

27. Present (inter)national conflicts in Asia

Israel vs. Palestina

Both Israeli *Jews and Arabs* (Palestinians) claim this region to be their own. Officially, Israel is an independent state with large support of the USA. But lot of individuals and groups advocate total territorial removal of the other community. Another opinions advocate a two-state solution and other a binational solution of a single secular state encompassing present-day Israel, the Gaza strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Iraq

Well-known conflict between the Allies and Saddam Hussein's army. USA and UK liberated the country's people from the oppression of Hussein's rule. Probably the reason was:

- to free the people from the Hussein's oppression
- to catch Hussein as a contributor to increasing world's terrorist threat
- to find Osama bin Laden (leader of Al-Kaida terrorist group)
- to get closer to the sources of huge oil reserves in Caspian Sea (Azerbaijan)

Afghanistan

Official cause of this war was to find Osama bin Laden to respond the terrorist attack from the 11th of September, 2001 and to free Afghani people from the oppression of Taliban movement (extreme ideology derived from Islam). Women were oppressed a lot, e.g. wearing a burka – traditional robe, that covered them from head to toe. But bin Laden hasn't been found yet.

Jammu and Kashmir

Both India and Pakistan claim Kashmir as their own territory. Problem = Pakistan (Muslim) people living in "official" Indian area => conflict that has resulted in regional threat of nuclear war (but only to scare/warn the other side).

North Korea vs. South Korea

North Korea = harsh country, communist government => long (economic and social) isolation. Collective farming. No trade with outer world.

GDP/capita: 1,700 USD (2004)

South Korea = democratic government, knowledge-based economy, well-educated workforce.

GDP/capita: 19,200 USD (2004)

1950-1953: Korean war = lot of refugees, devastated cities and factories.

Demilitarized zone = the most heavily armed border in the world.

Caucasus mountains

35-40 ethnics (>1000 inh.) => *melting pot* => every small conflict could increase into large war. These countries belonged to former USSR => *conflicts with local ethnics and Russian, communist rule (supremacy).*

Georgia

Abchasia (Suchumi surroundings) = war for independence (oil)

South Osetia => civil war

Big influence of "local" mafia (criminal and political)

Azerbaijan

Nagorno-Karabkh = Armenian population living in Azerbaijan area => conflict between Muslims and old Armenian Christians.