Applying Missile-related Confidence- and Security-building Measures in the Middle East
The Challenges in the Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-GCC Relationship

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This Policy Brief explores the concrete advantages of introducing confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) in the missile sector over steps to start reducing the more sensitive weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This is by no means an end itself, but a way of finding entry points for inducing a more cooperative and compromise-oriented security concept. By analyzing the relevance of trust-building steps in the most important state relationships in the Middle East/Gulf, we follow one of the fundamental insights described in the Framework for CSBMs, which guides our analysis of the specific relationships in the context of military asymmetries: in principle, conflict formations are paramount for explaining state behavior within the entire security area (see Policy Brief No. 18). Nevertheless, weapons and delivery vehicles (DV) considered to be especially destabilizing remain relevant. Hence, these arsenals need to be controlled, reduced, and finally eliminated in an adequately verifiable way.

Missile-related Trust-building Steps to Overcome the pre-Helsinki Gridlock

In this issue the complexity of the dyads presented in two previous Policy Briefs Nos. 13 and 14 are reduced by putting the emphasis on delivery vehicles/missiles and by clustering the bilateral relationships. Israel and Iran appear as two crucial centers which structure the state relationships together with their allies against their adversaries/enemies. As outlined in the Framework for CSBMs, trust-building initiatives are the third step for dealing with the utterly complex subject of military asymmetries. The first two steps, presented in Policy Briefs Nos. 13 and 14, consist of a list of security concerns and motives driving the weapon programs of the most relevant states in the region. In our view, expressing these concerns is a good way for countries to begin the discussion on the establishment of a WMD/DV Free Zone at the envisaged – yet postponed – Middle East Conference (MEC) in Helsinki. Identifying motives and interests especially behind WMD and DV/missile activities is important, since they lead to policies and positions which constitute stumbling blocks that must be reduced or even removed on the path towards a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East.

Concrete trust-building measures are central for the overall attempt to design a gradual way of reduction towards a WMD/DVs Free Zone. This would be the central element on the agenda of the Helsinki Conference. Our ideas and proposals are designed to support Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, the Facilitator of the MEC, in his pre-conference efforts to convene together with the United States, Russia, the UK, and the UN Secretary-General informal meetings attended by all states from the region to discuss the format, procedures, and agenda for an official gathering in the Finnish capital. Fortunately, Israel, Iran, Egypt as well as eleven additional Arab states accepted the Facilitator’s invitation to come to Glion, Switzerland, on October 21 and 22, 2013; on November 25 an even larger number of representatives (but not Iran) participated in ‘Glion II’. In both meetings the overall atmosphere was constructive so that ‘Glion III’ was envisaged in February 2014.

The Structure of This Policy Brief

We examine the role of missile-related CSBMs in the bilateral relationship (dyad) between Israel and Egypt and with the six states of the
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), especially with its most powerful member, Saudi Arabia. Analyzing problems in the Israeli-Egyptian dyad has the advantage of focusing on one of the major conflicts in the region. It has to be noted, however, that the Israel-GCC dyad is not really bilateral, since the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council do not always act in unison. Saudi Arabia is the dominant power in the GCC, which explains our decision to focus on the kingdom.

The authors of this Policy Brief come from countries inside and outside the region, and represent different and sometimes opposing views. But we are united in our hopes for a timely, successful, and sustainable MEC. In discussing the Israeli-Egyptian dyad and the relationship between Israel and the six Gulf countries, we are guided by the question: can trust-building initiatives in the missile realm contribute to resolving the political core challenges in the two cases? This approach has the advantage of analyzing CSBMs within their specific bilateral and regional context.

As Track II experts, we do not represent our respective governments but present our own views. Although each of us is interested in the security of our countries, we aim at overcoming current barriers to understanding and finding solutions based on compromise. In principle, both categories of confidence-and security-building measures presented in the Framework on CSBMs are relevant, i.e. first, non-demanding/modest steps such as transparency, communication, and (no-first use) declarations; and second, far-reaching ones like de-targeting and de-alerting, limiting ranges, test bans, and addressing missile deployment, re-deployment, and non-deployment. The task ahead is to explore the potential for constructive arms control, reduction, and disarmament as well as trust building in the context of the MEC. The following five main arms control/reduction-and MEC-related challenges have been identified in the missile area:

1. managing and reducing deep-rooted mistrust (and de-escalating crisis situations);
2. providing incentives for a flexible and serious arms control dialogue on the WMD/DVs Free Zone at the Middle East Conference and at other forums;
3. generating potential spill-over effects for talks on WMD and other DVs (such as aircraft) with transparency as the crucial element;
4. tackling norm-building challenges in the context of the two existing regimes, the Hague Code of Conduct Against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles (HCOC) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR);
5. exploring opportunities for trade-offs and bargaining on missiles and other delivery vehicles as well as nuclear, biological, and chemical warheads.

The Israeli-Egyptian Dyad

Missile and WMD Programs: Motives and Security Concerns

A conclusion of Policy Brief No. 13 on military asymmetries is that although the overall relationship between Egypt and Israel is characterized by a fairly low level of tension (‘cold peace’), it is burdened by the negative experiences of the past. This past is still present in a powerful way, manifesting itself in incompatible views of both countries about the asymmetries in the region, especially with regard to Israel’s nuclear monopoly. Like all other state actors in the Middle East/Gulf, the two neighbors think they know what the other side should do to improve their relationship, but are largely unable or unwilling to consider what they themselves can contribute.

The concerns, motives, and interests of Israel and Egypt differ, as do the challenges and opportunities for any bilateral CSBMs (see Policy Brief No. 13). Israel is motivated by a concern for security and this drives its DV/missile programs and associated WMD activities. By contrast, Egypt is primarily motivated by the desire for status and leadership in the Middle East. Thus, both countries operate on two different tracks of foreign policy principles: security versus status/leadership. But both countries have the same focus from opposite angles: nuclear weapons rather than missiles or aircraft. Bilateral relations must be understood within the regional context, but this plays out in different ways. The implications

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for missile-related CSBMs are enormous: while leadership in the Arab world is paramount for Egypt, Iran’s emergence as a potential nuclear power is Israel’s major concern. Therefore, the role of the CSBMs in the missile area is limited, but they can be employed to strengthen the bilateral relationship, without jeopardizing Israel’s overall security – this is not a zero-sum game.

