

Chapter One

An Introduction to the Concept of Confidence Building

Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs), in one form or another, have existed for as long as groups of people have distrusted each other. In the most basic sense, any action or undertaking intended to reduce suspicion and uncertainty and/or clarify intentions, particularly with respect to physical security, can be said to be a Confidence-Building Measure. The term has also been used to describe measures taken to reduce economic uncertainty and fears, and has even been used to describe scientific, cultural and sporting exchanges. While such usage is reasonable in everyday language terms – these measures, after all, do (or can) help to increase mutual understanding and confidence – it is too general and imprecise for more technical applications. To avoid this sort of imprecision, we will restrict our consideration to those interstate national security undertakings designed or intended to *increase confidence in the "good" intentions of potential adversaries and/or reduce fear of attack*. The dominant national security concern is generally the fear of surprise attack and most CBMs address this fear, either directly or indirectly. This more restrictive understanding, dealing almost exclusively with military-oriented undertakings, prevents the excessive dilution of the CBM concept. It also corresponds with international political as well as scholarly usage.

What follows is an introduction to the concept of Confidence-Building Measures, their history, their prospects and their problems. This introductory study attempts to demonstrate, by example, that "Confidence Building" is actually a multifaceted concept with more shades of meaning and more intrinsic analytic problems than are normally supposed. The study examines, first of all, some historical examples of Confidence-Building Measures. This helps to make the point that *CBMs have a*

history that predates the Confidence-Building Measures of the Helsinki Final Act. While not known as CBMs *per se*, a number of international undertakings negotiated during the past several hundred years clearly performed that function. There are also a number of more recent illustrations such as "Hot Line agreements" involving primarily the strategic nuclear relationship of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) led to the Helsinki Final Act which formalized a number of CBMs. They continue to stand as the dominant examples of Confidence-Building Measures and figure importantly in discussions of second-generation CBMs. Of particular importance, the Helsinki CBMs and the CSCE follow-up conferences at Belgrade and Madrid led to the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) where a major effort will be expended to create meaningful "second-generation" CBMs. In recognition of the greater intended impact of these second-generation measures, they have come to be called "Confidence and Security Building Measures" or CSBMs. This study will present a brief history of these events.

The Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations which have been underway in Vienna since 1973 also feature CBMs although in this case they are called Associated Measures. They are definitely ancillary features to the dominant concern of force reduction. The study will examine these Associated Measures, particularly because they have influenced thinking on the nature of second-generation CSBMs for the Conference on Disarmament in Europe discussions.¹

Once the historical context of Confidence-Building Measures has been established, it will

¹ It might be helpful at this early stage to establish a provisional rule about the use of the terms "CBM" and "CSBM". Despite a tendency to use CSBM as a replacement term for CBM, the term CSBM is a direct product of the Madrid review meeting and, by most accounts, it refers *specifically* to proposed measures which will extend the scope of existing (i.e. Helsinki) CBMs. Some (the Swiss, for instance) prefer to use the term CSBM to connote genuine, militarily constraining CBMs. CSBMs, however, do not yet exist as anything but proposals and the particular constraint function of CSBMs can be specified by noting functional categories of Confidence-Building Measures (see Chapter Five). As a consequence, there is a good case to be made for using

the term CSBM only to refer to the proposed "Stockholm measures." The compound term "Helsinki CBMs" ought to be used to refer to that restricted set of existing measures that appear in the Helsinki Final Act. When referring to the *general concept of Confidence Building*, it may make the most sense to simply use the most common term – CBM. Common and even professional usage has unfortunately tended to treat the two terms as synonyms and that probably will continue to be the case. In the absence of widespread consensus, this study employs the term CBM for the general concept and uses CSBM, with rare exception, only to refer to the measures which may emerge from Stockholm.

