

- Appropriate *respect* be shown for the unique cultural, political, military, and geostrategic circumstances and requirements of these new application areas.

Our principal experience with the confidence building approach thus far has been in the European context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the CSCE). However, confidence building ideas also have been used effectively in the United States-Soviet Union strategic nuclear relationship (for instance, "Hot Line" agreements) as well as the maritime context ("Incidents at Sea" agreements). Some modest confidence building arrangements also have been developed in Latin America and Asia. Nevertheless, the bulk of our ideas about confidence building have a distinctly European flavour, one informed by concerns about large conventional armed forces with substantial tank armies, the terrain of Central Europe, and fears of surprise attack. While other security environments may share some of these characteristics, the broader political cultures, geostrategic realities, and military relationships are unlikely to mirror those of Europe in the late 1980s. Thus, we must be very deliberate in constructing a *usefully general understanding* of the confidence building phenomenon. It would be both inappropriate and unwise to ignore these potentially great differences as this might impair the effectiveness of new confidence building agreements.

### What is Confidence Building?

Confidence building is usually understood to be

a security management approach employing purposely designed, distinctly *cooperative* measures intended to help clarify participating states' military intentions, to reduce uncertainties about their potentially threatening military activities, and to constrain their opportunities for surprise attack or the coercive use of military forces.

This can serve as a good working definition of confidence building but the approach involves more.

As a result of studying the experience of confidence building in the CSCE case, we are beginning to appreciate that successful confidence building also involves something more profound than improved access to security information. If the European case is any guide, it appears that confidence building, if it is to be successful, must also be associated with a process of transformation — a fundamental shift in the way leaders and publics think about potentially dangerous neighbours and the sorts of threats that they pose. Thus, confidence building is not simply the adoption of specific measures — confidence building measures or CBMs — providing participating states with more (and more reliable) information about each others' military capabilities and activities. More information about — and greater exposure to — dangerous neighbours' military forces will not