

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Confidence Building in the Arms Control Process: A Transformation View sees conventional understandings of confidence building as incomplete and focuses on why and how developing confidence building arrangements can help to improve security relations. The transformation view shifts attention away from operational measures towards the processes associated with their development and application.

Confidence building, according to the transformation view, is a distinct activity undertaken by policy makers with the minimum intention of improving some aspects of a traditionally antagonistic security relationship through security policy coordination and cooperation. It entails the comprehensive process of exploring, negotiating, and then implementing tailored measures, including those that promote interaction, information exchange, and constraint. It also entails the development and use of both formal and informal practices and principles associated with the cooperative development of CBMs. When conditions are supportive, the confidence building process can *facilitate, focus, synchronize, amplify, and generally structure the potential for a significant positive transformation in the security relations of participating states*. Thus, the confidence building process involves more than simply the production of a confidence building agreement and definitely should not be confused with what CBMs do.

The serious pursuit of legitimate confidence building arrangements, according to the transformation view, is an activity that is particularly well-suited to fostering positive changes in security thinking (transformation) when conditions are supportive. This is due to the activity's fundamentally cooperative character and the reinforcing nature of the confidence building measures that comprise an arrangement. Confidence building, because of its basic character, is able to facilitate and

structure the potential for change in security relationships when at least some states are dissatisfied with, and beginning to question, *status quo* security policies and approaches.

A particularly important dimension of the transformation view is the proposition that the changes in security thinking facilitated by confidence building can become institutionalized as a collection of new rules and practices stipulating how participating states should cooperate and compete with each other in their security relationship. This restructured relationship redefines expectations of normal behaviour among participating states. Without at least a modest transformation of basic security expectations flowing from its application, it is difficult to see how confidence building can improve basic security relations in meaningful ways.

Successful confidence building requires interaction amongst officials and experts from participating states, when conditions are supportive of change. The process of confidence building permits them to formulate and then institutionalize new, more positive ideas, practices, and principles defining their security relations and how to maintain them. The necessary supporting conditions include:

- (1) "security management fatigue";
- (2) unease and dissatisfaction with *status quo* security policies;
- (3) concern about the domestic costs of maintaining the *status quo*;
- (4) a group of experts (an epistemic community);
- (5) a new generation of more flexible and sophisticated policy makers;
- (6) a forum for discussion and interaction; and
- (7) perhaps, a "leap of faith" initiative by at least one key senior policy maker that is capable of crossing a key emotional and conceptual threshold.