



Making Sense of the Present and Future Operating Environment: Hybrid Threats and Hybrid Strategies in a Historical Context

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Presentation Outline

- **Definitions: What are we talking about?**
- **History as a Guide: Persistence of Hybrid Strategies**
- **Contemporary Hybrid War Thinking: Jargon Posing as Concepts?**
- **Contemporary Security Environment and Hybrid Strategies/Threats**
- **State, Non-state Actors and Hybrid Strategies and Threats in the Future Security Environment**
- **Responding to Hybrid Strategies**



Definitions: What are we talking about?



Hybrid War: Conceptual Fad?

Definition: Hybrid War

'Hybrid wars can be conducted by both states and a variety of non-state actors. Hybrid wars incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder.'

Hoffman, 'Conflict in the 21st Century', p. 14.

Clausewitz and the Dangers of Re-branding of War

Clausewitz's two facets of war:

- Its nature, which remains constant under all circumstances; and
- Its character, the variable 'means by which war has to be fought' which alters according to context.

UK Defence Doctrine Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01 (JDP 0-01) (5th Edition), dated November 2014, p. 18.





Are We Talking About Strategy?

‘The calculus of strategy is the term used to describe the alignment of ends, ways and means in order to achieve success . . .’



ADP Operations, 2010, p. 2-4.



Hybrid Strategies: Is this what we are actually talking about?

Definition: Hybrid War

'Hybrid ~~wars~~ [strategies] can be conducted by both states and a variety of non-state actors. Hybrid ~~wars~~ [strategies] incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder.'

Hoffman, 'Conflict in the 21st Century', p. 14.



Hybrid Strategy . . .

‘A strategy that uses simultaneous and adaptive employment of a complex combination of conventional weapons, irregular warfare, terrorism and criminal behaviours in the battle space to achieve political objectives.’





. . . Posing Hybrid Threats

‘Those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives’.

(As quoted in Michael Miklaucic, ‘NATO Countering the Hybrid Threat’, 23 September 2011 Web URL: <http://www.act.nato.int/nato-countering-the-hybrid-threat>)





Caveat Emptor: Strategy \neq New Form of Warfare





History as a Guide: Persistence of Hybrid Strategies

Old reality repackaged in new jargon?



Historical Example: First World War and British Influence Ops



Propaganda Organisation

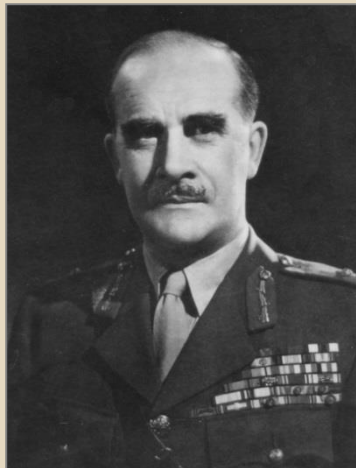
- Sept 1914 - Feb 1917 *Wellington House* – War Propaganda Bureau – Charles Masterman
- Feb 1917 – Feb 1918 *Department of Information* John Buchan
- Feb 1918 – Jan 1919 *Ministry of Information* - Lord Beaverbrook

Wartime Roles

- Distribution books and pamphlets
- Cinema
- Monitoring public opinion (overseas)
- News – promulgate a narrative
- Influence target neutral states particularly USA



Historical Example: Second World War - British Ministry of Economic Warfare Sept 1939-May 1945



Special Operations Executive - SOE

- Role to Conduct
 - Espionage
 - Sabotage
 - Reconnaissance
 - Support resistance
'to set Europe ablaze'

Economic Warfare Activity

- Political, Financial and Legislative Means
 - War Trade Agreements
 - Interference with Foreign Exchange
- Military Means
 - Blockade
 - Strategic Bombing

Historical Example: Colonial Insurgencies post 1945

- Independence movements adopted approach that was outside conventional warfare paradigm – nullify strengths; exploit weaknesses
- When they were strong enough/enemies weakened they shifted from insurgency to conventional operations and/or a mixture of the two
- Strong ideological underpinning - - Marxist-Leninism and/or Nationalism



Historical Example: Mao's Hybrid Strategy

- Mao and the Chinese Revolution 1938-49
 - Insurgency in the countryside
 - Transition to conventional forces
 - International dimension - Soviet support
 - Social activity
 - Economic activity
 - Incentive and coercion





Contemporary Hybrid War Thinking: Jargon Posing as Concepts?



