Regional Security Regime, Confidence and Security Building Measures within the Context of Arab- Israeli Disputes

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Confidence building measures (CBMs), applied for the first time during the peak moment of the Cold War in Europe, among phrases has been used in the terminology of arms control and security. The short-term purpose of these measurements is sufficient confidence building among parties in different conflicts in order to prevent unpleasant and dangerous consequences arising from misunderstanding. The long-term purpose of them has been fundamental resolution of conflicts of rival parties. Example of CBMs is installing hot-line telephone between Washington and Moscow and Helsinki documents in 1970s are instance of confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) (1).

The theoretical introductions of confidence building measures are very flexible. Almost any kind of measures which lead to more comfortable feeling can be called CBMs. The most important point needs to be addressed is that these effective measures have been designed for countries with continuous hostility, and not for friendly nations. CBMs do not include any sort of high threatening and cost, and they may rarely lead to the contrary results, but CBMs can be effective and reliable only when the world accompanies the action. CBMs in Europe has been successful, and regional stability and willingness of parties for maintaining peaceful relations are claimed to be responsible for this achievement. The main

question to be raised here is whether these measures can be applied for different kinds of conflicts and groupings in the Middle East region with less hope for peaceful coexistence.

The purpose of this article is to study historical development and application of CBMs in the Middle East, and to examine some subsequent measures towards the process of peace in this region. CBMs, in oder to be successful, should be performed within the framework of a regional security regime. Thus, let us at first discuss the concept of security regimes and the nature of confidence building measure.

Security Regime in the Middle East

According to Robert Jervis (2), security regime consists of those principles, rules, norms that permit nations to and be restrained in their behavior in the belief that others will reciprocate. This concept implies not only norms and expectations that facilitate cooperation, but a form of cooperation that is more than the following of short-run self- interest.

The Middle East is now in a state of flux in both diplomatic and strategic contexts. Much diplomatic efforts have been put into the peace process to reach a détente between the parties. Yet, both contexts are affected by the developments outside the pure inter-state Arab-Israeli relationship, such as proliferation of nuclear weapons and missiles, as well as a surge in the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism. Under the existing conditions and circumstances, the best the states in the region can aspire to is the establishment of a security regime.

An important component of this regime would be arms control. The cardinal elements of a regime require agreements on joint policy processes guided by agreed principles, verification mechanisms and decision-making procedures. Such a regime would require co-ordination by an institutional infrastructure. The second best option is a tacit security regime evolving in the absence of a formal security arrangement, which might require difficult compromises. Taking into account the long tradition of tacit agreements in the Arab-Israeli

context and two decades of nuclear opaqueness in the region, such a possibility should not be dismissed (3).

Nature and Importance of Confidence Building Measures

Security is the first priority in any state, but when one state increases its security, the security of the others is weakened, thereby leading to efforts to strengthen it (4). This is often explained in terms of a security-insecurity paradox. The only way to solve this problem is confidence building measures. Confidence building measures which have been created in Cold War, are arrangements to augment the allegiance and trust of the states to each other(5).

Confidence building measures (CBMs) and confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) are conceptions born in the Cold War and carry with them the flavor of military hardware in their acronyms. The former are intended to avoid the inadvertent use of weapons of mass destruction because of misunderstandings and miscommunication about the actions of either of the contending parties in the Cold War. The installation of the telephone hot line between Washington and Moscow was an example of a CBM. CSBMs have a more positive connotation since they are directed towards replacing distrust with trust through human contacts and institutional practices that reduce the level of suspicion and replace it with practices that build mutual understanding. The Helsinki accords were an example of a CSBM (6). CBMs are measures adopted to reduce the risk that arms will be used by the structural – functional institutionalization of behavior. CSBMs refer to such practices as cultural exchanges which develop social contacts and encourage psychological changes.

CBMs and CSBMs have three common characteristics. Both are directed primarily at the leadership of conflicting states rather than the broader public. Both are premised on state / state or bloc/bloc conflict in which contending military forces face each other, measures presumably applicable to the Israeli / Egyptian or Israeli / Syrian conflicts rather than the intercommunal conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. CBMs and CSBMs also have a

static connotation, not by ensuring a power balance is maintained through an ever escalating arms race, but by stabilizing a security regime and preventing inadvertent escalation. Instead of Berlin Wall that separates the sides and expands suspicion, these measures are to establish communicational channels for increasing the relations and creating confidence (7). Confidence and security building measures today are considered as vital concepts which can control and manage different disputes and conflicts. While the primary purpose is to control military equipment and decrease the threat and tension, both military and nonmilitary instruments may be productive to secure this purpose (8).

