

CA1
EA360
93C56

b2682825 (E)

DOCS

CANADA



**THE
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
APPROACH**



JANUARY 1993

CANADA



**THE
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
APPROACH**



JANUARY 1993

Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

JUL 10 1995

RETURN TO DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY
RETOURNER A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE DU MINISTERE

43 273 676

THE CONFIDENCE BUILDING APPROACH

Summary

This introduction to the promising concept of confidence building outlines a variety of important considerations to keep in mind as we consider the possible application of the confidence building approach in new regions with unique security environments and political cultures. It presents several distinct ways of understanding the confidence building approach, including (1) a general definition; (2) a catalogue of CBM categories; and (3) an example of a comprehensive CBM agreement. Collectively, they provide a rich understanding of what confidence building means. The paper also stresses the broader role that confidence building appears to play in helping to transform the security perceptions that states have of threatening neighbours. The paper warns of the need to apply the confidence building approach with care and insight in new application regions, taking full account of special or unique circumstances.

Introduction

Confidence building increasingly is recognized as an important approach to improving security relations amongst states suspicious about and uncertain of each other's intentions. Confidence building typically is understood to involve the use of formal, cooperative measures designed to improve information and reduce uncertainty about neighbours' military forces and activities. Great hopes are attached to its possibilities, particularly in light of the impressive success enjoyed in Europe during the last six years. There, confidence building has proven to be an effective, formal security management approach, almost certainly playing an important role in the positive transformation of security relations associated with the end of the Cold War.

The prospects for developing effective confidence building regimes in new regions outside Europe are very promising but great care must be taken to ensure that:

- We understand correctly the *lessons* of the European case from which many of our present ideas come; and

- Appropriate *respect* be shown for the unique cultural, political, military, and geostrategic circumstances and requirements of these new application areas.

Our principal experience with the confidence building approach thus far has been in the European context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the CSCE). However, confidence building ideas also have been used effectively in the United States-Soviet Union strategic nuclear relationship (for instance, "Hot Line" agreements) as well as the maritime context ("Incidents at Sea" agreements). Some modest confidence building arrangements also have been developed in Latin America and Asia. Nevertheless, the bulk of our ideas about confidence building have a distinctly European flavour, one informed by concerns about large conventional armed forces with substantial tank armies, the terrain of Central Europe, and fears of surprise attack. While other security environments may share some of these characteristics, the broader political cultures, geostrategic realities, and military relationships are unlikely to mirror those of Europe in the late 1980s. Thus, we must be very deliberate in constructing a *usefully general understanding* of the confidence building phenomenon. It would be both inappropriate and unwise to ignore these potentially great differences as this might impair the effectiveness of new confidence building agreements.

What is Confidence Building?

Confidence building is usually understood to be

a security management approach employing purposely designed, distinctly *cooperative* measures intended to help clarify participating states' military intentions, to reduce uncertainties about their potentially threatening military activities, and to constrain their opportunities for surprise attack or the coercive use of military forces.

This can serve as a good working definition of confidence building but the approach involves more.

As a result of studying the experience of confidence building in the CSCE case, we are beginning to appreciate that successful confidence building also involves something more profound than improved access to security information. If the European case is any guide, it appears that confidence building, if it is to be successful, must also be associated with a process of transformation — a fundamental shift in the way leaders and publics think about potentially dangerous neighbours and the sorts of threats that they pose. Thus, confidence building is not simply the adoption of specific measures — confidence building measures or CBMs — providing participating states with more (and more reliable) information about each others' military capabilities and activities. More information about — and greater exposure to — dangerous neighbours' military forces will not

necessarily improve security relations. Indeed, relations may worsen as added information feeds existing misperceptions and fears.

This idea of a major change in perceptions of threat is important because it alerts us to the likelihood that CBMs may work best when some variety of positive shift in security thinking is already taking place. According to this view, the negotiation and implementation of a package of confidence building measures will *accelerate or facilitate that process of improvement*. It seems less likely that a confidence building arrangement can actually start such a process by itself although this also may be possible, particularly in regions with different security relationships and political cultures.

Thus, the timing of negotiations to develop CBMs may be critical to their success. Pursue them too soon and they will produce a disappointingly marginal — or even dangerous — result. Wait too long and the pursuit of a CBM package will miss the window during which it can have a positive impact on the evolution of security relations. We do not yet completely understand the exact role played by the negotiation and implementation of confidence building agreements in this larger process of change. Thus, we remain uncertain about their precise status as *agent* (cause) or *artifact* (parallel phenomenon) of change. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the negotiation of confidence building agreements can play an important — perhaps crucial — part in the positive transformation of security relations. This makes their pursuit worthwhile and important.

