PREFACE

Confidence Building is a very technical subject that requires in-depth analysis. Political scientists will agree that in the stream of Political Science, Confidence Building is of recent origin. In fact, it is far more suitable to place Confidence Building in the realm of International Politics and if one can take it further, in the field of Defence Studies. The history of Confidence Building is not very far to trace, its roots are traced back to the Cold War. The need to build confidence was felt against the background of extensive militarization in Europe. One of the important areas of research is whether Confidence Building that originated in Europe can be applied to other parts of the world. This study is a very modest attempt to see whether Confidence Building is possible and how is it faring in Southeast Asia. The reason to choose Southeast Asia is not very difficult to explain. A study of the security scenario in Southeast Asia will show that the region is far from peaceful. The security picture of the region shows that it is very complex and challenging; there are security threats in almost all the domains of human existence and at every level of the Southeast Asian system – global, regional and internal. To add to the complexity of the security picture, there are linkages between the various domains and levels of Southeast Asia. There are vertical linkages between the three levels of Southeast Asian security. This has been proven during Cold War. There are horizontal linkages between the various domains of the Southeast Asian systems – society, politics, economy, and environment. There are sub-linkages within each domain and it is virtually difficult to dissociate them. If the security issues have links that run across the length and breadth of the system, then countering and addressing such security threats is possible through a singular mechanism of security redressal – Confidence Building. Thus this study looks at the utility of Confidence Building in the region. Another aspect that has immense scope of research is the Track II diplomacy. In Southeast Asia, Track II institutes had a late start but are quite into Confidence Building. These institutes have been working hard to build confidence and it has ample scope to make use of those linkages that link security issues into a complex web. The study thus tries to bring within its scope the two components, Confidence Building and Track II and seeks to apply them in Southeast Asian security cooperation.
This study begins with a concise introduction of the scope of this thesis. The next chapter presents a study of the concepts of Confidence Building and Track II channel and traces the trajectory of their evolution and the scope of application of Confidence Building Measures in Southeast in light of the complex security scenario of Southeast Asia. The third, fourth and fifth chapters describe the three levels of Southeast Asian security while at the same time it points at the linkages between the various aspects security. The sixth chapter studies the role of Track I institutes in Confidence Building and looks at their drawbacks. The next chapter is exclusively devoted to some of the most prominent Track II institutes and processes of Southeast Asia. The following chapter is the conclusive chapter that provides an assimilated presentation of the observations derived from the preceding chapters.

(Ishani Naskar)