

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conventional arms control and disarmament in Europe has been and is a priority of Canadian arms control and disarmament policy. This paper addresses Canadian objectives through a survey of major factors influencing policies. These factors illustrate the complexity and importance of the subject. During the period from planning for the MBFR talks on conventional force reductions in Central Europe to planning for the Negotiation on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), two factors have remained constant: concern about surprise attack, and the disparity in the geostrategic positions of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

There are a number of other similarities: the possibility of conflict by accident or miscalculation, the concept of stability, the question of long-term European security, the level of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, and the level of US forces in Western Europe. Other factors have changed during the past twenty years. These include: the international politico-military situation, the level of confidence, acceptability of on-site inspection, Soviet military doctrine, attitudes towards modernization of armaments, unilateral Soviet reductions, and public opinion.

Eight key objectives for conventional arms control are identified as a result of the present analysis:

- to reduce military confrontation;
- to maintain and enhance stability at lower levels of forces;
- to eliminate the capability for launching surprise attack and for initiating large-scale offensive action;
- to ensure that treaties on conventional forces in Europe contribute to the achievement of long-term European security;
- to assist, through the talks on conventional forces, in the management of East-West relations;