The major results of Policy Brief No. 13 are as follows for the two neighbors: Israel’s list of foreign policy concerns includes insecure borders with Egypt in the Sinai and uncontrolled terrorist activities. Israel regards Cairo’s “Disarmament First!” stance to be inflexible, and objects to Egypt’s attempt to link its own signing and ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) with Israel’s adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Egypt’s alleged chemical weapon programs are not a matter of concern because it does not currently have warheads to be put on missiles. Israel has a long history of dealing with Egyptian missile capabilities. In the early 1960s, President Nasser initiated a large-scale effort to build missiles with the help of German V-2 rocket scientists. Israel used covert operations, public diplomacy, and pressure on the West German government to put an end to this venture. The Egyptian project failed. During the Yom Kippur War (1973), Israel refrained from attacking targets in the Egyptian hinterland, primarily because of fears that the Egyptians would retaliate using Scud B (R-17) missiles, which had arrived in Egypt shortly before the war, but which were not yet fully operational. Despite this stormy history, from Israel’s perspective the current threat posed by the Egyptian surface-to-surface capability is rather small.

According to the Institute of National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, the current stockpile of Egyptian missiles capable of hitting Israel consists largely of 100 Scud B and Scud C and 24 launchers some of which have probably been upgraded, since they were purchased from the USSR in the early 1970s. According to these estimates, an additional 90 improved Scud C missiles (locally produced) are currently under procurement, as well as possibly 24 No-Dong surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs) imported from North Korea.3

Cairo is also believed to be engaged in continuing chemical weapons research and production of mustard and nerve agents. In the 1960s, Egypt had a program in this area and used chemical warfare agents in the Yemen War, but after the Yom Kippur War this project was reportedly terminated. Nevertheless, under the guise of a pesticide factory, a research and development plant was operated in the outskirts of Cairo. In 1981, following a $12 million contract from Iraq under the regime of Saddam Hussein, the plant was re-activated, but President Anwar al-Sadat gave orders to shut it down. In the 1990s, the facility reportedly produced medicines.4

Generally speaking, since the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty in 1979, Israel has ceased to view Egypt’s military build-up as an immediate threat. Some Israeli politicians, notably Yuval Steinitz, Minister of Strategic Affairs, Intelligence, and International Relations, have disagreed with this
assessment. In 2005, Steinitz claimed that Egypt’s military potential and Iran’s nuclear project were the two main menaces to Israel’s national security. But this is, as far as Egypt is concerned, a minority view within Israel’s policy-making, military, and intelligence establishment. Although concern about Egypt’s intentions was expressed in the wake of the Muslim Brotherhood’s ascension to power, the dominant Israeli position is that as long as the Egyptian army is dependent on American aid, it will not constitute a real military menace to Israel. While this situation does not offer real prospects for trade-offs and bargaining chips, it implies opportunities for endorsing and even improving the bilateral relationship.

Egypt, in turn, has expressed foreign policy concerns about Israel’s unconstructive attitude towards the Palestinian conflict. In the area of arms control, Cairo is concerned about Israel’s insistence on its “Peace First!” position, viz. demanding a peace settlement with all governments in the region as a precondition for negotiations on arms control. Moreover, Cairo is worried that there are no indications that its neighbor is ready to embark on the path of dismantling its nuclear arsenal and of becoming a member of the NPT. Finally, and most importantly, although Cairo presents the Israeli nuclear weapon monopoly as a menace to its security, Israel’s capabilities are largely a threat to Egypt’s foreign policy culture and its identity and leadership status in the Arab world.

The same applies to the missile area, although it is of much less relevance to Cairo. Meanwhile, various projects have been abandoned, and the country has limited itself to short-range missiles, respecting American demands. But Washington understands the importance of the status Egypt associates with these missiles and has therefore not pressed Cairo to curtail them. Today, the role of this category of DVs in the overall military posture of Egypt is limited, while the modernization of the Egyptian Air Force is of greater relevance. Because of the cost Cairo has long since given up its aspirations of matching Israel’s military activities in the nuclear area. Instead, it has embarked on a domestic policy of nuclear restraint in the military realm. In its relations with Israel, Cairo has tried to constrain its neighbor by having Israel join the NPT and – pointing to South Africa’s swift nuclear dismantlement as a role model – place all its activities under safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Cairo’s “Disarmament First!” demand is the core element of its diplomatic activities and constitutes the basis for the country’s leadership role in the Arab world. The 2010 NPT Review Conference and Egypt’s role in framing the MEC Mandate are the most recent examples of this traditional policy. Cairo’s insistence that Israel give up its nuclear monopoly reflects a deficit of the international community which tolerates Israel’s arsenal. From Egypt’s perspective, this is an untenable double standard. Cairo’s focus on Israel’s rapid nuclear dismantlement explains why it has not been very interested in CSBMs, especially if they do not involve weapons – this was the case with the measures agreed upon during the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) talks in the first half of the 1990s. They were seen as a mere tactic to delay addressing Cairo’s core nuclear concerns.

Meeting – in Part – the Core Challenge by Missile-related CSBMs

The major obstacles, which missile-related confidence- and security-building measures have to overcome to be effective, are the following ones: opposing positions on the core nuclear question are the outcome of differing foreign policy principles (security versus status/leadership); differences about the importance of CSBMs, weapon-related arms control/reduction, and differences on the sequence: what should come first? and the continuous and inflexible Egyptian policy of linking its own behavior in the biological and chemical weapon and even missile sector to Israel’s progress on the nuclear issue. Against this background, the task ahead is to explore the constructive potential of both non-demanding/modest and far-reaching CSBMs for addressing the five main challenges mentioned above.

In principle, both categories of CSBMs are relevant, i.e. non-demanding/modest steps such as transparency, communication, and (no-first use) declarations; and far-reaching steps such as de-targeting and de-alerting, limiting the ranges of missiles, banning missile tests, and addressing their deployment, re-deployment, and non-deployment. DV/missile capabilities are not directly a matter of great concern for either country. This implies that any confidence- and security-building measures in this sector may turn out to be an asset because of their secondary importance in the overall arsenals of both states.

We will argue that DVs, and missiles in particular as well as CSBMs, can and should be used for probing and exploring options to the greatest extent possible, in order to meet the

»[...] Israel’s nuclear weapons monopoly is seen as a challenge to Egypt’s role and status as the traditional leader of the Arab world. Although Cairo presents the Israeli nuclear weapons as threat to its security, Israel’s capabilities are largely a threat to Egypt’s foreign policy culture and its identity and leadership status in the Arab world.«
challenges listed above. This applies especially to Egypt to which missiles matter less militarily than politically and psychologically. As already explained, missiles are of greater military importance for Israel but not to the extent that CSBMs cannot be implemented with Egypt – Israel’s missile capabilities are not directed against its neighbor and are not driven by Cairo’s DV capabilities.

Managing and Reducing Deep-rooted Mistrust

It would of course be a grave mistake to expect an issue which is secondary to the MEC Mandate such as missiles to constitute a paramount problem solver, not to mention a panacea in such a complex bilateral relationship – this insight is in line with our fundamental assumption that, while weapons matter, conflict formations are in principle paramount. Yet in view of unpredictable political developments in Egypt associated with the violent transformations and changes at the leadership level, any measures to improve the much more strained relationship, reduce fears, and increase predictability would be welcome. Some CSBMs in the missile area may be helpful in this respect.

