

## **For the International Community**

The thesis that confidence building measures work best when found in a wider political context of a desire for better relations across the board is once again proved well founded here.

Surprise attack is a much more common source of concern than may be formally stated by some or all parties. This issue is worth tackling forcefully when found as it can poison much else if not dealt with in a proper fashion.

The lessons of one region where CBMs are concerned may not be transferable to others but it would be foolish to think that as a result of this there is *no* reason to look at the experience of others when attempting to find original ways to move forward in a specific conflict context.

Colonial issues are not altogether out of the way as some optimists would have us believe. And they can be highly complex and not at all fit patterns known best by the international community. Residual populations can be significant actors in these contexts especially in an international community generally paying more heed to the wishes of inhabitants. CBMs may be especially helpful here but may need some refining in order to do their work best.

The same point made under inter-American lessons learned should be repeated here. Closer economic relations are of course helpful to understanding and reduced tension in the general sense. But closer relations can also bring about more opportunities for dispute or discord. CBMs may be helpful earlier on in a context of preventive diplomacy or even just careful foreign policy design taking into account the highly emotional elements often present in shared development.

## **CONCLUSION**

One or two final thoughts may be worthwhile here. Despite the depth of emotion on the Argentine side, and the special circumstances of the islanders, this was and is a dispute between countries with the closest of ties over a long historical period. And while that history has included many negative elements in the relations of the two countries, they must still be considered in a similar cultural tradition, part of the European and Christian communities, and connected through all manner of personal, economic and other ties. Thus there was a base for common understanding which does not exist in all interstate disputes.

This author believes also that because the conduct of the war by both sides was so 'clean,' relatively speaking, in this era of just the opposite behaviour as a virtual norm in conflicts, that this also laid the groundwork for building confidence. There is little real hatred for Britain in the Argentine population, however much the issue of the Falklands is able to call up resentment. And there is certainly nothing resembling hatred for Argentina in Britain.