

Chapter Three

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is of special relevance to this study because the negotiated outcome – the so-called Final Act – included a number of Confidence-Building Measures. As we saw in the preceding chapter, the mere presence of undertakings intended to perform the *functions* of a Confidence-Building Measure is hardly remarkable. Many international agreements contain these sorts of undertakings. The Helsinki Final Act's CBMs are special because they are the central and dominant component of an international security agreement rather than an ancillary feature of a larger agreement. The security-related measures of the Final Act *are* CBMs. In addition, these particular measures have come to be regarded (incorrectly, I would argue) as being synonymous with the whole notion of CBMs. As a consequence, the analysis of Confidence-Building Measures – past, present and future – has become heavily structured by the actual content of the Helsinki measures. The discussion of CBMs is therefore almost always conducted in terms of a handful of modest, exploratory and voluntary undertakings never intended to bear such analytic weight. For these two good reasons, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe – and the CBMs it produced – warrant some attention.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has a history that dates to at least the 1964 proposal made by the Warsaw Treaty Organization Political Consultative Committee calling for a conference to discuss European collective security. A more elaborate proposal followed at the Bucharest meeting of the same Consultative Committee in 1966. That proposal ("A Declaration on Strengthening Peace and Security in Europe") contained a specific reference to the idea of a European Security Conference (ESC) to "ratify" the East European *status quo* as well as proposals for the dissolution of NATO and the WTO, and the creation of an all-Europe economic community of sorts. The 1967 statement on European security issued at a conference of European Communist Parties at Karlovy Vary reiterated the basic ingredients of emerging Soviet policy. As had been the case earlier at the various Four Power Conferences (beginning in 1954), the major underlying concern was the neutraliza-

tion of Germany, followed closely by the desire for formal recognition of Soviet hegemony in the East. Various methods for achieving this end had been explored during these earlier years (including proposals for separate treaties to deal with Germany, collective security proposals, European-wide security conferences and agreements to disband NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization) and they continued to surface in Soviet and East European proposals.

The idea of using a European Security Conference to address basic Eurocentric issues (predominantly the problem of Germany and the status of post-war boundaries) had emerged as a consistent high-priority foreign policy goal in Soviet foreign policy thinking by 1966. Soviet efforts to interest the United States and West European governments in a ESC were unsuccessful, however, until the growing Western desire for conventional force reductions in Europe created a parallel Western requirement for a European conference dealing with security issues. The Soviets wanted a multilateral conference to address broadly political concerns (particularly the recognition of East Germany and the remainder of post-war East European boundaries). Earlier Western responses to Soviet and East European proposals for European security conferences had usually countered with suggestions for the reunification of Germany. Now, however, the West wanted a NATO/WTO negotiation to reduce manpower levels and increase stability in Central Europe. This fairly basic division in focus permitted the creation of two separate European negotiating tracks. One was to become the Mutual (and Balanced) Force Reduction (MBFR) negotiations in Vienna while the other was to become the CSCE. Theatre Nuclear Force negotiations emerged from these distinct tracks to become a separate undertaking a decade later.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia caused a temporary delay in the process of resolving the fates of these distinctly different conference schemes. However, by early 1969 there were numerous (mostly Warsaw Treaty Organization) proposals and declarations progressively refining the idea of a European Security Conference. In March, the WTO foreign ministers issued a declaration explicitly stating that Canada and the United States could attend such a conference. In June, another of the ubiquitous Communist Party conferences called for

