

more reliable) information about each others' military intentions, capabilities, and activities.

However, this minimalist assumption is an inadequate basis for explanation and, hence, for action. *In an enduringly antagonistic military relationship, without the change of something more fundamental than enhanced transparency, more information is not necessarily going to result in reduced tensions and a better, more stable relationship.* It is entirely reasonable to believe, for instance, that more information will increase rather than diminish suspicion because it will feed powerful existing fears and populate misperceptions with additional grounds for concern. It is this assertion that "something more" than enhanced transparency must happen for security relations to improve in a meaningful way that is the key claim setting this study apart from most other discussions of confidence building.

The understanding of confidence building evolving in this study demands more: it insists on asking *why* security relations improve as a result of negotiating and implementing CBM agreements. This more comprehensive and rigorous view takes as a given that significant improvement in security relations is the central, conscious goal motivating participation in the confidence building policy process. It also assumes as a working hypothesis that positive change does indeed occur as a result of engaging successfully in that process. However, this view does *not* assume that positive change automatically will occur simply because there is increased information or because CBMs of various standard types are adopted. Instead, it treats the process of security relations improvement as a phenomenon that needs to be explained, both on its own terms and in relation to the operation of confidence building negotiations and their agreements.

The views developed in *Confidence Building in the Arms Control Process: A Transformation View* stand in marked contrast to the minimalist construction. These views constitute a very deliberate reconstruction that builds in significant ways on the operationally-informed and incomplete

minimalist understanding. They are also very different compared with the understanding of confidence building developed twelve years ago in the author's initial look at the phenomenon, *Confidence (and Security) Building Measures in the Arms Control Process: A Canadian Perspective*.¹ That original study, while critical of certain failings in the professional literature of the day, generally echoed the basic assumptions of that body of thought. It also was sceptical of the value of the confidence building approach.

The understanding of confidence building presented in the current review is the product of twelve years' intermittent reflection; a period of conceptual evolution that has seen the development of several distinct variations on the understanding first hinted in the original study. In retrospect, some of those interim constructions were weak, particularly concerning the relationship between confidence building and transformation, but the process of unravelling the meaning of confidence building generally has moved forward, nevertheless. While this process of exploration is far from complete, the present articulation of confidence building ideas represents what appears to be a significant advance in the effort to understand in a general way what "confidence building" entails and how it works.

Why Understanding the Confidence Building Process Matters

The persistent failure of the literature to explain the inner workings of the confidence building process is more important — and far more visible — today than it was twelve years ago when *Confidence (and Security) Building Measures in the Arms Control Process: A Canadian Perspective* was written. In the original study, this problem had no real defining context because there was only a rudimentary prototype agreement in place — the 1975 Helsinki Final Act's CBM package. In those frigid days of the Cold War, little was expected of it; there were only hints of what would follow. Today, we know that comprehensive confidence building agreements can be