Without attempting to make confidence building sound more complex or less promising than it is, we should nevertheless be clear that confidence building is an imperfectly understood security management approach. Obviously, its successful use in existing or new areas of application will depend on a good understanding of what confidence building really is and how it works. Thus far, we have good reasons for thinking that the approach has yielded successful outcomes in the European case. Although we aren't entirely sure we understand completely how confidence building has worked in this case, we have an increasingly good sense of its basic nature. The perspectives that follow summarize this knowledge and should provide some guidance to those wishing to develop the approach in new areas of application.

Three Perspectives

There are several different ways of presenting what we now know about confidence building. Each looks at a unique aspect of confidence building. Together, they provide a usefully comprehensive understanding. These perspectives include:

- A general or abstract definition of confidence building as a process;

- A comprehensive catalogue of confidence building measure categories — specific types of CBMs; and
- The CSCE's Vienna Document 1992 — the most detailed example of a working confidence building agreement. It shows us what a successful agreement looks like and what sort of measures it contains.

A General Definition of Confidence Building

In the introduction, we looked at a brief working definition of confidence building. Although useful, it is quite limited. For instance, it does not capture any sense of how confidence building actually works. Based on the experience of the European case, a more general or abstract definition has been developed. This is a definition of the confidence building *process*, a definition that attempts to capture the underlying purpose and political dynamic associated with confidence building. It focuses on the process of change that we believe has been associated with the successful negotiation and implementation of confidence building agreements in Europe. This helps us to understand that confidence building is *not* simply a means unto itself. Instead, it is a component of a larger political process and purpose. *Disassociated from this larger process and purpose, confidence building loses much of its meaning and becomes a narrow, information-enhancing activity incapable of fundamentally altering a security relationship.*

This process-oriented definition states that

- Confidence building is primarily a psychological process
- involving the transformation of senior decision maker beliefs about
- the nature of threat posed by other states,
- primarily entailing a fundamental shift from a basic assumption of hostile intentions to one of non-hostile (but not necessarily friendly) intentions.

The key element in this process approach is the identification of *transformation* — the transformation of ideas and beliefs about the threat posed by neighbouring states. The exact character of the transformation and why leaders come to feel comfortable with new, less stark conceptions of threat remain unclear. However, it seems that subtle processes of genuine change (perhaps the result of fatigue and concern about the costs of security) are combined with dramatic acts of statesmanship.

Central decision makers must see that neighbours are no longer the threat they once were and act to formalize this new reality in concrete terms.

Alternatively, we can draw on a generalized definition of what confidence building measures do. This provides a more operationally-oriented appreciation of confidence building although it does *not* replace the process-oriented understanding.

- Confidence building is a variety of security management typically entailing state actions, undertaken with a *reasonable* expectation that fellow participating states do not currently have hostile intentions,
- that can be (in principle) unilateral but which are typically either bilateral or multilateral
- that attempt to reduce or eliminate misperceptions of and concerns about potentially threatening military capabilities and activities
- by providing verifiable information about and advance notification of potentially threatening military activities
- and/or by providing the opportunity for the prompt explanation or exploration of worrisome military activities
- and/or by restricting the opportunities available for the use of military forces and their equipment by adopting verifiable restrictions on the activities, deployments, or qualitative improvements of those forces (or crucial components of them), frequently within sensitive areas near the borders of neighbours.

Together, these two definitions provide a general sense of the process of confidence building as well as its operational character. However, as we move to examine confidence building and the role that it can play in managing or moderating security relationships in other regions, we may find that we need to adjust our understanding of the concept to better reflect the nature of conditions in those regions. These current ideas about confidence building, therefore, should *not* be regarded as the final word on the approach and what it involves.

Categories of Confidence Building Measure

We can also gain an excellent idea of what confidence building is about by examining a comprehensive collection of CBM categories. This operationally-oriented perspective serves as a menu from which policy makers can select appropriate measures which then can be tailored to their specific needs. Although confidence building involves more than simply putting together a collection of CBMs, this is the raw stuff of policy.

