

## V The Contribution of Confidence-Building Measures

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### Confidence-Building

Throughout the ages, and especially during the recent Cold War, nations have wanted to be able to assess the prospects that their security would be endangered by the military power of other states. After collecting whatever intelligence they could, it was usual to evaluate the potential dangers by estimating the military capabilities of likely enemies, and also to appraise their intentions regarding the aggressive employment of these capabilities. For the short term, it was especially necessary to estimate present capabilities, which are unlikely to change very quickly. But intentions can change quickly, and attention had to be paid to the possibility of a surprise attack. For the longer term, forecasts were needed of what both capabilities and intentions would likely be in future years.

*Arms control* has been directed toward limitation of military capabilities. The parties to an agreement to limit armaments and not proliferate them will wish to be assured that the other parties comply with their undertakings, and for this purpose they will demand provisions for verification. To an increasing extent in recent years, arms control has been introduced through negotiated treaties, containing detailed provisions for verification.

Verification deals with military capabilities. It may not be possible to verify intentions, although a verified adherence to the conditions of an arms control treaty, especially if these involve substantial reductions in capabilities, provides an indication of the absence of aggressive intentions. Conversely, if verification reveals a build-up or repositioning of forces in a manner consistent with preparations for an attack, suspicion of aggressive intention will be heightened. Thus, while verification is aimed at the assessment of capabilities, it can make a contribution to the assessment of intentions.

*Confidence-building measures* are primarily directed toward the establishment of confidence in the benign intentions, rather than the military

capabilities of states. The agreements tend to be politically rather than legally binding on the participating states. There may or may not be an element of verification of the steps agreed, but usually it will be more difficult to obtain convincing evidence of non-compliance with CBMs than with the undertakings agreed in a treaty to limit the numbers of arms.

As will be discussed in more detail in connection with confidence-building in Europe, another difference between arms control and confidence-building measures is that the former tends to concentrate on military structures, including weapons, while the latter is more often directed toward activities. Both are directed toward aspects of *threat perception*.

Two key factors that determine the potential usefulness of CBMs as stabilizing elements in an unstable area are the timing of their introduction and their applicability to the particular circumstances. When hostilities are proceeding or relationships are otherwise combative rather than co-operative, it will be peace operations that are required. There will be little opportunity for confidence-building until the parties are willing to offer some measure of co-operation. Given co-operation, the CBMs must address the security concerns considered to be the most vital by the participants.

In the case of India and Pakistan, active hostilities broke out in 1947, 1965 and 1971. UN observer missions were sent to the border areas in 1949 and 1965.<sup>1</sup> Sporadic violence short of war continued in Kashmir through 1990. But since then India and Pakistan have undertaken some confidence-building measures regarding the avoidance of attacks on nuclear installations, prevention of airspace violations, and notifications of military exercises and troop movements in border areas.

When relations are friendly and co-operative, in other words when confidence is probably justified, CBMs can indeed help in building it up. The measures may include voluntary

<sup>1</sup> UNMOGIP has been in Kashmir since 1949. Deployed in 1965, UNIPOM was withdrawn in 1966.

