

relationship with London would therefore have to be brought back to life and making progress on at least reducing tensions on the Falklands was a *sine qua non* of such a rapprochement.

Confidence Building Measures were perceived by both governments as offering considerable scope in bringing outstanding tensions under greater control. In his first year in the presidency Mr. Menem worked increasingly closely with the British in order to find specific mechanisms to build confidence. Using the term openly, London and Buenos Aires moved by stages to set up what is arguably the most complete set of CBMs anywhere in the Latin American region.

These CBMs were reflected in two bilateral committees set up early in the new decade. One was to deal with reducing the threat of surprise attack and other largely direct defence matters while the other aimed to discover means to move forward on development issues of potential value to both the mainland and the islands.

Showing considerable originality, and despite some setbacks, the two governments dealt with such thorny issues as fishery protection, regional movements of naval shipping and military aircraft, army exercises, and a host of other potential and real bones of contention. Direct communications between military commanders were set up and staff talks between the two national armed forces began to take place.

At the same time, London and Buenos Aires worked together to track fish movements in the South Atlantic, discussed joint plans for oil development in the region, and met repeatedly to iron out specific problems. The results of all this activity included what must be seen as a significant reduction in levels of tension between the two governments as well as a clear transformation in the views of national elites as to the advantages of reducing tensions, at least in the short to mid-term.

Argentina is far from abandoning its claim to the Falkland Islands. And the realities of British politics would suggest that London would not be in any position for many years to propose anything as dramatic as negotiations on sovereignty over them. But the confidence building experience related to the Falklands over the last decade suggests strongly, as this study argues, that the process in the Anglo-Argentine case has added significantly to the reduction of tension in the region. It is also the case that while long-term solutions still elude the parties, time has been gained and the issue's salience reduced, as a result of the careful application of confidence building to what was previously a seemingly intractable problem. While in no ways a panacea, it is the case that confidence building in the South Atlantic has done much to show its potential worth in situations of this kind.