Based on the careful examination of over one hundred specific confidence building proposals, we can identify the following general categories, defined by basic function:

Type A: Information and Communication CBMs

- (1) ***Information Measures*** (provision of information about military forces, facilities, structures, and activities)

Examples include: publication of defence information, weapon system and force structure information exchange, consultative commissions, publication of defence budget figures, publication of weapon system development information, doctrine and strategy seminars;

- (2) ***Communication Measures*** (provision of means of communication)

Examples include: hot lines for exchange of crisis information, joint crisis control centres, "cool lines" for the regular distribution of required and requested information

- (3) ***Notification Measures*** (provision of advance notification of specified military activities)

Examples include: advance notification of exercises, force movements, mobilizations — including associated information about forces involved;

- (4) ***Observation-of-Movement Conduct Measures*** (provision of opportunity to observe specified military activities)

Examples include: mandatory and optional invitations to observe specified activities (with information about the activity) and rules of conduct for observers and hosts)

Type B: Constraint CBMs

- (1) **Inspection Measures** (provision of opportunity to inspect and/or monitor constrained or limited military forces, facilities, structures, and activities)

Examples include: special sensing devices, special observers for sensitive movements, on-site inspections. The "Open Skies"-type observer-inspection mission constitutes a special case, combining elements of the observation and inspection measure type. The inspection is not limited to a constrained facility or activity;

- (2) **Non-Interference (with verification) Measures;**¹

- (3) **Activity Constraint Measures** (provision of assurance to avoid or limit provocative military activities)

Examples include: no harassing activities such as "playing chicken" on the high seas or near territorial boundaries;

- (4) **Deployment Constraint Measures** (provision of assurance to avoid or limit the provocative stationing or positioning of military forces)

Examples include: no threatening manoeuvres or equipment tests, no threatening deployments near sensitive areas (such as tanks on a border), equipment constraints such as no attack aircraft within range of a neighbour's rear area territory, manpower limits, nuclear free zones;

- (5) **Technology Constraint Measures** (provision of assurance to avoid or limit the development and/or deployment of specified military technologies, including systems)

1. Note that "verification" has an ambiguous status in a confidence building agreement. Verification is a fundamentally unilateral activity that can be *facilitated* by provisions in a confidence building agreement. According to this view, verification provisions provide the opportunity and right to verify compliance but they do not constitute verification *per se*. Facilitating verification has a positive confidence building impact.

and subsystems, believed by participating states to have a destabilizing character or impact)

Examples include: no *replacement* of deployed military equipment of certain types (typically, tanks, heavily armoured combat vehicles (HACVs), self-propelled artillery, combat aircraft, and combat helicopters) with new, more advanced types; no *modernization* of deployed military equipment of certain types in certain key, well-defined respects; no *training* with new systems; no *field testing* of new designs; and no *production* of specified new systems or subsystems.

Confidence building agreements are constructed using these basic categories of CBMs in various combinations and to varying degrees of strictness. Measures can be assembled and designed in countless ways to address specific concerns. Agreements can include two or three very basic measures with modest limits or they can include a wide variety of diverse measures with very strict limits and thresholds. The Open Skies Treaty characterizes a very focused type of confidence building arrangement that concentrates on a hybrid task of inspection and observation. Its confidence building character flows from the willingness of participating states to permit neighbours access to troubling activities or facilities. The CSCE's Vienna Document, on the other hand, is a good example of a comprehensive agreement.

The Vienna Document 1992 — An Example of a Confidence Building Agreement

The Vienna Document 1992 is the most recent of three comprehensive confidence building agreements developed in the CSCE context. Each has expanded on the content and scope of the preceding example, starting with the Stockholm Document of 1986. The Stockholm agreement, in turn, grew out of the much more modest Helsinki Final Act CBMs of 1975. The initial Helsinki CBMs were very modest and only one approached being obligatory. This principal CBM required the notification of manoeuvres by CSCE states in Europe exceeding 25,000 personnel 21 days in advance of their conduct unless they were arranged on short notice. The notification also was to include basic information about the manoeuvre. The Helsinki CBMs also included an observer invitation measure and a discretionary military movement notification measure.

An important lesson from the CSCE experience is the way in which the confidence building enterprise began with a modest package of measures and then expanded on it with each successive agreement to eventually produce a very comprehensive confidence building agreement. This is a pattern that we might expect to see repeated in other regions.

Looking at the sorts of measures that are contained in the Vienna Document can give us an excellent idea of what a comprehensive confidence building agreement entails. In particular, it illustrates how the various measures work *together* to create a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Of course, an agreement developed in a different political, cultural, and military environment will likely begin with a more modest selection of measures and they would likely be crafted to address the unique concerns of that region. They might well concentrate on different types of potentially threatening behaviour and they might employ different types of notification thresholds. Nevertheless, the Vienna Document provides an excellent example of a real confidence building agreement and, less directly, a good idea of what confidence building is about.

