

- A comprehensive catalogue of confidence building measure categories — specific types of CBMs; and
- The CSCE's Vienna Document 1992 — the most detailed example of a working confidence building agreement. It shows us what a successful agreement looks like and what sort of measures it contains.

### **A General Definition of Confidence Building**

In the introduction, we looked at a brief working definition of confidence building. Although useful, it is quite limited. For instance, it does not capture any sense of how confidence building actually works. Based on the experience of the European case, a more general or abstract definition has been developed. This is a definition of the confidence building *process*, a definition that attempts to capture the underlying purpose and political dynamic associated with confidence building. It focuses on the process of change that we believe has been associated with the successful negotiation and implementation of confidence building agreements in Europe. This helps us to understand that confidence building is *not* simply a means unto itself. Instead, it is a component of a larger political process and purpose. *Disassociated from this larger process and purpose, confidence building loses much of its meaning and becomes a narrow, information-enhancing activity incapable of fundamentally altering a security relationship.*

This process-oriented definition states that

- Confidence building is primarily a psychological process
- involving the transformation of senior decision maker beliefs about
- the nature of threat posed by other states,
- primarily entailing a fundamental shift from a basic assumption of hostile intentions to one of non-hostile (but not necessarily friendly) intentions.

The key element in this process approach is the identification of *transformation* — the transformation of ideas and beliefs about the threat posed by neighbouring states. The exact character of the transformation and why leaders come to feel comfortable with new, less stark conceptions of threat remain unclear. However, it seems that subtle processes of genuine change (perhaps the result of fatigue and concern about the costs of security) are combined with dramatic acts of statesmanship.