

PRINCIPLE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study compares the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in terms of their organizational histories and structures as well as their experiences in the fields of arms control, confidence-building and verification. The aim is to establish whether there have been any similarities or linkages in these areas between the two organizations.

In contrast to the CSCE, ASEAN's experiences in this area have been rather embryonic. Similarities, however, include:

- 1) Within the underlying organizational principles of each body is the assumption that the security of each participating state is dependent on that of the others and; an agreement to refrain from the threat or use of force in relations with other participating states.
- 2) In both regions the very existence of the organization itself has served a confidence-building function.
- 3) Both organizations have recognized economic cooperation as being important to mutual security.
- 4) The practice of information sharing has aided mutual confidence-building in both regions. ASEAN members, however, have only participated on a bilateral, unstructured and voluntary basis in comparison to the CSCE's structured, multilateral approach.

These similarities have been accompanied by the following differences:

- 1) Europe and South-East Asia have experienced very different histories. It is most likely that the success of confidence-building and arms control in Europe has been largely attributable to Europe's unique historical and political circumstances (i.e., a common culture of European diplomacy and a "lingua franca" of arms control negotiations stretching back at least a century) and; the existence of two opposing blocs, involved in a single conflict, whose history of devastating war has left them with a common interest in avoiding war at all costs. The countries of South-East Asia on the other hand, have not shared a common history or a single conflict and therefore, have not developed the same commonality of interests.
- 2) Unlike South-East Asia, Europe had (temporarily at least) settled its boundary disputes before the CSCE process was initiated.