If the both sides of the conflict tend to prevent unpleasant consequences, they will attempt for confidence building measures. In other words, the sides do not possess political willingness to change the relations originally, but they focus on the situation that both sides have a tendency to prevent it. Even in a severe conflict characterized by strained relations, the sides do not incline to break off the relations abruptly which may be contiguous to war. But the danger of war is not impossible and, sometimes because of existence of unstable humanitarian societies, seems to be inevitable. In order to prevent this danger which can hurt the sides, we may take some measures. These measures cab be 1- preventive measures;2- confidence building measures, and 3- mixture of preventive and CBMs (9). Confidence building measures theory pragmatically depends on instrumental rationality and positivism. This theory concentrates on rational measures to prevent irrational ones. Accordingly, hostile sides have a common purpose; they intend to prevent violence and create better entente. There is a possibility that the sides have various interests, thereby specific measures should be taken by which not only the interests keep sound but they go forward(10).

Several definitions of CSBMs have been used. Since transparency was central in the European context, initial definitions focused on it. Transparency is aimed at diminishing the uncertainties of both sides regarding their military situation, thus increasing their confidence.

In order to include additional dimensions of the effects of CSBMs, however, a more comprehensive and structured definition is required. The following, while limited to the strategic – military dimension, covers all these aspects: CSBMs are measures taken in the strategic – military area that regulate the military behavior of states in conflict, leading to the reduction of uncertainty on both sides in regard to: (11)

- General military escalation

- Crisis escalation

- Surprise attacks

- Low – level violence

CSBMs fall into several categories. First, there are those measures relating to communications between opponents; some of the CSBMs in the European context, such as advance notification about military exercise, belong to this category. Second are "physical" measures, that is, measures affecting actual military hardware and deployments; the most common among these is the creation of demilitarized zones, or areas of limited military deployment. Third are measures affecting military behavior; for example, "rules of engagement" between air forces or navies.

CSBMs, Arms Control and Security Regimes

Whereas CSBMs focus on the regulation of military forces, rules of engagement and other measures designed to enhance confidence and stability, arms control deals in a more restricted way with quantitative limitations or reductions of various weapon systems. Because both aim at enhanced strategic stability, there is some overlapping between CSBMs and arms control, and arms control also has a confidence – building orientation. However, as noted, the instruments are different(12).

When CSBMs are elaborate, persist over time and are combined with stable mutual deterrence (or stable deterrence by the party committed to the defense of the status quo), the

potential for the emergence of a security regime may develop. A security regime between conflicting parties is based on shared interests in the preservation of the status quo. It comprises sets of mutual expectations that the parties would adhere to the "rules" of the regime, and also various established procedures for dealing with different aspects of the regime. One approach suggests that in some developed security regimes, "norms" of behavior emerge, are internalized by the parties, and dictate policy outputs. Another approach regards regimes as intervening variables that, in addition to interests, serve as an input into the decision – making process(13).

Some sets of CSBMs in the Arab – Israeli region have indeed developed into limited security regimes.

Confidence Building Measures in Arab-Israeli Region

Disputes vary in the Middle East; some are in the regional level, some between two countries, and others stay between the Arabic and Islamic countries themselves. Even in the framework of Arab-Israeli disputes, there are various issues which should be analytically separated. The quality of relations between Egypt and Israel are certainly different from the war between Palestinians and Israelis in the sake of the territory where is based on belief, racial/ethical and minority aspects. In fact, the relations between Egypt and Israel have been highly changed over time and their current relations differ from the relations during Naser period. The current relations between Israel and major regional actors, however, permit to begin the confidence building measures because in most disputes zero-sum game is not available and if there is, it will not be unchangeable.

