

Central decision makers must see that neighbours are no longer the threat they once were and act to formalize this new reality in concrete terms.

Alternatively, we can draw on a generalized definition of what confidence building measures do. This provides a more operationally-oriented appreciation of confidence building although it does *not* replace the process-oriented understanding.

- Confidence building is a variety of security management typically entailing state actions, undertaken with a *reasonable* expectation that fellow participating states do not currently have hostile intentions,
- that can be (in principle) unilateral but which are typically either bilateral or multilateral
- that attempt to reduce or eliminate misperceptions of and concerns about potentially threatening military capabilities and activities
- by providing verifiable information about and advance notification of potentially threatening military activities
- and/or by providing the opportunity for the prompt explanation or exploration of worrisome military activities
- and/or by restricting the opportunities available for the use of military forces and their equipment by adopting verifiable restrictions on the activities, deployments, or qualitative improvements of those forces (or crucial components of them), frequently within sensitive areas near the borders of neighbours.

Together, these two definitions provide a general sense of the process of confidence building as well as its operational character. However, as we move to examine confidence building and the role that it can play in managing or moderating security relationships in other regions, we may find that we need to adjust our understanding of the concept to better reflect the nature of conditions in those regions. These current ideas about confidence building, therefore, should *not* be regarded as the final word on the approach and what it involves.