

how confidence building works. They could help acquaint interested states and regional experts with various cost-effective, operational approaches such as cooperative monitoring that can play a useful role in supporting both traditional and non-traditional confidence building efforts.

Conclusion

The generic study of confidence building itself is also far from complete. Much remains unclear about how the process of confidence building actually functions and what role it plays in changing the way people think about each other and the threats that they pose. The transformation view encourages us to break away from existing, rather limited ideas about confidence building while still attempting to impose greater conceptual rigor on our explanatory efforts. For instance, we need to understand in explicit terms how and under what circumstances the development, negotiation, and implementation of CBMs contributes to a process of security environment improvement.

It is quite likely that we will have a clearer sense of the potential of confidence building only as we explore its applicability in distinctively new application areas and study how it has been pursued in new contexts. This will expand our base of experience significantly. The vigorous participation of interested analysts and policy makers from various potential application areas throughout the world will doubtless help to move this process of understanding forward in many important ways.

ENDNOTES

1. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," p. 8.
2. "Agreement between the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the People's Republic of China on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area" of 26 April 1996.