Military confidence building measures confine the access or maintaining of military capabilities, and political confidence building measures restrict the use of offensive capabilities. Regarding the dissatisfaction of Arab from the status quo, they do not incline to acknowledge open confidence building measures and direct negotiations, because this is

considered as an implicit recognition of Israeli legitimacy. Arab usually adjust their policy in reaction to Israeli policy. If Israel starts confidence building measures, the Arab will seem to do so. This is why western states in spite of disinclination, have accepted different kinds of military confidence building measures particularly in the field of forces segregation (14). Yet, Jordan's policy to refrain deployment in West Bank prior to 1967 can be seen as a confidence building measure. Also, Syria when accepted unofficial agreement (Red Line) to limit military intervention in Lebanon after 1967, did another kind of confidence building measure (15).

But Israel has not shown tendency towards these measures. Although Israel does not consider itself as a revisionist state, it severely mistrusts the Arab and believes that they intend to change the status quo through military ways. This is why Israel increases its military capabilities and does not support arms control as well as confidence building measures.

In fact, most restrictions towards confidence building measures have been accepted by Arab, but Israel has not admitted them. Israel does not have tendency to support and acknowledge multilateral arms control agreements aimed at confidence building measures. Israel refrained to sign nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and only after American force it accepted the control regime for missile technological export in 1992. Israel believes that the acceptance of restrictions indicates its feebleness against enemy, and because it does not trust to international organizations, attempting to have self-reliance in security issues. Although Israel accepts limited confidence building , it relies on military deterrence for its security which implies a kind of threat to Arab. In these situations the Arab-Israeli relations remain unchanged and limited confidence building measures seem insufficient to achieve major objectives (16).

Since the end of the 1948 War, Israel and its four Arab neighbors have at different times applied various sets of CSBMs. These have included both formal and informal

arrangements. The formal arrangements include the four armistice agreements of 1949 between Israel and Egypt, Israel and Jordan, Israel and Syria, and Israel and Lebanon; and also the 1974 Israeli – Syrian agreement concerning the military situation on the Golan, the 1974 and 1974 Israeli – Egyptian agreements (Sinai I and Sinai II), and the military components of the Israeli – Egyptian peace agreement of 1979.

Among the informal "packages" of CSBMs have been the continuing Israeli – Jordanian military understandings and sometimes co-ordination extending (with some breakdowns) from the 1950s to the 1990s; the de facto demilitarization of the Sinai from 1957 to 1967; and the Israeli – Syrian system of "red lines" obtaining in Lebanon from 1976 to the present (with the intermission of the war and its aftermath during 1982-85).

The 1949 Armistice System

The system of the armistice agreements created in 1949 developed into what could be termed as a limited security regime that was an important factor in whatever strategic stability obtained from 1949 to the mid – 1950s.

The armistice agreements were initially regarded as an intermediate measure serving as an introduction to peace. Although this was certainly the Israeli hope, the Arab attitude toward them soon changed, and the agreements were increasingly perceived as only fulfilling a military function. Indeed, the agreements soon became an alternative to political settlements.

The agreements formalized the end of hostilities and demarcated the lines between combatants. They also created formal institutionalized mechanisms whose objective was to settle outstanding disputes stemming from the agreements. These were the Mixed Armistice Committees, in which the parties to the agreements participated and whose chairmen were United Nations representatives. Thus, a system was created that enabled the exchange of direct communications between the parties, which in turn facilitated the settlement of

disputes. Usually these disputes were about the military situation along the borders. Increasingly, in the Israeli – Egyptian and Israeli – Jordanian committees, the main focus of contention was the armed infiltration into Israel and Israeli military retaliation. In addition to the activity of the committees, the UN organ, UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organization), which had been created during the 1948 War and had a body of international observers at   its disposal, served as a further component of security regime that evolved around the armistice agreements. Although both sides – Israelis and Arabs – were occasionally unhappy about UNTSO's activities, these nevertheless provided a machinery that contributed to stability in the area. Finally, through UNTSO or directly, the parties were allowed to appeal to the Security Council when disputes could not otherwise be settled.

The armistice agreements were necessary in order to formalize the end of hostilities. But the evolvement of a security regime based on these agreements, comprising the various formal elements detailed above, depended on three sets of factors. Most important among them was the common desire of all the parties to avoid further military friction. Accordingly, the parties used the mechanisms of the regime to settle many of the disputes that occasionally erupted between them. The parties had a shared interest in the successful maintenance of the regime so long as they wished to avoid escalation to another round of hostilities. Israel had no interest in another war; the Arab parties had other political preoccupations and also were cognizant of Israel's superior military power. In the absence of peace, the agreements and the various mechanisms of the regime enabled the parties to maintain strategic stability along the borders. Indeed, eventually the regime appeared to be a convenient alternative to peace.

