

examination of these issues would require a great deal more work. Analysts are still some distance from a coherent framework for understanding security cultures that would link positions concerning NACD issues with particular diplomatic, historical, strategic or political cultural orientations. Further research on security cultures could thus concentrate on the following issues:

- tracing different cultural influences on the development (and implementation) of global NACD norms in areas such as transparency, verification or confidence-building;
- focusing on the different cultural mainsprings of national security policies in specific regional environments (such as Southeast Asia or the Middle East) in order to catalyze regional "track-two" dialogues on these issues;
- analysing the security cultures of regional "outlier" states (such as South Korea, France, Israel or South Africa) to determine how and why they share or diverge from regional norms; and
- studying the role of transnational actors and forces as "transmission mechanisms" for domestic norm change in particular states or issue areas.

In the end, all of these case studies illustrate that "culture matters" in the formulation of national interests towards non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament policies, and in the stances decision-makers take towards participation in multilateral security-building processes. Instead of the crude question "does culture matter?" these authors have attempted to treat cultural factors not as one more variable in a causal process, but to examine the way in which widely-shared beliefs, traditions, attitudes, and symbols form an inescapable backdrop or framework of meaning for political actors, policy-makers, and ordinary citizens. Elements of this framework manifest themselves all the way from micro-level (in negotiating behaviour, perceptions of "the other") to macro-level (socio-cultural attitudes towards violence, visions of one's place in the world) processes. Although the influence of these cultural elements may often seem elusive or intangible, there is little doubt that they can (and will) exercise a powerful influence on the prospects for security-building in various states and regions.