We assume that the two sides know best which specific steps are most appropriate for purposes of mutual military and politico-psychological reassurance. Assessing and possibly introducing de-alerting and de-targeting measures are steps that come to mind in this context. Re-vitalizing and endorsing the Peace Treaty of 1979 would be the major immediate goal. In addition, discussions of missiles may have positive side effects if both governments jointly agreed that steps in other policy fields would be important. In this context, the military-to-military interaction between Egypt and Israel remains relevant.

The cooperation and coordination of activities between the two armies continue unabated, even after the social and political upheavals in Egypt. They take place at the level of senior commanders of military units at the border area as well as in Cairo with Israeli generals being present. The only difference, compared to the past, was at least when President Mohamed Morsi was in power, that the Egyptian Minister of Defense is not personally involved in these talks, at least for the time being. The coordination refers to arrangements with Hamas to continue the cease-fire from the Gaza Strip and to improve security conditions in Sinai, so as to prevent the smuggling of arms into Gaza. Of special practical relevance for both armies is the joint positive experience of fighting Islamic militants in the Sinai Peninsula as well as in the context of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO). Designed as a CSBM to implement the 1979 bilateral Peace Treaty, twelve countries contributed as of 2012 their military personnel to the MFO.7

Facilitating the Start of an Arms Control Dialogue Signaling More Flexibility and Seriousness

Given Egypt’s great skepticism (in the last years even aversion) towards CSBMs that are not linked to tangible arms control/reduction, those measures have to be crafted with corresponding care in Helsinki. Indeed it is remarkable that despite the changes of presidents and cabinets, Cairo’s policy in this area has remained by and large the same, a fact which can probably be attributed to the quality and relative independence of Egypt’s diplomats. In the past, i.e. in the ACRS talks of the early 1990s, Israel favored CSBMs that had absolutely no relationship to weapons and thus would not impose limits on them. The situation is entirely different with respect to the modest and the far-reaching CSBMs we are discussing here.

To be sure, neither category would directly address the nuclear issue which is still Cairo’s central concern. Yet they deal with the issue indirectly (and, therefore, could mitigate Egypt’s fears) because missiles are also carriers of WMD. On the Israeli side, missiles show up in connection with its alleged, yet widely publicized defense and protection program in this area. Some uncertainty still surrounds whether the missile program is also offensive in nature, mostly due to deliberate ambiguity.8 In this context, pre-notification of Israeli flight tests could help mitigate Cairo’s concerns about Israel’s nuclear capabilities, precisely because Israel alone is conducting such probes.

Annual reporting of missile and space activities as required by the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation could be a good beginning for discussions on arms control, whether in a bilateral or a regional setting such as the Middle East Conference – since these requirements are much less demanding than those prescribed by the UN (see below). Against this backdrop, both sides may want to discuss whether institutional confidence-building measures such as emergency communication channels (hot lines) or more demanding and complex joint data exchange centers are desirable or necessary.

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Tackling Norm Building

If both sides were to discuss and apply (some of) the measures listed above, it would contribute to norm building as specified in the HCOC on annual reporting of missile and space activities and pre-notification of flight tests. These minimal requirements should be acceptable to both countries. Joining the Hague regime would certainly show that regional cooperation is possible in the security sector. But in order for this to happen, the HCOC would have to provide more incentives, for instance, for technical cooperation in the space area. This is a demand consistently advanced by Egypt. The other criticism regards the narrow focus on ballistic missiles. Cairo’s demand of increasing the scope of missile control would be met in part by including cruise missiles in the HCOC – a move especially opposed by the United States.

The specific control of exports stipulated by the Missile Technology Control Regime are not relevant in this context, since to date the states in the Middle East/Gulf have only undertaken minor missile transfers within and outside the region. Nevertheless, Cairo is a leading critic of the regime by asking all 34 MTCR members (none of which are Middle East/Gulf states) to give up their basic philosophy of ‘my missiles are good, yours are bad’.

Generating Potential Spill-over Effects to the WMD Area and other DVs with Transparency as the Crucial Element

In our Routledge study, some of us have suggested that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) could be a promising way for Israel and Egypt to deal with CSBMs, especially regarding transparency. This register could be a testing ground for developing military openness between the two countries beyond the missile realm. In addition to submit their data as required by the UN Register, both countries could meet in parallel to promote transparency and joint understanding. A more forthcoming attitude of Israel and Egypt towards UNROCA could provide a role model for other regional (and extra-regional) countries.

Exploring Opportunities for Trade-offs and Bargaining Chips Regarding DVs and WMD Warheads

There is no doubt that Israel is militarily superior to Egypt by all standards and in almost all areas relevant to the Helsinki Conference. Nevertheless, a few opportunities are possible for trade-offs and there are...
bargaining chips available for a compromise-oriented solution (see Table No. 1). From a pure bargaining perspective, these opportunities would be even greater if Cairo actually had chemical weapons that it could put on its short-range missiles which then would be a potential menace to Israel. But this is not the case. Therefore, limiting ranges of even short-range missiles and re-deploying them on Egyptian territory cannot be offered as confidence-building steps with the effect of improving Cairo’s position in talks with its neighbor. But because of Cairo’s efforts of modernizing its air force, bargaining may be, in principle, possible in this area.

This estimate of relative strength and the comparatively small and outdated Egyptian stockpile of surface-to-surface missiles, combined with Israel’s deterrent power, makes the chance of an Egyptian missile attack on Israel very unlikely. From Israel’s perspective, therefore, missile-related CSBMs talks in the Egyptian-Israeli context are hardly of value, but they exact a considerable potential cost, primarily since they would require Israel to expose its strategic missile arsenal. Moreover, Iran and Syria, the main sources of the SSM threat, would not be a part of such agreements. It remains to be seen whether a forum such as the Helsinki Conference can find a solution to this problem. As argued below, at least the Syrian threat with regard to chemical weapons was removed in view of the development after the catastrophic use of chemical weapons on August 21, 2013. But it remains to be seen whether the generally promising approach of President Hassan Rouhani will yield any concrete results in the missile realm.

**Mostly beyond the Range of Missile-related CSBMs: The Nuclear Core Challenge**

There may be opportunities for limited, yet relevant trust-building measures in the missile realm: fortunately, by examining and eventually reassessing the underlying assumptions of both sides, the carved-in-stone positions of both Israel and Egypt can be made more flexible. This is in line with the political imperative, as stated above, that both governments must be willing to express what they themselves can do to improve the overall bilateral relationship. In fact, perceptions within the region of the Iranian menace can make it easier especially for Egypt to adopt a more flexible position impacting the core element of its foreign policy culture: Cairo’s restrictive nuclear policy demands vis-à-vis Israel based on its identity and its leadership status in the Arab world.