Another set of factors that helped maintain the regime, though eventually contributing to its collapse, was regional. Israel and Jordan had overlapping or coincidental regional political interests that drew them together. The two of them were the main benefactors of the war, and they shared an interest in stabilizing the status quo created by the war. Egypt and

Syria were involved in their internal domestic affairs; in the case of Egypt this included the struggle against the British colonial presence there. Both, therefore, were interested in stability along the border with Israel.

The third set of factors was the international situation, which was initially also conducive to the uninterrupted operation of the regime. Until the mid – 1950s, the Cold War did not penetrate the Middle East and the Western powers enjoyed considerable influence over interstate developments in the region. Overall they supported the armistice regime as an important component of the region's stabilization.

By 1954-55, however, both the regional and international environments began to change. Tensions within the Arab world combined with the penetration of the Cold War into the Middle East to undermine strategic stability in Israeli – Arab relations. But the main reasons for the collapse of the regimes were the escalating violence along the borders and the gradual loss of political interest by the parties in the regime security (17).

The Israeli – Syrian "Red Lines" System in Lebanon

Another example of an informal CSBM is the creation of the system of "red lines" between Israel and Syria in Lebanon. The system emerged as a result of indirect contacts (through Washington) between Jerusalem and Damascus in early 1976. At the time, Syria was concerned about the deteriorating situation in Lebanon and reached the conclusion that only its own military intervention could halt the civil war and the process of disintegration there. However, cognizant of the Israeli security interests in Lebanon, Damascus approached Washington and invited American mediation between it and Jerusalem. After a while, Israel responded favorably through Washington to the idea of Syrian intervention, conditioned on limitations on Syrian freedom of military behavior. Damascus accepted these Israeli limitations in general terms, though modifying them, and indeed from that point until 1982 regulated its military behavior within Lebanon in accordance with them. The red lines

consisted, first, geographical limitations on the area in which the Syrian army could operate. Initially, Syrian forces were not to move south of an imaginary line running 10km south of the Beirut – Damascus highway. Eventually the Syrian forces, with tacit Israeli acceptance, moved south beyond that line, but not south of the Zaharani river. A second limitation concerned the size of forces. Another important condition was the non-deployment of surface – to – air missiles within Lebanon. With the outbreak of the 1982 Lebanon War, the system collapsed; it was renewed, however, albeit with modifications, following the Israeli withdrawal in 1985.

The system of red lines served as a major CSBM. Although allowing for Syrian military intervention, it regulated it in ways that protected vital Israeli security interests. Thus, both sides implemented their strategies in Lebanon while reducing their uncertainties about what they perceived as security threats (18).

The 1974 Golan Agreement

In contrast to the Sinai de facto demilitarization and the red lines understandings in Lebanon, which were informal (and to some degree even tacit) arrangements, the Israeli – Syrian 1974 agreement concerning the Golan was formal, explicit and detailed. It was important for several reasons: first, it terminated the phase of the 1973 War; second, it delineated demilitarized zones and zones of limited military deployment, thus, considerably reducing the danger of escalation from unintended, direct confrontational contacts between the opponents; it also provided for the introduction of third parties as observers and as a conduit for the positions and complaints of both sides. Altogether then, this agreement played an important role in stabilizing the military situation on the ground. Syria had a political interest in changing the status quo on the Golan. But Israeli military superiority, demonstrated yet again in 1973, was sufficient to deter Damascus from initiating military action by itself.

Because the two parties were convinced that the agreement promoted their respective strategic interests, they implemented it rigorously.

Sina I and Sina II

In 1974 Egypt and Israel agreed to formalize the cease-fire that had followed the 1973 War, with an agreement that served as an important security measure until it was replaced by the Sinai II agreement in September 1975. Both agreements included detailed arrangements for the creation of areas of limited military deployment that served as buffer zones. This facilitated the process of Israeli withdrawal from areas it had conquered in the war. The agreements also contained detailed arrangements for verification and control, thus diminishing the parties' uncertainty about possible defection.

Another important aspect was the significant American involvement in the execution of the agreements., which served as a further guarantee against violations. Moreover, the 1975 agreement provided for American compensation to the aggrieved party in case of defection by the opponent.

