

In order to achieve its objectives, the study is in several parts. First, there is an introduction to the dispute itself and then to the 1982 South Atlantic or Falklands War which it sparked. The aftermath and its lack of progress in conflict resolution is then briefly analysed. A look back is then given to the experience of both Argentina and the United Kingdom in the field of confidence building, not only on a bilateral basis between them but in their other relationships around their regions and the world at large. The changes in the international and two national contexts which permitted the beginning of moves towards building confidence in the late 1980s are then assessed.

The 1989 breakthrough represented by the Madrid Joint Declaration is then looked at in some detail as are the initial confidence building measures that this declaration sets in motion. There is then a rather lengthy description of the setting up of the wider CBM arrangements, which are, for our purposes, the most impressive part of this story. After an aside on the evolution of the islanders and their perceptions is given, there is a discussion on how the CBMs have actually worked and this leads us to a look at the present situation. Finally, an attempt at a conclusion is given which ends with what appear to be the main lessons learned from this case study for the bilateral UK-Argentine relationship, and the inter-American and wider international communities.

The dispute over the Falkland Islands, referred to in Spanish as the *Islas Malvinas*, is one of the oldest in all the Americas and has dogged the diplomacy of not only the United Kingdom and the Argentine Republic but at one or more times of France and Spain, Britain and Spain, and Britain and France. Even the Netherlands had at one time some claim to the islands, situated as they are along potentially important sea lanes between Europe and western South America, and before the Panama Canal opened in 1914, between eastern North America and Pacific Latin America as well.

The dispute over the islands goes back to their very first sightings by Europeans in the 16th and early 17th centuries. Even then, Englishmen, Dutchmen and Spaniards claimed to see them first. And while claims to sightings do not get one very far in international law dealing with possessions, these conflicting reports of who saw what when continue to confuse debate as to the proper ownership of the archipelago. Since then sporadic occupations of the islands by the French, British, Spanish and Argentines have for long given more or less solidity to the claims of the two key protagonists of modern times and London and Buenos Aires remain squared off on the issue right to this day.

Argentina inherited Spanish claims to the islands even after it had broken with the metropolis. And while for many years the issue was largely dormant, the Argentines had after a fashion occupied the islands in the late 1820s and early thirties and had thus reinforced their claim to them. Expelled by the actions of both the United States and then Great Britain, the Argentines had never entirely given up on making good their claims.

Periodic bouts of difficult relations could not, however, spoil the wide-ranging and complex relations between the two capitals over the long period between Argentine independence in the early 19th century and well after the Second World War. The closeness of this relationship is often hard for us to realise but the Anglo-Argentine connection was doubtless one of the deepest between an