These demands could turn out to be less effective in the future since Arab Gulf states are less concerned about Israel’s nuclear weapon monopoly than they are about the possibility of an emerging nuclear Iran. In fact, whether Emirati and Saudi rhetoric publically acknowledges it or not, the Islamic Republic has replaced Israel as the paramount threat in the region. Israel is similarly concerned about Tehran. The jury is still out on how to assess the reaction of Arab states to the walkout of the Egyptian delegation almost at the end of the second session of the Preparatory Committee to the 2015 NPT Review Conference in Geneva on April 29, 2013: no Arab League state joined Egypt’s symbolic protest. Against this backdrop, we raise the question whether Egypt’s quest for leadership could be better realized if an additional policy field gained high priority on Cairo’s foreign policy agenda: the Arab Peace Initiative (API) – which so far has been mainly associated with Saudi Arabia – provides for the full recognition of Israel by the Arab League and normalization of relations in exchange for Israel agreeing to the API. This would include the restoration of its borders to the 1967 lines. Cairo may consider taking the lead on pressing for the API together with Riyadh. Based on the Peace Treaty of 1979, Egypt is in the advantageous position of having better relations to Israel than almost all other Arab states. Broadening the Egyptian foreign policy agenda, however, does not entail at all foregoing Cairo’s commitment to (nuclear) zonal disarmament, “a central component of regional, Arab, and Egyptian national security, which impacts directly international peace and security.”

**Table No. 1: Identifying Bargaining Opportunities in the Context of Military Asymmetries Between Israel and Egypt in the DV Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballistic Missiles</th>
<th>Short-range</th>
<th>Medium-range</th>
<th>Long-range</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Advantageous/superior position for Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Advantageous/superior position for Isreal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cruise Missiles   | +            | -            | -          | Advantageous/superior position for Isreal |
| Missiles Defense  | +            | -            | -          | Advantageous/superior position for Isreal |
| Aircraft          | +            | -            | -          | Advantageous/superior position for Isreal |


> There may be opportunities for limited, yet relevant trust-building measures in the missile realm: fortunately, by examining and eventually reassessing the underlying assumptions of both sides, the carved-in-stone positions of both Israel and Egypt can be made more flexible. <<
The time has come for a reassessment of Israel's foremost security concerns expressed in its nuclear monopoly. Such an evaluation would reveal that its superiority in the conventional area is sufficient to deter the Arab states from waging war against it. Hence Israel itself can take steps to improve its bilateral relationships in the region without jeopardizing its security. The MEC process will also provide Israel an opportunity to express its security concerns in the nuclear area vis-à-vis Iran, while signaling especially to Egypt that at some point its own nuclear arsenal could be put on the agenda. Here the Arab Peace Initiative could be extremely important, if Israel started discussions on this proposal. Doing so would be a signal that it takes its own policy of “Peace First!” seriously.

Israel's Relationship with the GCC States

Identifying the Security Concerns and Motivations behind Missile and WMD Programs

On the basis of Policy Brief No. 14 on military asymmetries one can conclude: the relations between Israel and GCC states remain ‘cold’ rather than hostile and the potential for a militarized conflict is relatively low. Although Israel has no peace agreement with any of the six Gulf countries, it had some commercial or even diplomatic relations with Qatar. One can summarize the security concerns/threat perceptions expressed by Israel and especially Saudi Arabia, as follows: elites on both sides see the threat to the GCC states from Israel and vice versa, as more imagined than real. The suspicion, with which conservative members of the six Gulf states have traditionally viewed Israel, has apparently softened considerably over the past decade or so. Also, Israel's interest in maintaining its regional military superiority, especially its nuclear monopoly, and Saudi Arabia's desire for an unequivocal leadership role in the region do not create any direct military competition between GCC states and Israel.

There are some common positions and even interests between Israel and the GCC countries: all six members are extremely concerned about Iran's hegemonic aspirations and nuclear activities, which they see as a direct threat to stability in the Gulf region. Israel and the GCC are in a similar situation in this regard. The GCC countries, led by Saudi Arabia, launched their own initiative for a Gulf Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone which eventually was even to include Israel. This specific ‘sub-zonal’ idea was explicitly designed to prevent Iran from pursuing its nuclear activities and from becoming a nuclear weapon state. Saudi Arabia and the GCC countries (and since 1980 Israel) have supported the concept of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East formally proposed by the protagonists Egypt and Iran; they likewise endorsed the expanded concept of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East presented by then-President Hosni Mubarak in 1990.

The perception of Iran as a common menace has created new room for maneuver between Israel and the GCC countries. Israel has already softened its traditional objections to U.S. arms sales to the Gulf states. While there is not a direct conflict between Israel and the GCC, Palestine remains, however, the focal point of the traditional Arab-Israeli dispute. In this respect, the Arab Peace Initiative launched by Riyadh in 2002 remains vital for constructively tackling this conflict. The API was signed and renewed in 2007 by all members of the Arab League. In fact, Saudi Arabia has continued to push for its adoption, while Israel has not given up its illegal occupation of Palestinian territory. It is surprising that successive Israeli governments have not even discussed this plan, because, as noted above, it in principle incorporates their traditional “Peace First!” demand.

Compared to the Israeli-Egyptian dyad, the relevant spectrum of missiles (not to mention the entire range of DVs which would include aircraft as well) is broader in the Israeli-GCC relationship. At stake here are not only ballistic missiles, but also cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. For Israel, however, the problem is broader. Israeli strategists like to use the term ‘high trajectory fire’. This notion binds together all the threats to the Israeli homeland: mortar fire, short- and medium-range rockets as well as ballistic missiles. All these weapons have been fired at Israeli civilians as well as Israeli strategic infrastructure – and they still threaten them.