Although the agreements did not explicitly serve as an introduction to formal peace, in retrospect it is clear that they were instrumental in paving the way to the Israeli – Egyptian peace treaty(19).

The Peace Treaty

With the signing of the peace treaty in 1979 , Israeli – Egyptian strategic and military relations underwent a major transformation. For the first time, the military clauses that formed part of the treaty were backed by a new political relationship characterized by accommodation rather than conflict.

The security regime created by the treaty consisted of several elements: demilitarization of a large part of Sinai; limitations on the deployment of ground forces in other parts of Sinai; arrangements limiting air and naval movements; the creation of binational

military committees for overseeing the operation of the agreement and discussing issues in dispute; the creation of a multilateral force (MFO), including American forces, to verify the agreement. All these elements constitute a perfect body of CSBM.

CSBMs in the Middle East and in Europe: Some Comparative Comments

The inventory of CSBMs in the Middle East has been richer than in Europe. On the face of it, it seems paradoxical that precisely in a high-intensity conflict such as the Arab-Israeli one, the CSBMs were introduced at an early stage. There are several possible explanations:

- In the absence of formal peace, war termination necessitates arrangements organizing the transition from war to the no-war phase. These usually regulate military behavior and thus fall into the category of CSBMs. Thus, it was precisely the frequency of wars in the Middle East and the absence of formal peace agreements that led to the introduction of various CSBMs. The situation in Europe has been, of course, very different.

- Precisely the persistent concern about the outbreak of war in the Arab-Israeli region, including the possibility that small-scale violence along the borders might escalate into large-scale war, obliged the parties (so long as they wished to avoid such war) to establish mechanisms and procedures for regulating their military forces and behavior. The objective has been to prevent both small-scale military friction and large-scale escalation (20).

In the past even in severe disputes era, strategic stability in Arab-Israeli region has been maintained by limited confidence building measures. Also, today a formal peace will not establish unless security arrangements which include arms control and confidence and security building measures have already been constituted.

The rich inventory of CSBMs obtaining over the years in the Middle East could provide insights for future bilateral CSBMs. The conditions for their success, as well as their failure where indeed they have failed, are significant for the future.

First, the formal and explicit nature of future CSBMs could reduce the uncertainties that attended past informal CSBMs and thus diminish fears about defections and violations. Second, the political process currently evolving promises, as mentioned, a more conducive context for the achievement and persistence of CSBMs. However, by the same token, a major breakdown in the peace negotiations would destabilize existing CSBMs, primarily the 1974 Golan agreement, and, less certainly and depending on political conditions, also the Israeli – Jordanian relationship and the Israeli – Egyptian overall relationship. Third, extra – regional parties played an important role in some of the historical CSBMs. It is likely that their role in the future, especially in the Syrian – Israeli context, will continue to be important. On the other hand, in cases where two parties have accumulated extensive co-operation experience over the years, as between Israel and Jordan, there is no need for direct involvement of third parties in a system of CSBMs. Fourth, formal peace coupled with extensive CSBM could provide the conditions for the creation of a comprehensive co-operative security regime.

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss in detail issues that are currently under diplomatic negotiations or might become so very soon. Instead, only the possible general features of future CSBMs will be considered here.

Future CSBMs will fall into four categories:

1. "Physical" arrangements, such as demilitarization of zones, areas of limited deployment of forces, and limitations on the deployment of specific weapon systems.

2. Regulation of military behavior, which could consist of "rules of engagement" of military units, primarily in the air, and other measures for regulating areas in which the armed forces of parties confront each other.

3. Increased communications between the parties, comprising two distinct categories: first , the creation of various mechanisms for settling disputes in the military area as well as for advance notification about military exercises or other threatening aspects of military operations; second, mutual learning about the strategic doctrines and intentions of the parties.

