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COMPLIANCE WITH CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES: FROM HELSINKI TO STOCKHOLM

by Michael Holmes

On 28 August 1987 four United States Army officers arrived at a Soviet military base northeast of Minsk to inspect a military exercise involving 16,000 troops and 425 tanks. The US officers were greeted at the airport by two Soviet generals and briefed on the structure and purpose of the exercise. They were permitted access to air and ground transportation to view the manoeuvre, and allowed full use of cameras, binoculars, maps and charts. After the forty-eight hours allotted for the inspection, the officers left the Soviet Union satisfied that the force levels given in the Soviets' prior notification of the exercise had not been exceeded and that their hosts had been positive and forthcoming.

The challenge inspection described above, the first of its kind by the United States in the Soviet Union, was carried out in accordance with the 1986 Agreement of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CCSBMDE), more commonly known as the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE). The goal of the agreement is to reduce the risks of armed conflict resulting from misunderstanding or miscalculation. The inspection outlined illustrates the use of confidence-building measures (CBMs) in international relations. Further, it presents an example of how the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement in particular has worked toward creating a more open, cooperative and predictable environment in European security affairs.

Since World War II, CBMs have been pursued in proposals such as President Eisenhower's 1955 *Open Skies* programme, the 1958 Rapacki Plan, and the 1963 'Hotline' agreement between the

TERMS*

Verification: The determination, to a high degree of confidence, whether or not a signatory has complied with an agreement. Verification can take many forms, including on-site inspection and observance of actions as they occur, national technical means — that is, satellites, pre-positioned listening devices, and the like — and covert surveillance (spying), among others.

Transparency: Refers to the visibility and predictability of military actions. Information exchanges and prior notification of military activities, for example, increase the transparency of military activities.

Notification: Announcement, in writing or otherwise, of military activities prior to their occurrence. In the recent European experience, only activities of certain sizes and types have required notification.

Information Measures: Some agreements require the exchange of information between parties to encourage openness — for example, the location of military bases and facilities, or military budget figures.

Constraining Measures: Impose limits on certain types of military activity — for example, the timing, location, size, type, frequency or duration of activities.

Declaratory Measures: Statements of intent — for example, vowing no-first-use of nuclear weapons. Declaratory measures are often unilateral.

Observations: The viewing, by military or other personnel, of the military activities of another country.

Challenge Inspections: Similar to observations, except that the initiative to observe is taken by the inspecting party when compliance is in question.

Movements and Manoeuvres: Military movements can consist of changes in location of units. Manoeuvres are frequently tactical exercises, imitating conditions of war and having limited duration. These terms have, at times, been interpreted differently by different countries.

*These terms are subject to differing official interpretations. The definitions given here are intended simply to provide the reader with a better understanding of how these terms are used in the context of the paper.

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