Secretary-General." (UN, 2024). However, this ceasefire, the diplomatic negotiations since then, and all the region's violence have gone relatively unchecked. Neither Pakistan nor India is seemingly slowing their support for the area under their supremacy and continues to fund and send troops to skirmish and threaten stability.



In the last couple of years, the area has seen a significant resurgence in violence. This is likely due to "... Modi's Hindu-nationalist-led government revoked the region's semi-autonomous status, annulled its separate constitution, split the area into two federal territories – Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir – and removed inherited protections on land and jobs. The Muslim-majority region is now run by unelected government officials and bureaucrats." (AP, 2024). This move in 2019 caused a massive surge in tensions with Pakistan, which accused India of occupying the region illegally and holding Muslims hostage under this regime. Modi and India believe they are simply protecting their people from outside dangers. Neither side is currently discussing this issue (UN, 2024). Prime Minister Modi recently visited Kashmir and discussed the grand projects and developments India was bringing to the region (AP, Al Jazeera, 2024). In his eyes, he is bringing prosperity to a region destroyed by conflict. While many nations have supported this move, the UN and various other bodies wonder what cost this development is worth (UN, 2024). India's regional policy change has also allowed China to take a new role in the claims conflict. "But last year's abolition of Article 370, the guarantee of Kashmir's quasi-autonomy, has allowed an old player to take a stronger role: China." (FP, 2020). With so many active participants in this conflict, many wonder where the future lies. As of today, India holds onto the region firmly. Pakistan is losing its supremacy daily, especially as China grows more powerful. Afghanistan has not renewed any claims due to the Taliban's takeover, and former colonial owner Great Britain long gave up any claim to the region, "...with Britain washing its hands of the issue as soon as it could." (FP, 2020).

Kashmir is a relic of a broken colonial era of splitting cultural zones via arbitrary lines that were only exacerbated by abrupt decolonization. India and Pakistan's battle for the region has been relentless, never allowing for development and growth, and China's recent interest means peace is not on the horizon. For over 80 years, Kashmir has been a region at war with itself, at war with identity, and at war with its claimers.

# GAZA'S CEASEFIRE

## THE WORLD'S CRISIS



The Middle East is a region often plagued by turmoil and destruction. It has become infamous for conflict and widespread democratic backsliding. Its highly diverse ethnic and religious groupings were rearranged and destroyed by colonization in the early 20th century, resulting in widespread identity crises. The resulting wars and conflict during decolonization have meant many of the people of the region have fallen victim to cult dictators, extremist groups, and violent external occupiers and invaders. One region in particular exemplifies this modern pain and suffering. That region is the UN unrecognized state of Palestine and its territory of Gaza.

This region has been in a now infamous scene of violence and suffering in the past several weeks. On October 7th, 2023, the Hamas militant group led attacks on Israel, killing an estimated 1000 people on immediate strike and carried out mass abductions of Israeli citizens (UN, CNN, 2024). From this moment forward, the future of the region was determined by a new war between Israel and Hamas over the supremacy of the region. Both sides seek to bring their version of peace and control to Gaza, but regardless, both cost thousands of lives.

In order to facilitate the interactions of this new war, the UN has been placed at the center of the diplomatic discussion occurring on this front. "Following several failed attempts over five months of Israel's devastating war in Gaza, the United Nations Security Council on Monday finally passed a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire. The United States, which had been the only remaining hurdle to such a call, decided not to strike down the resolution." (CNN, 2024). This move by the US to not prevent a ceasefire bill from going through has been hailed as a breakthrough in the process of peace. Israel, however, fervently disagrees. "This was rejected by Israel, though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reportedly agreed to further talks. More importantly, the military offensive by Tel Aviv continues unabated, and the US is reported to have authorized the transfer of more arms and ammunition to Israel." (SCMP, 2024). This is a catastrophic problem in the peace talks. Israel's unwillingness to accept the UN resolution is based severely on disagreements over the return of its hostages and the destruction of Hamas, which it sees as a threat to its national survival. Due to this, talks between the US, Egypt, Qatar, Hamas, and Israel are due to continue shortly in order to prevent further breakdown of the situation and avoid an all-out war in Rafah (UN, 2024).



At this point, the conflict is still headed towards a dangerous future. Gaza is nearing a total famine, one of the worst on Earth (UN, 2024). Israel has lost many lives in the war, both civilian and military, and has lost enormous international support. Palestine's future as a state appears even further away, and as nearly 32,000 people have died in the conflict, devastation is rampant in Gaza (CNN, 2024). Hamas appears to be dying overall; its ability to fight has been severely weakened by successive Israeli attacks (Al Jazeera, 2024). These continuous situations show that on every front of this conflict is suffering. The situation is embedded in so much post-colonial ethnic and religious pain that the future for stability and peace in the Middle East has never looked more uncertain. As the UN/USA/EU desperately tries to get food and other resources through ports they are constructing or through airlifts, many populations worldwide have pressured their governments to do more or back away and stop supporting either side.

Whether or not the British and later UN officials in the 1930s and 40s knew that the future they had set out was destined to reach a disaster of death and humanitarian fallout is unclear, but the legacy of those decisions continues to damage Palestine's future. This has resulted in a region reaching critical levels of humanitarian disaster and dwindling hope for peace.





*Next Week*

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HONG KONG'S FREEDOM,

HIV CURE?,

ICRC?,

LAGOS,

AND THE REBIRTH OF EMPIRE

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