In 1947, India and Pakistan gained their independence from Great Britain, and both new countries shared a common objective; obtaining control of the land adjacent to both countries known as Kashmir. Eventually, Pakistani raiders invaded Kashmir, provoking Kashmir’s leader, Maharaja Hari Singh, to accept India’s treaty to control most of Kashmir. The fighting between India and Pakistan over the disputed land continued until the United Nations intervened, making Kashmir a ceasefire zone. Although Kashmir was recognized as such, India and Pakistan continued fighting. This, in turn, lead to uncertainties on both sides, as to whether the opposing side was returning fire, or continuing their advance on Kashmir.

 In May 1998, India tested nuclear devices, which provoked Pakistan to start testing of a similar nature. “In the months following the tests, an upsurge in shelling and shooting by Indian and Pakistani troops stationed along the cease-fire line in Kashmir left over one hundred civilians dead.” (Human Rights Watch, 3). India’s nuclear testing caused Pakistan to assume that India is preparing for nuclear war. This misperception led to military escalations on both sides, and ultimately to more conflicts, which persist to this day. If they continue to be unobservant of the United Nations sanctioned ceasefire , it could lead to the use of  nuclear weapons on both sides, potentially starting WWIII.

The conflict between India and Pakistan has escalated through each sides attempt to control  Kashmir. Because of this amplification, overcoming this problem will require the assistance of  a third party unlike the United Nations, who only made the situation worse for Kashmir. An impartial third party, with adequate power as to enforce sanctions met, will need to hold negotiations. In order to reduce potential casualties from Indian and Pakistani agressions, this group would also have to be able to give full protection to the people of Kashmir during this time. The governments of India and Pakistan would need to remove their militaries from the disputed border. This way, an agreement could potentially be met, and give Kashmir a chance to express their opinion on the matter before even further escalation occurs. The leaders of India and Pakistan need to find it in themselves to consider the possibility of diplomacy, rather than violence. Their people, as well as the leaders themselves can reevaluate how they treat each other, as well as their actions towards Kashmir. Kashmir is not a trophy of a long and gruesome battle, but an independent state, with no intention of entering the violence, and simply want to live peacefully. Due to the stubbornness of the India and Pakistani governments, stemming from their deeply rooted religious and social divides, outside military force may be required to solve this pressing issue. The governments of India and Pakistan seem to be only interested in their own personal agendas, rather than listening to the peoples’ needs, and putting their differences aside, to reach a much more preferable optional of diplomacy.