4. Crisis prevention and crisis management mechanisms (21).

Israeli – Syrian CSBMs

In the absence of mutual confidence, the complicated and territorial political-strategic problems between Syria and Israel have intensified. Former president of Syria Hafez Asad describes the relations between two countries:

"Syria is enemy of Israel as Israel is enemy of Syria"(22)

After 1974 , acutely aware of its military inferiority to Israel, Syria based its strategy in the conflict on the achievement of "strategic parity" with Israel. The key to "parity" was wide – ranging Soviet support. But the evolving changes in the Soviet Union meant that such parity was no longer realizable. A reassessment of Syria's policies ensued. Asad's military response was a continuing and accelerated effort to improve Syria's defensive capability (or in soviet terms, its "reasonable defensive sufficiency"). To deter Israel or to exact a high price from it in case of war, surface-to-surface missiles (possibly counterforce and a countervalue weapon. Syria, however, is still almost entirely dependent on outside suppliers and has been experiencing difficulties in procuring first-rate technology. Asad's political response was a gradual "tilt" toward the US, culminating in his participation in both the Gulf War and the Madrid peace process (which was indispensable to setting it in motion). To Asad, the main advantage of the process lay in furthering his relationship with the US Administration (which had previously aided him to tighten his hold over Lebanon)(23).

Syria is following the policy to take back its territory (Golan) where was occupied by Israel in 1967 and we can not expect Syria to forget this policy (24).

The Israeli – Syrian situation is very different from the circumstances which led to CBM between the US and USSR and in Europe. There the point of departure was the nuclear stalemate between status quo powers. Here the problem is how to go about building confidence between a status quo state and a "dissatisfied" state wishing to change the existing situation. Israel and Syria differ in their "visions" and their views on the issues involved. Their deep mutual distrust has been reinforced by reciprocal perceptions of the other in negative "demonic" stereotypes (e.g., Israel as a "high – tech crusader state")(25).

Concerning confidence building Hafez Asad states:

> In circumstances like ours, CBMs are not the best way to resolve the pr a 170oblem under discussion. If we really want peace, then we must implement these resolutions [Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338]. This implementation will take us directly… to confidence itself which goes beyond the CBMs. If we start going into CBMs – which in this case will be many measures and not only one - we will waste time… needed by the peace process as a whole. So why do we not walk on a straight line to the objective we want, if we really want peace (26).

The asymmetries in outlook and capabilities (including the field of WMD), has led some observers to conclude that a military balance of power in the classical sense between Israel and Syria may not be possible. How to overcome such asymmetry and by what reciprocity is a matter of delicate negotiations and assumes more mutual confidence than reigns between the parties at present.

The hostility prevalent in the Israeli – Syrian conflict has psychological and cultural foundations. The divergent political cultures may have different ethics of compliance. In such an environment, to embark sincerely on confidence building the parties have to make fundamental political decisions establishing "rules of the game." One essential measure of trust is accepting the legitimacy of Israel. Another is accepting that both sides have legitimate security needs, often in conflict. Yet, a process of CB has now begun, mainly on the

nonbinding declaratory level; it will have to deal with renouncing the use of force, deployment limitations, buffer zones, changes in force structure, and arms control. It may not really progress unless political negotiations advance.

Israeli – Jordanian CSBM

The Jordanians are also aware of their basic military inferiority vis -a – vis Israel and apparently are not aiming to increase their military capability relative to Israel. Moreover, their commitments to general Arab causes are more than balanced by their shared political interests with Israel, among them their concern about the possibility of other Arab forces being deployed in their own territory. Following the Washington Declaration, the Jordanians have moved to formal peace with Israel and to various CSBMs.

Because of Israel's concern about the possibility of penetration of hostile Arab forces into Jordan, it would be logical for Israel to search for wider defense arrangements with Jordan that could make such penetration unlikely. Thus, Israeli – Jordanian security relations should combine measures to pre-empt terrorism as well as long – range understandings regarding the possibility of joint defense arrangements on the high strategic level. Indeed, the current Jordanian – Israeli strategic negotiations in the context of the peace treaty are focusing already, among other things, on ideas such as a defense treaty. In addition, Israel would probably share with Jordan an effort to involve Jordan politically and strategically in the West Bank.

American Involvement

Resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been a central theme of American policy since the conflict emerged as an international issue following World Ware II, but the intensity of American efforts and the nature of the approaches to conflict resolution and management have varied considerably. Although the dominance of the American position has been asserted only after the Six Day War (1967) and especially the Yom Kippur War (1973), the concepts

were developed earlier. In 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles articulated a conceptualization, albeit not particularly announced, of the problem that included some rudimentary notions of confidence building to counteract the fear of the regional actors that contributed to the problems of the region(27). Although Dulles' approach was rather unsophisticated, reflecting the level of understanding of the issues and of the mechanisms to make them operative, it nevertheless wove together concepts of conflict resolution and confidence building in ways that have been a part of the American approach since, although not always clearly and explicitly.

