

islands was by any definition a surprise attack undertaken by a Latin American armed force with every intention of using surprise in order to gain advantages in the military contest at hand.

A further word should perhaps be said on this issue which has been present if not central in so much of the discussion of CBMs in Latin America. In the 1982 Falklands case one is far from seeing the only Latin American or inter-American case of surprise attack. Both sides, and especially Lima, accused the other of a surprise attack in the context of the beginning of the Peru-Ecuador War of 1995.<sup>15</sup> Fifty years before Peru and Colombia launched such accusations at one another at the beginning of the Leticia conflict. At the same time such language was not absent in Bolivian and Paraguayan accounts of how the long and bloody Chaco War began. More recently, the same can be said of the El Salvador-Honduras 'Soccer War' of 1969 as well as a number of other incidents short of war in the Central American and northern South American regions from the 1940s right up to the late 1980s. As noted elsewhere Argentina planned and actually began to execute a massive surprise attack on Chile in 1978. And finally, any number of US military interventions in Latin America, and especially in the Caribbean Basin area, have been termed surprise attacks by the governments against which they were launched.

Thus it must be said that in the Falklands case as well as in a number of others in the Latin American context, it is simply false to suggest that experience with the surprise attack phenomenon is irrelevant to the region. And the matter should therefore be included when talking about confidence building at the Security Committee of the Organization of American States, at the Defence Ministerials of the Americas, and at other appropriate bilateral, sub-regional and regional forums in the hemisphere.

Returning to other outstanding issues in the Falklands post-1982 context, military ones were only part of a picture of lack of confidence between the two, or even three, sides. Others frequently were even more problematical. The most thorny was surely fishing. The Falkland Islands lie in one of the richest fishing zones of the world. At one time famed for whaling, they are now much better known for their stocks of illex squid, finfish and loligo. As maritime resources have become ever more valuable and sought after as foodstuffs in recent decades, and as stocks have been increasingly depleted in much of the world, the importance of the supply available in abundance in the Falklands has become more evident. The Falklands War of 1982 was most assuredly not about fish but it is important to realise that since that war, the importance of fishing in those waters has become more obvious to Argentina, Britain and to the Falklanders themselves.

By 1987, an important part of the Falkland Islands gross income came from the granting of licences to international fishermen anxious to exploit the maritime areas around the islands.<sup>16</sup> Soon

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<sup>15</sup> This is elaborated upon in much greater detail in this author's *Confidence Building Sidestepped: the Peru-Ecuador Conflict of 1995* (Toronto: York University, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> The figure for 1987 was just under £20 million. For 1997, it had risen to over £40 million, this for a population of just over 2,000. Falklands Government Figures.