

The CBM Typology

The third distinctive approach to understanding the confidence building phenomenon employed in the original 1985 study was the construction of a comprehensive typology of CBMs organized by major functional category. Here, the goal was straightforward: to develop an organizing device capable of categorizing the large number of distinct measures discussed in various books, articles, official papers, and conference papers dealing with confidence building.

The typology has proven to be an immensely useful device and remains so today, in modified form. The attraction of the typology approach is obvious. A comprehensive typology of CBM categories constitutes a very practical and operationally-oriented approach to understanding confidence building — or at least one important aspect of it. This is an approach that naturally appeals to policy makers exploring the confidence building concept for the first time or seeking measures relevant to specific negotiating problems. For policy makers, this can seem to be the stuff of confidence building.

In effect, this approach amounted to the development of a comprehensive *menu* of both existing and potential CBMs organized in terms of their basic purpose — the collection of information; the provision of advance notification of military activities; constraints on troublesome military activities and deployments; and so on. Using such a comprehensive catalogue of CBM types as a basic reference tool, policy makers and analysts can more easily identify unrestrained activities, capabilities, and developments of potential concern and then devise appropriate CBM solutions. It is far easier to deal with lacunae when we have easy access to a detailed breakdown of existing CBM types than it is to proceed from scratch.

The careful use of a comprehensive typology can also help us to understand when we are treading near the margins of what counts as confidence building, at least according to the typology's underlying understanding of confidence building. With examples so visible, the nature and

boundaries of confidence building, at least in operational terms, are more easily discerned. Thus, assessments of what counts as a CBM can be facilitated by the existence of a comprehensive typology. This is particularly helpful when we deliberately seek to expand the boundaries of traditional confidence building to accommodate new understandings of the confidence building process. It should be noted, however, that most analysts and policy makers tend to look from the inside out, dismissing those possible measures that do not fit easily into the existing conventional mould. Thus, the setting of clear boundaries can be a *restricting* as well as a *liberating* exercise. The conservative-minded typically will tend toward the former perspective.

Confidence (and Security) Building Measures in the Arms Control Process: A Canadian Perspective undertook a comprehensive analysis of CBM proposals and a review of several existing typologies in the professional literature of the day. That analysis led to the conclusion that all existing CBMs could be reduced to two fundamental functional types — three, if purely declaratory proposals such as “non-use of force” declarations were also included as CBMs.⁵ It was argued at the time that these two fundamental categories — *information* and *constraint* — represented the two most basic ways in which all confidence building measures could function. Thus, specific CBMs were seen to inform or constrain — or both inform and constrain in the case of some compound measures. Within each of the two fundamental super-categories, four basic categories were identified, each with a distinctive functional focus.⁶ A deliberate effort was made at the time to ensure that the broadest possible coverage of legitimate CBMs was achieved in constructing this category structure.

Although the category approach appears to be the essence of simplicity, there are some problems. For instance, the typology's strength is also a source of weakness. By necessity, the typology focuses on practical examples of confidence building *measures* and does not include any direct sense