But as far as short- and medium-range rockets are concerned, American-manufactured multiple-launched rocket systems are in service in Israel and some GCC countries. Other systems in use in the region are the Turkish-made TR-122 and TR-300 (Kasirga), the Russian-produced Smerch and the Brazilian-made Astros. Due to their short range, they do not constitute a threat for either side. This applies also to the short-
Table No. 2: The Potential Benefits of Missile-Related CSBMs – Benefitting from CSBMs Developed in the OSCE Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Five Potential Benefits of Missile-related CSBMs</th>
<th>Issues Discussed in this POLICY BRIEF to Tackle the Five Main Arms Control/Helsinki-related Challenges</th>
<th>Possibilities for Intensifying and Extending Current Activities (with an Emphasis on the Less Sensitive Conventional Area) in the Short-, Mid-, and Long-term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| First potential benefit: managing and reducing deep-rooted mistrust (and their immediate de-escalatory function in crisis situations) | Israel-Egypt:  
- Military-to-military contacts / cooperation  
Israel-GCC:  
- Direct communication, i.e. addressing especially the fact the military security situation is more relaxed than the ideologically less loaded political areas | • Prior notification of major military movements  
• Creating points of contacts for hazardous incidents of a military nature  
• Invitations to foreign observers to dispel concerns about military activities seen as destabilizing  
• Emergency meetings to clarify unusual military activities  
• Establishing communication networks to transmit crucial information in order to relax tense (crisis) situations  
• (Unilaterally) introducing measures of self-restraint in exercises in areas of one's own advantages such as material, manpower, and frequency of the exercises  
• Stabilizing measures for localized crisis situations, among them de-activation of additional weapon systems, introducing cease-fires on the long way to a demilitarized zone  
• Creating a project for military contacts and cooperation, including joint military exercises and training as well as seminars on cooperation-related matters  
• Pre-notification of (major) maneuvers  
• Cross-border military activities/ Multinational Force and Observers  
• Provisions on annual calendars and planned military activities  
• Annual exchanges of military information on existing forces; structures of the armed forces, their deployment, peacetime authorized strength, as well as major weapon and equipment systems  
• Extending amount of visitors (military personnel and military/political delegations) on a regular basis; on planned deployment of major weapon systems; and on annual military budgets  
• Increased openness in defense planning, making information mandatory on defense policies and doctrines, force planning and budgets  
• Establishing mechanisms for (regional) verification; introducing criteria acceptable to all parties for implementing sufficient verification by means available; creating a forum for clarifying contentious issues. |
| Second potential benefit: helping start an arms control dialogue to signal greater flexibility and seriousness | Israel-Egypt:  
- Pre-notification of flight tests  
- Reassurance of positive joint experience among both armies in fighting Islamic militants in Sinai Peninsula with a special emphasis on the Multinational Force and Observers designed as a CSBM to implement the 1979 Peace Treaty  
Israel-GCC:  
- Direct communication | |
| Third potential benefit: tackling norm building | Israel-Egypt/GCC:  
- Annual reporting on missile – and space rocket – activities  
- Pre-notification of missile tests and space rocket launches  
Israel-GCC:  
- Mutual visits on each side's sites and invitation of foreign observers to missile tests and space rocket launches  
Generally: Taking criticism from Middle Eastern countries seriously, i.e. including cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles; emphasizing cooperation in the civilian space area | |
| Fourth potential benefit: spill-over effects to the WMD area and other DVs with transparency as the crucial element | Israel-Egypt/GCC:  
- Building on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC), and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) | |
| Fifth potential benefit: opportunities for trade-offs and compromise on DVs and WMD warheads | Israel-Egypt:  
- Given Israel's military advantage over Egypt, opportunities for trade-offs in the missile area are limited. Cairo could explore whether modernizing its air force offers opportunities for bargaining on Israel's missiles. This is certainly not a way to tackle Egypt's main concern: Israel's nuclear arsenal. But Israel could be forthcoming at least in the missile area, since the Syrian chemical weapons potential has been neutralized  
Israel-GCC:  
- See remarks and options discussed in POLICY BRIEF Nos. 23/24 | |


range ballistic missile Lora being developed in Israel as well as to Bahrain’s American-produced ATACMs tactical ballistic missile, which was also ordered by the United Arab Emirates. Long-range ballistic missiles and an Israeli UAV system can reach the other side’s territory and are thus relevant for the Israeli-GCC relationship. For Israel this includes the Jericho-2, and -3 ballistic missiles with an estimated range of 1,500 and 4,800-6,500 km, respectively; these missiles could serve as delivery vehicles for Israel’s alleged nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Israel is one of the world’s leading producers of unmanned aerial vehicles. Its production capabilities range from very small tactical UAVs to the very
large Heron-TP (Eitan). This Israeli expertise in unmanned vehicles was transferred to cruise missiles such as the two Popeye Turbo submarine-launched variants with an assumed range of 1,500 km, which could reach the territory of the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The only GCC country whose missiles could reach Israel is Saudi Arabia. The kingdom has possessed 8-12 Chinese CSS-2 (DF-3) since the late 1980s. Their current operational status is unknown – probably they are obsolete – since they were older and already discontinued in China when they were delivered to Saudi Arabia. Recently, Newsweek reported that “according to a well-placed intelligence source” Saudi Arabia began to purchase CSS-5 (DF-21) ground-to-ground missiles from China in 2007.15 If one, however, assumes obsolescence of Riyadh’s ballistic missiles, then their reported targeting at Israel60 and Iran is militarily insignificant. The political signal of resolve, which the Saudi leadership wants to send to Tehran, seems clear enough, but whether the kingdom intends to transfer a message to Israel remains unclear. The political illustration towards the United States is one of detachment in that Saudi Arabia is not confident of the American will to ally with them in a manner deemed sufficient for its security.

As far as the motives and interests behind the delivery vehicle/missile programs of Israel and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council are concerned, one can conclude on the basis of POLICY BRIEFS Nos. 13 and 14 in view of the rather low level of tensions and the relatively low potential for conflict escalation: military activities are to a certain extent driven by factors that have nothing to do with the Israeli-GCC relationship. Because of the powerful presence of the past, the DV/missile arsenals of the six Gulf countries have played a larger role in Israeli military thinking and posture than vice versa. The good news is that the DV/missile activities by themselves are not stumbling blocks to employing trust-building initiatives as a central element of a gradual reduction path towards a WMD/DVs Free Zone in the Middle East/Gulf. The sobering message is: even if CSBMs were established and they worked, tackling the weapons issue would have to take those other mainly domestic and regional driving forces into account.

We are facing the paradox that Israel favors the “Peace First!” approach and Saudi Arabia has offered peace by proposing the Arab Peace Initiative – both sides are nevertheless at loggerheads. The Saudi Kingdom, too, prefers a comprehensive approach, and it expects Israel to demonstrate a willingness to pursue regional stability and peace. But with respect to trust-building steps, the two sides take different positions. Israel welcomes such measures if they do not impinge on its security, i.e. if they do not affect its weapon arsenals. For the GCC states, especially for Saudi Arabia, the implementation of confidence building is linked to serious Israeli peace-making attempts and a freeze on settlements in Palestine. In his response to the 2009 U.S. entreaties for Saudi Arabia to engage in general confidence-building measures, Prince Saud Al-Faisal stated that “incrementalism and a step-by-step approach, has not and, we believe, will not lead to peace, […] Temporary security and confidence building measures will also not bring peace.” Prince Saud’s disappointment with Israeli policy is obvious, and his statement reflects the fear that the Israelis are unlikely to reciprocate. At least indirectly his statement also reflects the Israeli failure to discuss the Arab (Saudi) Peace Initiative.

