

tacit) are discussed in sequence. That done, the analysis will present an overall concept by which a regime of mutual trust at sea could be developed.

As in any such undertaking, the political factors are always the most difficult to predict. That the maritime dimension of the region has functioned for centuries in virtual isolation of political factors does not necessarily mean that traditional mutual understanding and cooperation between mariners is transferable to the more complex dimension of regional politics. It is possible, though, that the naval and para-military maritime forces of the various states may provide the necessary linkage.

### Information and Communication Measures

#### **Information Measures**

Today most naval programs are transparent, and only those states able to conduct their own military Research and Development, and who have a full internal defence industrial base, are able to impose a significant degree of secrecy on their military programs. Even then, it is seldom easy to maintain total secrecy. Also, any requirement to involve third parties in armament programs makes secrecy very much more difficult. Moreover, there are information networks throughout the world that provide a readily available flow of data on military programs and plans.

In the Middle East today, only Israel approaches self-sufficiency in a broad range of military technologies. Even so, Israel still buys some major equipment from other countries and makes little attempt to hide its procurement programs. A regime of information exchanges would thus be a more symbolic CBM, though no less useful for that.

Exchanging schedules of naval activities (naval calendars) is also a largely symbolic CBM because such schedules are not