Cold War Origins of Contemporary Hybrid Warfare Thinking

Cold war

Trinquier 1964
'Revolutionary War'

Aron 1958
'Polymorphous
Violence'

Mack 1975
'Asymmetric Warfare'

Kitson 1987
'Ladder of Warfare'



Post Cold War Hybrid Warfare Intensification of Conceptual Confusion

End of
Cold war

Contemporary
Conflict

Mockaitis
1995
'Hybrid War'

Krulak 1999 'Three
Block War'

Lind 2001
'4GW'

Smith 2005
'War Amongst
the People'

Huber 1996
'Compound
Wars'

Liang and Xiangsui
1999
'Beyond Limits Warfare'

Mattis and
Hoffman 2005
'Hybrid War'



Cost Cold War Hybrid Warfare

End of
Cold war

Contemporary
Conflict

Mockaitis

Lind 2001
'4GW'

Smith 2005
'War Amongst
the People'

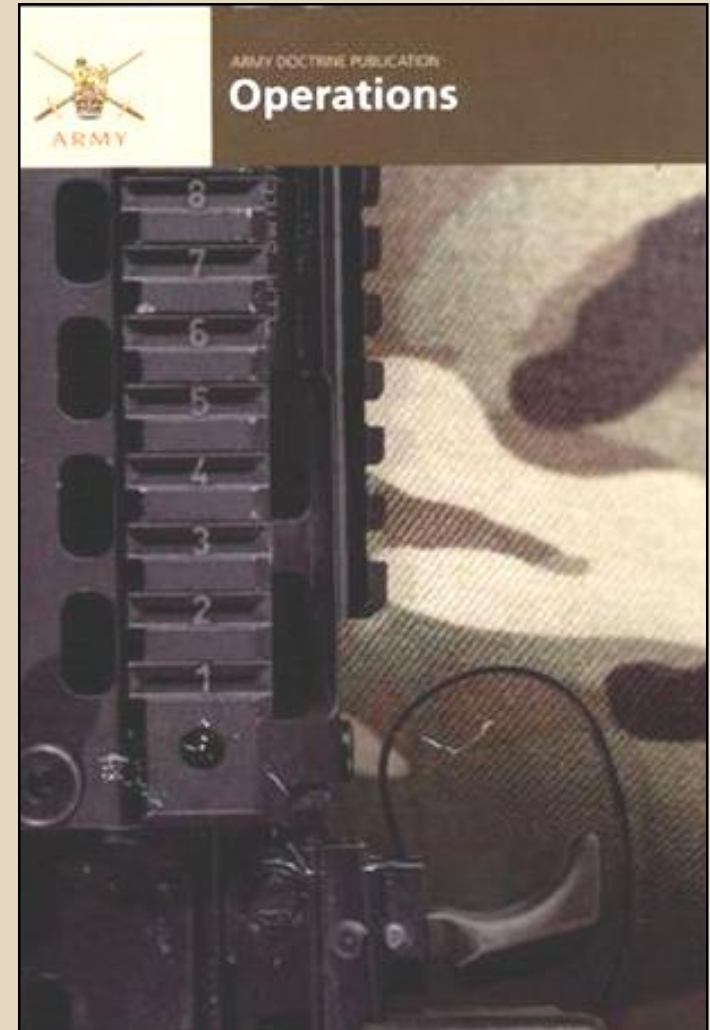
'This hybrid war [Borneo] demonstrates the extreme fluidity of categories such as "low", "mid" and "high" intensity when applied to modern war. The conflict spectrum operates within individual wars as well as separating them from each other'. Mockaitas 1995



Caveat Emptor: Jargon ≠ Useful Concept

‘Understand Asymmetry.
Operations in the land
environment are by definition
asymmetric because
adversaries always differ,
even if sometimes only
marginally. . . *The key
question is not: is the conflict
asymmetric, but how and in
what way is it asymmetric?*’

Army Doctrine Publication, *Operations*,
November 2010, p. 3-13.

