

systematically that these factors make a difference in outcomes, although there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that they do, especially in creating misunderstandings or roadblocks to progress.¹²

On closer scrutiny, however, there are some points where these kinds of issues matter more. In particular, many scholars argue that in addition to affecting processual and stylistic elements, cultural factors in negotiation are more important when negotiators are lower-level rather than senior officials, and when negotiations are direct and bilateral rather than multilateral.¹³ International negotiators may be in some sense "expatriates," but it is important to note that today "fewer international negotiations are carried out by diplomats residing abroad; more international agreements are negotiated by experts coming from the respective capitals."¹⁴ In addition, rapid communication with capitals may mean diplomats in face-to-face negotiations are more constrained than in the past, and have fewer opportunities to smooth out the cross-cultural frictions that can emerge in a reciprocal negotiation conducted anonymously between capitals. This, coupled with the dramatic increase in the number of lower-level contacts between officials concerned with security policy (whether these are inspection visits for the verification of arms control treaties, joint operations in a multinational force, participation in training courses, or conferences of experts), multiplies the opportunities for cultural elements to surface in security-building dialogues.

This has some obvious implications for efforts to advance the NACD agenda in various regions. As Gabriel Ben-Dor notes in his case study of the Middle East (and he is echoed by Ahmed Fakhr): in the absence of the most important precondition (a decision that it is in one's interest to join a particular process and achieve a positive result), the cultural factors that might be associated with the *process* of achieving that outcome are irrelevant. If, however, there is a base commitment to a negotiated, positive-sum, solution, it might be hugely important that negotiations are conducted at the highest levels possible, that they not be exclusively bilateral (or be somehow nested within a multilateral process), and that participants are conscious of the role these cultural factors might play. Ben-Dor also points out that there are, in fact, many examples in the Arab-Israeli relationship where bilateral discussions were conducted at low levels, after a basic decision to make progress had been reached, and that these have been repeatedly frustrated, in part because of a lack of awareness of these issues. By contrast, the apparent Asian penchant to focus on process as opposed to outcomes, might actually facilitate the achievement of specific bilateral (or even multilateral) security-building efforts over the longer term.

Influences Derived from Domestic Political Culture

The impact of cultural influences that have their roots in domestic political cultures is perhaps the most important aspect of the cross-cultural dimensions of the security-building agenda. All contributors could

¹² Several examples are offered Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures* (Washington: United States Institute for Peace, 1991); Michael Blaker, "Probe, Push and Panic: The Japanese Tactical Style in International Negotiations," in Robert Scalapino, ed., *The Foreign Policy of Modern Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 55-101; and Glen Fisher, *International Negotiation: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Chicago: Intercultural Press, 1980).

¹³ See Gabriel Ben-Dor, "Regional Culture and the NACD in the Middle East," 157.

¹⁴ Winfried Lang, "A Professional's View," in Guy Olivier Faure and Jeffrey Rubin, *Culture and Negotiation* (London: Sage, 1993), 40.