

- (1) Explicit *definitions* of confidence building (usually framed in terms of confidence building measures); and
- (2) Focused *descriptions* of confidence building's key operational aspects and objectives, discussions that performed approximately the same basic function as an explicit definition of the phenomenon.

The immediate goal of the definition approach was to identify common elements in various treatments of confidence building in the professional literature and then construct what amounted to a composite general definition. It should be noted, however, that this perspective did *not* include as an objective the explicit reconceptualization of the confidence building idea, *per se*. At that time there was no clear sense that such a reconceptualization was necessary; that would come later. The goal was to clarify existing strands of thought.

Confidence (and Security) Building Measures in the Arms Control Process: A Canadian Perspective devoted considerable attention to a survey of definitions and discussions of confidence building.

Many explicit definitions, descriptive accounts, and more tangential insights from the body of the existing professional literature were examined with some care and a number were included in the study's text. Thirty-six distinct attributes of confidence building were distilled from that collection of defining efforts.¹⁰ Although some of the attributes directly contradicted others, there was a clear pattern of characteristics that seemed to run through most discussions of the phenomenon. Out of that list of thirty-six attributes, a point-form composite definition was assembled, a definition intended to represent the essential character of confidence building as understood by the professional community at that time.

Reflecting the tendency to frame definitions of confidence building in terms of what confidence building *measures* did, the composite definition stated that military confidence building measures are:

- "(1) a variety of arms control measure entailing
- (2) states actions
- (3) that can be unilateral but which are more often either bilateral or multilateral
- (4) that attempt to reduce or eliminate misperceptions about specific military threats or concerns (very often having to do with surprise attack)
- (5) by communicating adequately verifiable evidence of acceptable reliability to the effect that those concerns are groundless often (but not always) by demonstrating that military and political intentions are not aggressive
- (7) and/or by providing early warning indicators to create confidence that surprise would be difficult to achieve
- (8) and/or by restricting the opportunities available for the use of military forces by adopting restrictions on the activities and deployments of those forces (or crucial components of them) within sensitive areas."¹¹

It is striking, in retrospect, how various examples from the literature (and thus the composite definition) focused on confidence building *measures* and generally said next to nothing about the process dimension of confidence building. In addition, there was no significant reference to how using CBMs caused any type of change in security relations beyond the expectation that perceptions would be altered, a view generally couched in the minimalist language of more information and greater predictability improving security relations. Although original study was sensitive to the fact that there was such a thing as a confidence building process and that it had to do with perceptual change, the process sense barely intruded into the composite definition.¹²

This attempt to construct a satisfactory general definition of confidence building — what the author eventually termed the “procedural definition” — was successful in a superficial sense. It