

The purpose of this study has been to compare the CSCE and ASEAN with particular emphasis on the ways arms control, confidence-building and verification issues have been addressed in the past as well as how these processes might evolve in the future. This analysis is meant to identify political, organizational, legal and other similarities and differences as well as general lessons regarding the transferability of such processes, approaches and strategies among regions of the world.

SIMILARITIES

To date there has been relatively little to compare between the two organizations. In contrast to the CSCE, ASEAN's experiences have been rather embryonic. However, there are certain general similarities which are worth citing. Perhaps the most important commonality lies in that the fact that the underlying principles of each organization are similar. Both organizations work on the assumption that security within the region is indivisible (ie: that the security of each participating state is dependent on the security of the other participating states). The initial documents produced by each organization therefore, include an agreement to refrain from the use or the threat of the use of force in its relations with fellow members. To this end, both organizations also provide for the peaceful settlement of disputes through consultation between the disputants and other participating states. These perhaps can be considered to be the two universal characteristics of confidence building as no confidence can be built in their absence.

It is also important to note that in each instance, the simple existence of the organization itself and the contacts and consultations it encompasses, (even in the non-military fields), have served a confidence-building function. It should also be noted that each organization has a broad mandate including economic and other issues. This is because each grouping recognized the low politics of economics and trade as being important to their future security.

In addition, the practice of sharing information has been common to both experiences. This must be clarified, however. In the case of ASEAN the information shared was not on military movements, capabilities and posture as was the case with the CSCE. It was instead characterized by an intelligence sharing aimed at the containment of communist guerilla activities within the ASEAN states. The sharing of information within ASEAN also lacked the obligatory, structured, multilateral approach characteristic of the CSCE. Instead, it was carried on bilaterally and voluntarily. This sort of information sharing has been characteristic of many CSCE states but it has not been carried on within the auspices of the CSCE itself.