

sive Eastern understanding of Confidence Building ("everything counts") and a much more specific, predominantly Western conception. This Western version, according to Bomsdorf, views

"confidence building measures as a specific concept of security policy and arms control. In this context it relates to a specific threat to a country's security and is an attempt to eliminate or alleviate this threat by means of appropriate measures. Confidence here means confidence in the absence of certain threats posed by the other side, so it is confidence in a specific situation. Confidence-building measures as here understood are intended to give the other side circumstantial evidence indicating that the threat it fears or that a genuine threat has been either reduced or eliminated. Confidence, or trust, between nations is thus not the foremost objective of this concept. Advocates of this school of thought work more on the assumption, ... that fundamental mistrust, especially of the East by the West and vice versa, cannot be eliminated by confidence-building measures and replaced by confidence in the wider sense of the term. This mistrust must, ... be accepted as a fact and an attempt made by reaching agreement on confidence-building measures, to prevent mistrust from being heightened to the point at which it leads to open conflict."³⁷

In sharp contrast to this "Western" conception of Confidence Building is the other basic approach, an approach that is frequently associated with the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies. Here, the tendency is to equate the term Confidence-Building Measures with any gesture or undertaking that:

"in any way tends to promote mutual understanding between countries. Thus

³⁷ Falk Bomsdorf, "The Confidence-Building Offensive in the United Nations," *Aussenpolitik*, vol. 33, no. 4, p. 374.

³⁸ Ibid. Although the official Soviet approach to CBMs (as noted above) is distinctly inclined toward a very broad interpretation, the utility of some (narrow) military CBMs has also been acknowledged. There is a degree of latitude within the Warsaw Pact states with some members adopting perspectives that are rather similar, in some respects, to Western proposals.

any treaty signed, any negotiations, any talks, any encounter and any exchange of whatever kind between states is frequently understood as part of the confidence-building process and thus as part of a confidence-building measure. ... confidence-building measures are not, by this token, limited to the politico-military sector; they may also ... apply to the economic, scientific and technological, cultural and other sectors. Last but not least, declarations of political intent are also viewed as confidence-building measures ..."³⁸

Pavel Podlesnyi's characterization of CBMs illustrates this point:

"Soviet researchers distinguish between "confidence-building measures" (CBMs) in the military field and those in economic, political and scientific spheres, which may widen and consolidate the material bases for positive interstate relations. These latter CBMs may be very effective and may not be inferior to CBMs in the military field, such as the notification of military manoeuvres or the invitation of military observers. Soviet specialists also start from the assumption that, while no opportunity to promote confidence in the military sphere must be disregarded, such steps should not be undertaken instead or at the expense of measures aimed at curbing the arms race and furthering disarmament."³⁹

In the same vein but subtly different is Istvan-Farago's characterization of CBMs:

"The broad concept favored by the WTO states is reflected in a description offered by Polish experts: confidence building is a broad process which includes political, legal, military and even technological aspects. This broad notion embraces a wide range of strictly defined activities, undertakings and obligations which are designed to promote detente. In this view, the entire CSCE Final Act is an instrument which serves to develop confidence between states. ...

³⁹ Pavel Podlesnyi, "Confidence-Building as a Necessary Element of Detente," in Karl Birnbaum, *Confidence-Building in East-West Relations*, pp. 95-96.