The Vienna Document 1992, in outline, includes the following CBMs:

- Non-Use of Force Re-Affirmation;
- **Annual exchange of military information** — requires the submission of information detailing land force organization, unit location, manpower, and major weapon and equipment systems organic to formations. It includes non-active and low-strength formations and combat units. Additional requirements include information on military budgets *and* major new weapon system deployments;
- **Risk reduction** (employing the Conflict Prevention Centre) — entails timely consultation regarding unusual military activities; cooperation as regards hazardous military incidents; and voluntary hosting of visits to dispel concerns about troubling military activities;
- **Contacts** — to enhance openness and transparency through invitations to visit air bases; expanded military exchanges; *and* the demonstration of new types of major weapon and equipment systems;
- **Prior Notification** — requires minimum 42 days advance notification of all military activities involving at least: 9,000 troops or 250 tanks, if organized in a division-like structure (air force participation also is to be notified if fixed-wing sorties associated with the activity are expected to exceed 200); or 3,000 troops in an amphibious or parachute assault exercise; or transfers or concentrations of a division equivalent (including extensive information about the activity and participating forces);

- **Observation** — requires invitation of up to 2 observers per state to observe any exercise, transfer, or concentration involving at least 13,000 troops or 300 tanks or 3,500 amphibious or parachute assault troops and includes extensive regulations to ensure acceptable observation opportunities;
- **Calendar** — requires extensive information about notifiable military activities scheduled for the following year;
- **Constraining provisions** — limit notifiable major activities of more than 40,000 troops or 900 tanks to one per two years and smaller exercises (13,000 to 40,000 troops or 300 to 900 tanks) to six per year for each state. Of these six activities per year, only three may be over 25,000 troops or 400 tanks. Maximum of three simultaneous notifiable activities and none may exceed more than 13,000 troops or 300 tanks;
- **Compliance and verification** — provides for short-warning *inspections* (to be initiated within 36 hours of the request, employing a maximum of four inspectors, and to last no more than 48 hours) of troubling sites and activities (limit of three received inspections per year for each state) as well as *evaluation* visits to confirm the accuracy of the information measure's data (the number of visits based on force size but a maximum of fifteen received visits per year for each state);
- **Communications** — establishes an efficient and direct communications network for CSCE use in distributing notifications, clarifications, and requests; and
- **Annual Implementation Assessment** — which mandates an annual assessment of compliance.

Conclusion

This brief paper provides a general background that should help in understanding the nature of confidence building. The goal has been to provide "food for thought" rather than ready-made proposals for CBM packages applicable in distinct regions throughout the world. The advance construction of such packages by outsiders is inappropriate. For them to have meaning and value, CBM proposals must be informed by conceptual sensitivity (the paper's contribution) *and* a deep appreciation of the specific political, military, and social context of a particular regional application. The latter entails incorporating the insights of true area specialists and also requires the active engagement

of thoughtful and committed policy makers from the region. The potential for genuine confidence building in different regions will be difficult to realize unless policy makers and area specialists have a good understanding of the confidence building approach *and* how its implementation could serve the security interests of states within the region.

A secondary aim of this paper has been to suggest that confidence building — and its use in new areas of application — is more complex than some might suspect. Simply copying existing applications — for instance, transferring a simple version of the Vienna CBM agreement to a new region — probably will prove inadequate. The provision of information about military forces (both structures and activities), the opportunity to observe military activities, the provision of direct communication lines, and some modest deployment constraints (the basics of a modest CBM package) do little on their own to change the security relationship of a group of states. Information is as likely to stir concerns as it is to resolve them. One simply acquires more data to support existing conceptions of adversaries and threatening neighbours. While some measures can be useful on their own terms — "Hot Line" communication links, for instance — they are of limited utility. The understanding of confidence building guiding this paper maintains that a true confidence building arrangement taps into broader processes of transformation, both in the perception of security relations and perhaps in even broader terms.

Although this security management approach has great promise, its adoption must be tempered by caution and pursued with imagination. Confidence building is not simply the negotiation of a collection of CBMs. As we are increasingly coming to appreciate, it involves more fundamental processes of change. This paper has attempted to stress the importance of the relationship between the negotiation and implementation of CBM agreements on the one hand and, on the other, the fundamental transformation of perceptions of threat. *If* confidence building means facilitating transformation — if it means more than simply compiling a collection of discrete measures — then the use of the confidence building concept must be linked with a genuine transformation process. And, of course, the process of change must be attainable and imminent. Timing — when to begin exploring the negotiation of CBM agreements — will be important and the identification of the roots of change or transformation will be crucial. But most importantly, policy makers and analysts must understand the basic nature of the confidence building approach in order to use it effectively and productively. If they do, the promise of confidence building surely will be realized.

LIBRARY E / BIBLIOTHEQUE A E



3 5036 20041243 8



