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Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms

Working paper submitted by Sweden on behalf of the European Union*

Preliminary suggestions for recommendations on chapter V

General

The European Union would like chapter V to include a recommendation encouraging States to continue building trust and reducing misperceptions and miscalculations in international relations, thereby contributing to international peace and security.

The examples of practical confidence-building measures (CBMs) provided for in chapter III (developed to include a new subchapter "Politico-military aspects of security" as proposed by the European Union), would, together with the additional new chapter, which contains experiences from different regions, constitute a broad range of measures that can serve as inspiration and possible guidance for countries and regions.

The European Union would recommend that all States, in their efforts to enhance their own security situation as well as the security situation of their respective regions, should consider the possibility of applying CBMs that have proved to be effective in other regions, taking into consideration the specificities of their own security situation.

* The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia) and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this working paper.



The European Union considers transparency to be a key element in all CBMs. To further develop transparency between nations, the resumption of work in the Conference of Disarmament on the agenda item “Transparency in armament” would be instrumental.

Countries or regions that already have CBMs in place should consider further consolidating them and, if applicable, should be encouraged to gradually change non-binding regimes into binding instruments. While recognizing that CBMs may start as voluntary actions, they may subsequently be transferred into politically binding documents or further developed into international legally binding agreements. This development can take place on a bilateral, subregional, regional or global basis.

Countries and regions that do not have CBMs, in particular all States in whose regions military tensions exist or armed conflicts occur, should be especially encouraged to consider taking action with regard to such measures.

The recommendations should include a call for improved dialogue on all levels, including between regions, in an effort to learn from and be inspired by experience gained.

States should be encouraged to involve civil society and non-governmental organizations when considering possible new CBMs as well as, when applicable, implementing such measures.

At a national, regional and subregional level

Regions should be encouraged to share information with other regions of their experience of various CBMs through joint seminars and other activities.

Countries and regions should be encouraged to support various United Nations efforts to facilitate the broadest possible exchange of information.

Role of the United Nations

The role of the United Nations should be enhanced with regard to arranging seminars and other events related to CBMs. To this end, the United Nations could draw on the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament.

Regionally

The United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament should be encouraged to facilitate work within their respective regions on CBMs. They should also help with the compiling and submission of data from their respective regions, to be gathered on a global level, which would improve dialogue with other regions on CBMs.

Globally

In the global context, the United Nations should be encouraged to explore ways to improve the collection and dissemination of information on CBMs in order to avoid duplication and improve effectiveness.

Given the character of the CBMs as valuable tools in pre-conflict and post-conflict situations, the United Nations should facilitate their voluntary adoption by concerned countries in all cases of conflict prevention and resolution as well as in post-conflict stabilization and rehabilitation.

The recommendations should include a call on States to actively improve the effectiveness of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as well as the United Nations standardized system of reporting on military expenditures so as to gain universal participation in these two instruments.

The European Union would like to see CBMs included in the plan of action from the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be held from 9 to 20 July 2001, and will further elaborate on this at a later stage.