From the outset, a number of themes have been included in the articulated approach. Clearly the United States believed that the conflict required resolution and was prepared to work to achieve that end, although the nature and extent of the United States effort varied from administration to administration. (28) At the same time, the United States has seen its own role in varying terms. In the first decades of the conflict it remained distant ant sought not to be a central player, despite concern about the problem. It was after the Six Day War and especially after the Yom Kippur War that it became a central and indispensable actor. And, it was only after the 1973 war that a clear and detailed conceptual framework began to develop, although elements of the policy were articulated earlier in such statements as President Lyndon Johnson's "principles of peace" address of June 1967.(29) After the 1973 war the United States also began to guarantee the process through various actions that were designed to reassure the parties and create the confidence essential to ensure the success of the peace process. (30)

Throughout the effort, the United States developed a weak and often unarticulated conceptual approach to the problem. By the post-Cold War period its content focused on several themes: the conflict was an important one and dangerous, posing a threat to the regional and international interests of the United States. The parties could not, on their own,

reach a solution to the problem. But, on the other hand, the United States could not substitute itself for any of the parties – that is, the parties to the conflict had to be the parties to the peace. The United States could play the role of bringing the parties together and could then help to generate the CBMs that would bridge the gaps between them and thereby help to assure the success of the process. It could also help to create a more friendly and positive regional environment by dealing with collateral issues, such as water resources and arms control. This conceptualization later became a part of the Madrid process with its simultaneous bilateral and multilateral tracks.

American Approach to the Confidence Building Measures

The United States has recognized the value of CBMs in the Arab – Israeli peace process since it first utilized them in the Nixon administration. The absence of confidence can preclude negotiations while its existence will not in and of itself make negotiations "happen". But confidence is difficult both to create and to sustain. Confidence remains an intangible factor, difficult to identify and to quantify. As Kissinger negotiated the disengagement agreement of 1974 and the Sinai II agreement of 1975, CBMs of various types were included in the process and in the agreements. CBMs, albeit initially without using the appellation, were seen as both appropriate and necessary in the US effort to convince the parties to participate in the process and to reach agreement. The CBMs proved essential to the process.

The United States has seen confidence building measures as an important element of the Arab – Israeli process. Dennis Ross, then head of the Department of State's policy planning staff and a leading player in the US efforts, in an address before the Middle East Institute, on October 12, 1990, said: "We believe that confidence building measures of the sort we developed with the Soviets in Europe, could be pursued between Israel and her Arab neighbors to reduce the risk of war and miscalculation and to lay the basis for their political engagement." He did not elaborate.

The United States has sought to use two approaches to CBMs: One is to get the parties to initiate them for each other. Failing that, as for example in the first months of the Madrid process, the United States will, as with Camp David and earlier efforts, propose its own CBMs for the parties. The United States would seek to encourage the parties to take mutual confidence building measures. For example, Baker suggested to Israel that it could freeze the building of settlements in the occupied territories in exchange for a relaxation by Arab states of the Arab economic boycott against Israel. However, each side preferred the first move to be made by the other and neither was prepared for such far – reaching concessions.

The United States can provide a variety of CBMs to the parties involved. Thus, for example, for Jordan and the Palestinians the United States could provide an improved quality of life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there could be an end to settlement building, there could be less military pressure in the occupied territories, there could be limits on the arms races (both conventional and nonconventional), and there are possibilities of water sharing, as well as demilitarized zones. The idea of a goodwill gesture remains a part of the process. All together, US considers that she is the only power that can make a major role to settle Arab-Israeli disputes.

Those that went to Madrid did not go because they wanted to or because they were eager to make peace or speak to each other. They went because Bush and Baker wanted them to, told them to, and pressured them to do so (31).

Although US mediates the peace but in Arab-Israeli disputes US has never been neutral and always supported Israeli interests. The only way which can solve the problem and settle the disputes is neutral position or let us say fair position adopted by United States. US should force and influence Israel for establishment of peace as does it to the Arab. But unfortunately, in all efforts for peace between Arab and Israel such as Madrid Conference in October 1991 the U.S. support to the Israeli position is obvious.