If his position were carved in stone, missile-related CSBMs, too, would face a big obstacle. Yet neither the Arab world nor the Saudi leadership speak in unison. We make the case for exploring the value of such trust-building steps, mainly because the security realm, although part of Riyadh’s policy towards Israel, is relatively relaxed and ideologically less loaded than the political areas. Therefore, in principle missile-related CSBMs have the potential of positively affecting the political relationships, at least to some extent.»

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**Meeting – in Part – the Core Challenge by Missile-related CSBMs**

Two results of our findings so far are: first, missiles, even long-range ballistic missile/ UAV arsenals, are not perceived as a genuine military threat by either side; weapons have to be seen in their regional context and Israeli-GCC relations, while ‘cold’, are not hostile and the corresponding potential for military conflict is low. Second, the longstanding Israeli-Arab conflict regarding Palestine and the lack of a formal diplomatic relationship between Israel and the Gulf states is the central problem. The Arab Peace Initiative is of special relevance here. Hence, the core challenge is how to bring this dispute in line with the relatively relaxed military situation – or, formulated as a task, how to explore the conditions under which missile-related CSBMs can help mitigate this basic problem, in addition to addressing the five arms control/MEC-related challenges identified.
Managing and Decreasing Deep-rooted Mistrust

The conclusions drawn about the Israeli-Egyptian dyad apply even more so to the Israeli-GCC relationship, although in the former case the relations are based on a peace treaty and in the latter case there are no formal diplomatic ties; political issues are paramount, whereas weapon/DV-related CSBMs are of secondary importance. In view of the rather low degree of tensions and the fairly low potential of conflict escalation, trust-building steps do not have to function as de-escalatory mechanisms in a crisis situation.

From Israel's perspective, missile-related CSBMs can play a limited yet in principle constructive role in this adversarial relationship. This is especially true for the various types of short- and medium-range rockets mentioned above. Because of their short range they do not constitute a threat for either Israel or the GCC countries. Therefore, they can be a part of some early stage CSBMs. The situation is different, if weapons or DVs such as the Jericho-2 and -3, are involved, which according to non-Israeli sources may carry nuclear warheads, and are considered important elements of Israel's security. At the same time, this opens opportunities for talks and trade-offs with Saudi Arabia, since both countries (as well as the other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council) do not regard each other as a genuine military threat any more. These issues should be raised and the details worked out at the negotiating table (see Policy Brief Nos. 23/24).

Facilitating the Start of an Arms Control Dialogue Signaling More Flexibility and Seriousness

The joint concern of Israel and the Gulf countries (above all in Saudi Arabia) about Tehran’s nuclear program could be a starting point for bilateral talks however cautionary and informal. The Middle East Conference could provide a forum for what is most needed between the two sides: direct communication. Such a dialogue on arms control-related matters could be conducted in parallel with talks on the Arab Peace Initiative acceptable to both sides.18

Nevertheless, far-reaching CSBMs such as capping the missile ranges cannot be dealt with in a bilateral setting alone, but would have to include Iran as well. In our view it would be helpful to take a Track II proposal from Tehran as the starting point for a tri- or multilateral discussion: “[…] it is possible that Iran might be persuaded to cease developing longer-range missiles or to limit the deployment of its arsenals so that sensitive areas in Israel and Europe are not within their range. This would be a bargaining chip in a comprehensive deal to resolve disputes with the West and the United States. Iran and the West could agree on a verification regime to check and monitor deployments. It is conceivable that reaching agreements along these lines would serve as confidence-building measures.”

Tackling Norm Building

At issue here is the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missiles Proliferation, which incorporates the mentioned modest missile-related CSBMs: first, an annual declaration of members’ missile and space policies; and second, pre-notification of missile and space rocket launches.20 We suggest adding a third element, namely mutual visits on the other side’s sites and invitations of foreign observers to tests and space rocket launches for civilian purposes (e.g. satellites).21

Certainly, Egypt’s critical remarks regarding not only the HCOC, but also the MTCR, are shared by the six Gulf states, none of which has joined this non-binding arrangement. At the same time, HCOC requirements are so minimal that even an informal acceptance of them – or even better, the creation of a regional version – would assist norm building in this area, not as an end in itself, but as a signal that cooperative endeavors could enhance security for all participants.

The issue of unmanned aerial vehicles might be raised at the Helsinki discussions. They have been recognized in the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime as a subject for various controls (Israel adheres to the MTCR stipulations, although it is not a formal member). But due to the very large diversification of unmanned aerial vehicles and the many roles they perform, applying any comprehensive measures of control to them will be a very difficult task, and it is hard to see how CSBMs can be constructed around UAVs.

Generating Potential Spill-over Effects to the WMD Area and other DVs with Transparency as the Crucial Element

From an Israeli perspective, discussing delivery vehicles at the Middle East Conference has the advantage of being a concern of most countries in the region. Moreover, since resolving this issue has fewer strings

>>The Middle East Conference could provide a forum for what is most needed between the two sides: direct communication. Such a dialogue on arms control-related matters could be conducted in parallel with talks on the Arab Peace Initiative acceptable to both sides.«
As far as transparency is concerned, Israel made public its Shavit space launch vehicle (SLV), which was capable of launching satellites such as the Ofeq series. [...] As in the past, it is conceivable that Israel will make pre-notifications of coming satellite launches and even invite foreign observers, including visitors from the GCC countries. [...] As far as transparency is concerned, Israel made public its Shavit space launch vehicle (SLV), which was capable of launching satellites such as the Ofeq series. These SLVs are supposedly based on Israel’s military ballistic missiles – the Jericho-1, -2, and -3, which serve as delivery vehicles for its alleged nuclear weapons. Israel could also be forthcoming about its satellite launching programs in the future. As in the past, it is conceivable that Israel will make pre-notifications of coming satellite launches and even invite foreign observers, including visitors from the GCC countries. Nevertheless, Israel cannot at this time commit itself to pre-notification of all test launches, since this could contradict its security interests. In the absence of a commitment to comprehensive pre-notification, such announcements – when they are made – could be seen as threatening instead of being understood as a step towards openness and transparency, thus making them counter-productive.

What has been said for Egypt applies equally to the GCC countries: military openness, even a non-demanding/modest CSBM, for instance in terms of meeting the reporting requirements of the UN Register of Conventional Arms, continues to be problematic. The Middle East/Gulf states view the UN Register as discriminatory because it favors Iran and Israel in that it only calls for the submission of information regarding arms and missile exports, ignoring pre-existing stockpiles and indigenously produced weapons. Therefore, the Gulf states are unlikely to take part in the register until it is significantly reformed. Making progress in this area could indeed produce the hoped for spill-over effects. As noted in the Israeli-Egyptian context, Israel’s willingness to signal flexibility on this issue would be vital for reaching this goal.

