

system. Bilateral or multilateral collective security arrangements, if they are truly defensive in nature, are fully compatible with a regional cooperative security framework. The evolution of a comprehensive military component of a regional cooperative security framework will follow. A finely balanced, judgmental treatment of the military component, including arms control and confidence building - or "reassurance" - measures can be neither ignored nor accelerated.

While it is possible to speak of building global cooperative security, it is more realistic to focus, in the first instance, on developing cooperative security at the regional (or sub-regional) level where shared values, interests, experiences and problems can contribute to the development of workable approaches, networks and mechanisms. Regional frameworks, successfully established and implemented, can and should then interact to contribute to broader cooperative security frameworks.

Multilateral arrangements often have a functional, as well as regional common denominator. Regional cooperative bodies such as development banks, economic and environmental agreements, and dialogue mechanisms consistent with global norms (e.g., the GATT, the IMF, the UN) are evidence that more countries are realizing that membership or involvement in such mechanisms serves their national security interests. Within their defined domains, these institutions can secure their members' broader interests through cooperation and, perhaps more importantly, ensure that issues that arise among states do not have effects which lead to tension and conflict.

States do not base their security on altruistic, unfounded notions of cooperation. It is only through an appeal to national interests that the building blocks of a cooperative security system will be put into place.

Cooperative security is not a theory but a practical method of dealing with important issues. For example, a principle source of future conflict in the Middle East may well be water rights. The Gulf War has brought home to us the problems of economic inequalities and even the impact of oil pricing policies for what we call "national security". The ability to cooperate on issues such as management of water rights may well have more to do in the future with "security" in the truest sense of the word. Similar problems can be identified in other regions.

As already mentioned, cooperative security is an approach, not an institution or organization. Its ability to succeed is completely dependent upon the recognition by states that their participation in the sort of legally or politically binding arrangements that would result from such dialogue and negotiation would contribute in identifiable and concrete ways to their national security.

It is for this reason that cooperative security offers so many possibilities: it is fundamentally rooted in developing dialogue that will enable states to deal with their real and practical concerns -- their national interests.