Conclusion

Because of arms procurement, Middle East has been highly armed during several last decades. Some regional states such as Israel, Egypt and Iraq have expanded their military industries which approximately depend on foreign technology. The arms race has augmented regional instability. Different political priorities of Arabic states along with financial evaluation of war against Israel have forced Egypt, Syria and Jordan to accept confidence building measures which include arms control regimes. These measures adopted to prevent or decrease severe tensions which may lead to general war.

In mid-1950s these measures were formal, but informal understandings or ententes were also possible. After 1950s the measures mainly became less formal and later on they returned to be adopted in the framework of formal treaties such as Golan agreement, Sina I and Sina II, and Egypt- Israel peace agreement. Sometimes these confidence building measures have helped the regional stability but in mid- 1950s and in 1967 and 1982 they collapsed.

There were several military-political factors aimed at failing the confidence building measures; (1) limited violence in the borders along with regional and global political events, (2) expansion of Arabic states disputes to the Arab-Israel relations, and changing Israeli national security that led Israel to occupy part of Lebanon in 1982. Confidence building measures, therefore, individually can not necessarily guarantee peace and stability. Although these measures are very important but it does not mean that they do not fail. Furthermore, the role of supra regional actors in confidence building measures is necessary condition but not sufficient one. Thus, confidence and security building measures are necessary for peace and stability. If these measures lead to appropriate security regimes which may redefine national security interests, they will be constructive. National and international security will gradually convince political decision -makers to prefer security regime rather than conflicting interests.

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Notes:

1- Howard Adelman , " Towards a Confidence Transformational Dynamic ", In Gabriel Ben-Dor and David B. Dewitt(eds)", *Confedence Building Measures in the Middle East ,*(Boulder , Sanfrancisco, Oxford : Westview Press 1994), P 166.

2- Robert Jervis , " Security Regimes " , in Kvasners , *International Regimes ,* Vol 36, No 2, (Princetone : Princetone University Press, 1983), P.173.

3- Yair Evron, "Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Arab-Israeli Context, " *Contemporary Security Policy,*" Vol 16, No 1 (April 1995), P 182.

4- Robert Jervis , "Coopration Under the Security Dilemma ", *World Politics,* Vol 30 , (1978) , P 167.

5- Gideon Gera, " Israeli and Syria:The Problem of Confidence ", in Ben-Dor and Dewitt (eds) ,. *Op.cit ,* P 166.

6- Adelman ,*Op.cit,* P 170.

7- Gera , *Op.cit.*

8- Gabreil Ben-Dor and David B. Dewitt, *Confidence Building in the Middle East,*(Boulder, Sanfrancisco , Oxford : Westview Press , 1994), P 28.

9- *Ibid,* PP 3-4.

10-   Adelman ,*Op.cit,* P 177.

11-   Evron , *Op.cit,* P 153.

12-   Volker, Rittberger, Manfred Efinger and Martin Mandler, "Toward an East-West Security Regime: The Case of Confidence and Security Building Measures, " *Journal of Peace Research,* Vol 27, No 1, (1990), PP 58-59.

13-   Evron, *Op.cit,* P 153.

14-   Mark A. Heller, "Confidence Building Measures and Israeli Security Concerns", in Ben-Dor and Dewitt, *Op.cit,* P 106.

15-   *Ibid,* P 107.

16-   *Ibid,* PP 107-110.

17-   Evron, *Op.cit,* PP 154-156.

18-   *Ibid,* PP 157-158.

19-   *Ibid,* PP 154-156.

20-   *Ibid,* 158.

21-   *Ibid,* 159.

22-   Heller, *Op.cit,* P 110.

23-   Gera, *Op.cit,* P 167.

24-   Evron, *Op.cit,* P 160.

25-   Gera, *Op.cit,* P 170.

26-   *Ibid,* 171.

27-   Bernard Reich, "The United States and the AraIsraeli Peace Process", in Ben-Dor and Dewitt, *Op.cit,* P 222.

28-   William B. Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*(Washington: The Brooking Institution, and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

29-   Reich, *Op.cit,* P 222.

30-   The US role included such activities as the civilians emplaced in Sinai to help monitor compliance with the terms of the Sinai II agreement of 1975 and the MFO constructed for Sinai after the egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of 1979.

31- Reich, *Op.cit,* P 234.