Exploring Opportunities for Trade-offs and Bargaining Chips Regarding DVs and WMD Warheads

The modest trust-building measures discussed in this case study offer sufficient opportunities for compromise in formal or informal talks. The negotiators acting in an already existing or a to-be-established forum such as the Helsinki Conference will know best how to use those measures in order to achieve results on a give-and-take basis. Given the precarious state of communication between Israel and the GCC states, modest steps such as exchanging missile-related information, announcing certain missile activities and even inviting representatives from ‘the other side’ to observe specific activities constitute major progress in trust building.

Far-fetched and way too optimistic as it may look from today’s perspective (and not discussed in this POLICY BRIEF), later stages of missile-related talks in the Israeli-GCC relationship may be expanded to include Iran as part of the regional picture. This would require addressing medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) with a range over 1,000 km. Again, as argued in POLICY BRIEF No. 23/24 on MRBM-related measures in the Israeli-Saudi-Iranian triangle, negotiations on those modest trust-building steps are likely to precede far-reaching initiatives such as de-alerting and de-targeting the weapons. This holds even truer for negotiating a joint test ban for MRBMs or agreements limiting the deployment of additional missiles beyond a certain number.

Mostly Beyond the Range of Missile-related CSBMs: The Core Challenge of Aligning Political Relationships with Threat Perceptions

Our analysis has shown that trust-building steps in the missile realm are of limited relevance and face a number of obstacles in the various contexts: at the United Nations (UNROCA) or on the multilateral level (especially the HCOC). Yet reduced mutual threat perceptions and a common fear of Tehran’s nuclear aspirations cry out for forums of direct communication. Such exchange is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for assessing the relationship between Israel and the GCC states. Dominant military assumptions can be revised and joint assessments concerning the common menace undertaken. Nevertheless, trust-building steps in the missile area cannot solve the long-standing Israeli-Arab dispute with the most prominent Palestinian dimension. But CSBMs could improve the atmosphere for re-launching promising instruments such as the Arab Peace Initiative, which in turn might lead to a better Arab-Israeli relationship. As indicated above, CSBM-/arms reduction-related steps should be pursued in parallel with such political initiatives.
Saudi Arabia sees itself as having proposed every politically conceivable option for peace. But the situation is much more nuanced, leaving open a window of opportunity for taking the API seriously for discussion by the Israeli public and the government. The historical record is clear that the “Saudi's aloof position” was viewed critically among the Palestinians themselves, who were expected to benefit the most from it. Palestinian media has underscored that the initiative was “only a means to silence” American criticism of Riyadh after the 9/11 attacks in which Saudi nationals were prominently involved. Palestinians also stressed that the API “did not establish a practical apparatus to carry out its decisions [...]”. This explains in part why Saudi leaders failed “to make a success of their peace initiative in terms of its ostensible aims.”

In the past, leading Saudi political figures such as Prince Turki Al-Faisal, Chairman of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies and former Ambassador to London and Washington, have supported those who hold the view that the API “is not a plan that can be negotiated. Rather it is [... the end result of negotiation.” But in his Foreword to a conference of the Oxford Research Group on the API, Prince Turki seems to have left open whether this “end result” reflects the discussion within the Arab League or future negotiations with Israel. Also, Marwan Muasher, Jordan’s first ambassador to Israel and “someone who was intimately involved in developing and formulating the peace initiative,” has not only criticized that “[n]either Israel nor the United States [has] responded with more than lip service. Arab states are also to be blamed for failing to explain the Initiative to the Israeli public, our principal audience.”

Prince Turki himself considered the “positive response” of the participating Israelis in the Oxford conference as an “encouraging sign that, as Israelis become more aware of the quid pro quo offered by the Initiative, they will see the great opportunity that this vision of a final and definitive peace between Israel and the Arab world offers.” Meanwhile, on April 6, 2011, a group of 40 prominent Israelis, including former high-ranking military and intelligence officials, released the Israeli Peace Initiative as a response to the Arab Peace Initiative. The proposal of the group – to accept the API as a framework for regional peace negotiations – leaves enough room for both sides to find a constructive security-compatible solution.

Nevertheless, the key problem is the lack of direct communication between Israel and Saudi Arabia in particular. Here Egypt could play a promising role, since Prince Turki Al-Faisal himself has stated: “Shimon Peres has offered to discuss the Arab peace initiative anytime, anywhere, and we welcome this response. At this point, the Saudi government is constrained from direct talks with Israel. Egypt and Jordan have been commissioned to meet with Israel on behalf of the Arab world. Once agreements between Palestine, Lebanon and Syria are reached with Israel, Saudi Arabia will join fully in ending hostilities and establishing diplomatic and normal relations with Israel.”

Again, we do not think that CSBMs in the missile area and beyond can solve all these fundamental problems. But as they are tied to various existing and potential specific forums, including the Helsinki Conference, they can provide a venue for what is most needed: direct communication. Consistent with our argument, Prince Turki Al-Faisal has stated that numerous regional disputes “will have to be dealt with to make the zone workable. [...] So, there are incentives for everybody” — and one would of course include Israel — “to be serious about establishing an overall peace so that the [WMD/DVs Free] zone can be put in place.”

Conclusions and Recommendations

We conclude that analyzing problems through the perspective of state relations has its merits, especially when they reflect major conflicts in the region. Also, examining missiles neither in isolation from other DVs and WMD nor in a political vacuum, but dealing with them in the two bilateral and regional case studies, has revealed their limits, but also their potential. This is true for the five arms control/MEC-related challenges we have enumerated, and even more so for the two identified core challenges in both the Israeli-Egyptian and the Israeli-GCC relationships.

As far as the Israeli-Egyptian dyad is concerned, the first challenge of managing and reducing deep-rooted mistrust is in view of the rather low level of military tensions neither an immediate nor a high priority issue. Still, since the Egyptian Arab Spring new political problems have been added to the agenda and must be resolved. Therefore, in ongoing military-to-military contacts between Egypt

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and Israel missiles can be part of a ‘military package’ – not necessarily considered in isolation – to serve as a means of mutual political and psychological reassurance. This requires an endorsement of the Peace Treaty.

Regarding the second and third challenges, missiles and the related trust-building steps can help start an arms control dialogue, as a signal of greater flexibility and seriousness – and they can contribute to norm building. These confidence-generating initiatives do not only have a bilateral dimension, but a regional/international one as well. We have stated that the record of all Middle Eastern states to fulfill the reporting requirements of the UN Register is not good. And yet, discussing delivery vehicles at a forum such as the Middle East Conference has the advantage that this subject concerns most of the countries in the region. At the same time, the much less demanding Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation could be a good starting point for a discussions on arms control, and it would certainly be helpful if states parties responded positively to criticism from the Arab states about changes to the HCOC and if the regime were modified accordingly. Here, under certain conditions, Israel could, in the future, be forthcoming about its satellite launching programs, including its pre-notifications of planned satellite launches, and invite foreign observers, including visitors from Egypt and the GCC countries. Such flexibility would, of course, have to be reciprocated by offers on the Arab side.

