DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ELABORATING GUIDELINES FOR CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES

Working paper: Finland

The purpose of the present working paper is to submit some considerations that the delegation of Finland regards as particularly relevant to the work of the Disarmament Commission in fulfilling the task of elaborating guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global and regional level.

1. Delimitation of the concept

Confidence between States, or, in a broader sense, between nations, is the function of various factors - historical, cultural, political and economic - that encompass virtually the entire scope of international interaction. This basic and obvious relationship was underlined, inter alia, in the comprehensive study of the Group of Governmental Experts on Confidence-building Measures (A/36/474 and Corr.1). It is suggested, however, that the Disarmament Commission, in fulfilling its task, take the following into account when considering guidelines for confidence-building measures:

(a) As a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, the function of which is to consider and make recommendations concerning various problems in the field of disarmament, the Disarmament Commission is intended to deal with the military aspects of security;

(b) Both as a theoretical concept and as concrete arrangements, confidence-building measures, both envisaged and implemented, pertain essentially to the field of military activities. This has been notably the case in the context of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe;
(c) A delimitation of the concept of confidence-building measures so as to concentrate on the military aspects of security should be seen as a pragmatic approach aiming at ensuring that the Disarmament Commission effectively discharge its task.

2. **Contents of confidence-building measures**

In the light of the above, the contents of confidence-building measures should derive from the overall objectives of confidence-building to promote security and stability, in particular the following:

- Reducing the dangers of misunderstanding or miscalculation of military activities;

- Reducing the risk of military confrontation and giving effect to the duty of States to refrain from the use or threat of use of force.

The implementation of confidence-building measures, even if on a voluntary basis, or even if such measures are marginal from the military point of view, may assume major political importance. However, an overall aim should be the attainment of both militarily significant and politically binding measures, i.e. measures which cover a major part of military activities, in particular such as may be perceived to be threatening. Such measures would include arrangements for providing and obtaining information on military activities as well as qualitatively different measures, including constraints, and would provide for appropriate procedures for verifying compliance.

The building of confidence through such measures could be seen as a dynamic process: early, largely voluntary, militarily less significant measures could successively be followed by more far-reaching measures. Both in a political and technical sense, experience gained from the implementation of such early measures could facilitate agreement on further measures. Evolution of politically binding confidence-building measures into obligations under international law could also be envisaged.

3. **Indivisibility of security**

Irrespective of the ways of delimiting the concept of confidence-building measures, the interdependence of the security of Member States and the complementary nature of military and political aspects of security should be kept in mind: the consideration of confidence-building measures is possible only in a broader context of international relations. In considering such measures, it is the sovereign right of every State to assess and define its own security interests.

4. **Global and regional approaches**

A global and a regional approach to tackling questions of international security have in various contexts been found to be complementary rather than contradictory. The Charter of the United Nations, *inter alia*, specifically provides for the possibility of regional arrangements.
Considering the nature of confidence-building measures as concrete and practical undertakings, a regional approach may be particularly useful in view of the following:

(a) A "region" could be conceived so as to correspond as closely as possible with a regional security system, so as to comprise all States responsible for the security of the region concerned;

(b) In view of the immediate purposes of confidence-building measures, geographical proximity plays a major role;

(c) Measures to be adopted could be designed to reflect the particular political and military situation of the region concerned;

(d) The elaboration of confidence-building measures could constitute a part of other arrangements of regional co-operation already existing or envisaged, with the voluntary participation, and on the basis of sovereign equality, of all States concerned;

(e) As many confidence-building measures may involve arrangements for various kinds of information on military activities and therefore costs for providing and obtaining such information, the efficiency of such measures in a regional context may be optimal;

(f) Commitment to pursue confidence-building measures on a regional level serves in itself to increase confidence in the intentions of others: such commitment implicitly recognizes the existence of shared interest which can be translated into mutually beneficial practical measures. In this regard the conditions for pursuing confidence-building measures may significantly vary from region to region;

(g) A regional approach should be pursued in full recognition of the relationship between the security of the region concerned and the security of adjacent regions as well as world security in general.

5. **Confidence-building measures and disarmament**

As contributions to the realization of the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations, confidence-building measures should be seen as an avenue to increased rationality and stability in international relations and thus to enhanced international security. As such their basic aims are not dissimilar to those of disarmament efforts. Yet, confidence-building measures should not and cannot be considered a substitute for disarmament. Nor can they affect the priorities established for disarmament negotiations as elaborated, inter alia, in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In considering guidelines for confidence-building measures, it should be envisaged that the elaboration of such measures can be pursued independently or as measures collateral to disarmament. By their very nature, confidence-building measures could be seen as action aimed at creating conditions for agreements on arms control and disarmament and, in appropriate cases, also be instrumental in the verification of such agreements.