

measures and a distinctive confidence building activity. This point will become more clear as we explore the transformation view of confidence building later in this review.

For the present, it is sufficient to note the need to re-examine earlier assumptions about the status of a number of international arrangements as examples of confidence building. That these modest regimes were developed in different political cultures could be very illuminating from a conceptual perspective, although this aspect was not discussed to any extent in *Confidence (and Security) Building Measures in the Arms Control Process: A Canadian Perspective*. This is a seriously under-studied dimension of security management research, one that is virtually ignored in efforts to export essentially Western ideas into new political cultural contexts. It also warrants a major research effort.

Overall, this "historical" approach was probably the least useful of the four developed in the original study, although it may become more valuable in the near future as we look at applying confidence building ideas in significantly different political cultural contexts.

The CSCE/OSCE Experience and the MBFR

The second cut at understanding confidence building in the 1985 study was the most obvious — a look at European conventional arms control negotiations explicitly intended to produce confidence building agreements. This amounted to CSCE security negotiations as well as the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) negotiations, the latter because of NATO's interest in developing CBM-like "associated measures."⁴ The CSCE/OSCE experience has provided the context for most confidence building discussions since the early 1970s and was an obvious source of insight.

The examination of specific CSCE/OSCE-related confidence building negotiations up to the point of the previous report's preparation (1984) was hardly a source of startling insights; raising more questions than it resolved. To that point, it should be recalled, there simply had not been

much real confidence building progress in Europe — or elsewhere. The analysis basically was limited to the very modest Helsinki Final Act CBMs of 1975 and the stalled MBFR negotiations. Making matters more difficult, East-West relations were particularly poor during this period and the possibility of a positive "transformation" in basic political and security perceptions — the heart of the current appreciation of confidence building — could not reasonably have been anticipated. Thus, the real nature and full potential of confidence building during this initial period was difficult to appreciate on the basis of the existing experience.

In the years since, however, the story has changed dramatically. The CSCE/OSCE's security negotiations in Stockholm and then Vienna have achieved remarkable success. They provide a rich and compelling illustration of confidence building in action. Indeed, it is perhaps *too* compelling an illustration. Despite the fact that these post-1984 negotiations constitute a valuable source of both practical and conceptual insights, the unreflective reliance on the CSCE/OSCE case as the sole exemplar of "confidence building" could be very misleading. A superficial familiarity with the CSCE/OSCE negotiating history and an over-reliance on the comprehensive 1994 Vienna Document as a menu from which to select CBM "solutions" could result in an overly operational understanding of confidence building that lacks virtually any conceptual underpinnings. That, in fact, is too often what has happened.

It is only when the CSCE/OSCE experience is filtered carefully through a process of deliberate, conceptually-oriented analysis that we can benefit fully from this extremely important practical example. The excessive attention devoted to the discussion of specific CBM proposals in the European context is probably at least partly responsible for the under-developed nature of conceptual thinking in the professional literature, both then and now. These are points that were not — and could not have been — fully appreciated in 1984.