As far as the fourth challenge (potential spill-over effects, transparency) is concerned, it will be easier for some states to discuss missiles and the associated CSBMs than the more sensitive WMD issues. Therefore, they can serve as a bridge to those more contentious topics. To be sure, the success in managing to have the Bashar al-Assad regime join the Chemical Weapons Convention and the associated ongoing dismantlement of the chemical stockpiles in Syria suggests that missiles may become less threatening once the warheads are destroyed in a truly verifiable manner. But tackling nuclear capabilities will be rocky and cumbersome – and require comprehensive trust-building efforts in all areas, including missiles. Therefore, the justification for a prominent role of delivery vehicles in this year-long regional reduction process is no less compelling. All in all, the

Endnotes

1. The terms CSBMs (confidence-and security-building measures) and CBMs (confidence-building measures) are used as synonyms. On the addition of the term ‘security’, see Sven-Eric Fikenscher et al. (2012) ‘The promise of military transparency: Building on East–West experiences and on the UN Register of Conventional Arms’, in Bernd W. Kubbig and ibid. (eds), Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East, London: Routledge, 217-233, here p. 218. The terms ‘confidence’ and ‘trust’ are also used synonymously.

2. The GCC consists of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

3. In order to make things easier for the reader, the triad ‘arms control, reduction, and disarmament’ is reduced to the first two elements.


10. Israel had a trade bureau in Qatar, which was shut down after the 2009 Israeli operation against Gaza. Although the bureau was termed ‘trade bureau’, the relations were much deeper than that, as was evident in high levels visits – including those on ministerial levels. Shutting the bureau down did not eventually sever relations altogether. See on this Allen J. Fromherz (2012) ‘The Future of Qatar’, The Ibitaurisblog, January 1. Online, available at http://theibtaurisblog.com/2012/01/31/the-future-of-qatar-dealing-with-israel/ (October 15, 2013). Israel also maintains informal relations with the Arab side.


12. This term is usually a tactical-technical one – used to differentiate between ‘flat trajectory fire’ (like rifles, machine guns, and even tank-cannons and anti-tank cannons) – and ‘high trajectory fire’ (mortars, field artillery, rockets of all types – and ballistic missiles). Only in Israeli military thinking the term is used as a major strategic threat.


14. Since the existence of these systems was never officially acknowledged, one can only speculate about their numbers, specifications, and capabilities.
opportunities for intensifying and extending missiles-related CSBMs are tremendous—and hopefully inspiring—as the summary of trust-building steps in the world of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) shows (see Table No. 2).

The fifth challenge (exploring trade-offs and bargaining chips) is complicated by the military asymmetries between Israel and Egypt in the missile area. Only if Egypt had chemical warheads that could be put on its missiles, there would be a trade-off potential. It may be productive to explore trade-offs with respect to aircraft, since the Egyptian Air Force is modernizing its fleet. There are also differences in the military significance of missiles. For Egypt, this class of DVs matters less militarily than politically and psychologically. For Israel, its short-range missiles are not relevant in its relationship of a ‘cold peace’ with Egypt, but they did matter with respect to its adversarial neighbor Syria until recently, whose missiles were targeted at Israel and equipped with chemical warheads until Damascus was forced to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. Therefore, the threat potential for Israel is considerably reduced. What is more, the destroyed Syrian chemical weapons have already raised the question why Israel should not ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention which it signed in early 1993. Such a positive dynamic could expand and have the Egyptian government start thinking about signing and ratifying the CWC without linking it to demanding Israel to join the NPT simultaneously.31

The core challenge in the Israeli-Egyptian relationship—how to cope with Israel’s nuclear monopoly—can to some extent only be resolved by considering the issue of missiles by hoping that there is a spill-over effect at some point into the nuclear area. The fundamental difference between status-related (Egypt) versus security-related (Israel) factors that shape the overall policies of both countries have to be resolved mainly on the political level. Here, we suggest reflecting on a new role for Cairo.

As far as Israel and the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council are concerned, we have come to the conclusion that there is no genuine conflict of interest or military threat between the two sides. Yet, a major conflict remains unresolved: the Palestinian issue is still the focal point in the long-standing

18. See in this context POLICY BRIEF Nos. 9/10, p. 13.
21. This could for example be realized in the context of Saudi Arabia’s plans to launch two satellites with the help of Russia in 2015. See on this ‘Russia to help launch two Saudi science satellites’, Asharq al-Awsat, September 29, 2013. Online, available at http://www.aawsat.net/2013/09/article55317866 (October 30, 2013). It would of course be for the Russians to decide whether they invite Israeli experts to Russia.
23. It is admittedly difficult to imagine from today’s perspective that “de-alerting and de-targeting” will be implemented soon, and one reason being that precise information about each side’s status of alert or missile targets is missing.
31. But this demand is at the heart of Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy’s proposal presented to the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly on September 28, 2013.
Further Reading


Arab-Israeli dispute. The problems and opportunities summarized above with respect to the five arms control/MEC-related challenges are, in principle, similar. To highlight one aspect only: short-range missiles, i.e. those unable to reach the territory of the other side, could become the starting point of a dialogue. Like in the Israeli-Egyptian dyad, the outcome of the discussion could be for the same reason quite promising at a forum such as the Helsinki Conference: the Syrian short-range missiles, which would not be affected by an Israeli-GCC agreement on this class of missiles, will not carry chemical warheads in the future.

The core challenge identified in the Israeli-GCC relationship differs from that of the Israeli-Egyptian dyad. It amounts to bringing the current political relationship into alignment with the lack of perceived military threat between the parties. Here, it becomes important to explore the Arab Peace Initiative. Egypt has a special and leading role to play based on its Peace Treaty with Israel and the official diplomatic ties. Again, missiles and the related trust-building steps should not be seen in isolation, but as part of additional CSBMs in other areas. Moreover, by dealing constructively with the API, the hardened positions of “Peace First!” versus Disarmament First!” would slowly erode. Parallel processes in these two areas could be pursued in a flexible way, representing the only constructive political alternative. The same applies to the unfruitful debate between Egypt and Israel on what should come first on the agenda – CSBMs or arms control/reduction.

By giving a new push to the API with its innovative offer by the Arab League states to recognize Israel, the entire political landscape in the region might fundamentally change – and the Arab states would thereby accept Israel’s major precondition for breaking the taboo of addressing the question of its nuclear arsenal, whether in terms of CSBMs or arms control/reduction. Against this backdrop and with the assistance of the experienced Finnish Facilitator and his team, more compromise-based solutions seem possible for both governments, upon whose support the future of the Helsinki Conference will considerably depend. This would set a good precedent for tackling the next challenge, as remote as it may seem from today’s perspective: arms control and reduction as the other component of a comprehensive, gradual concept towards the planned zone.