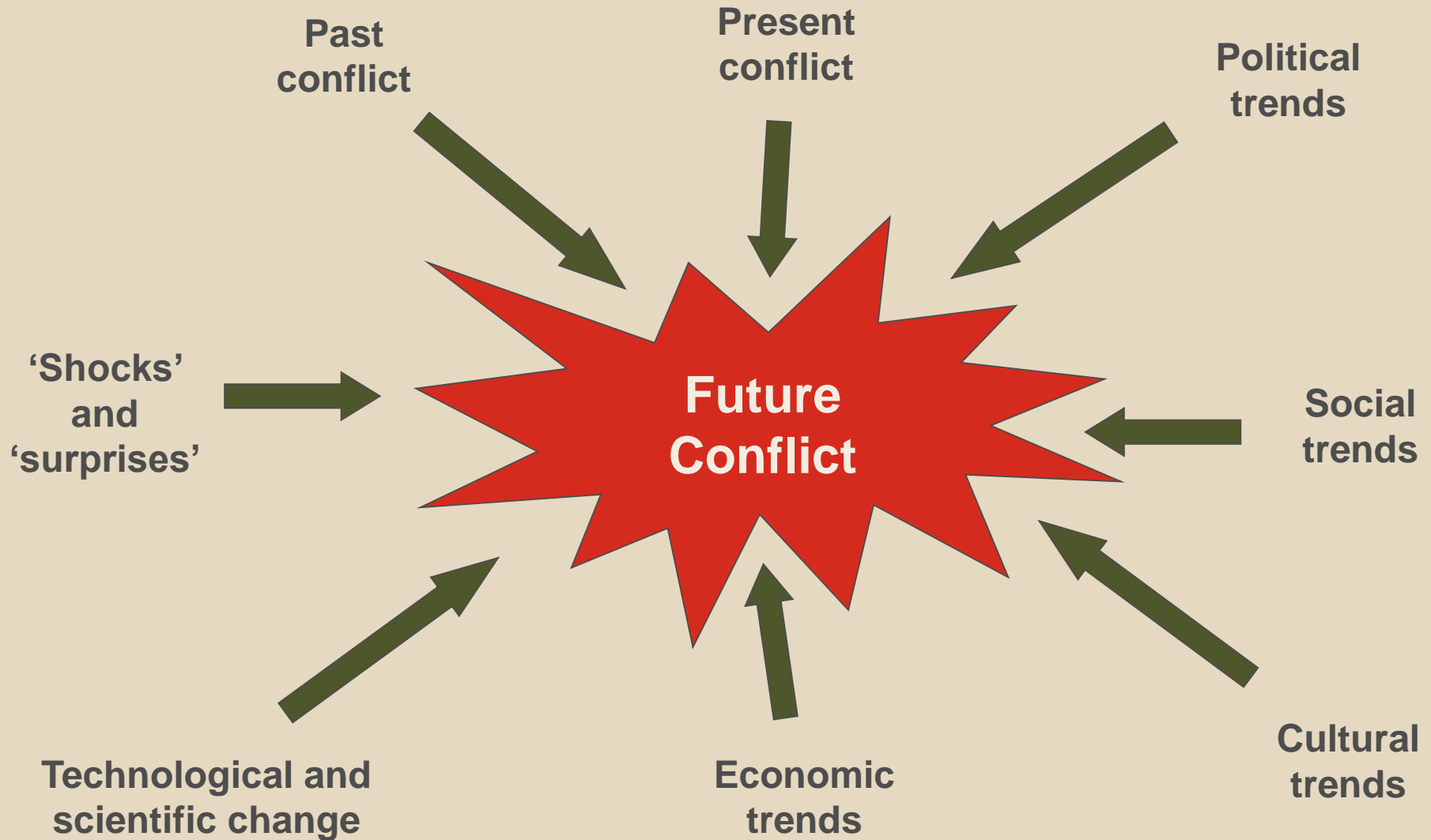




Contemporary Security Environment and Hybrid Strategies/Threats



The Perils of Predicting Future Conflict

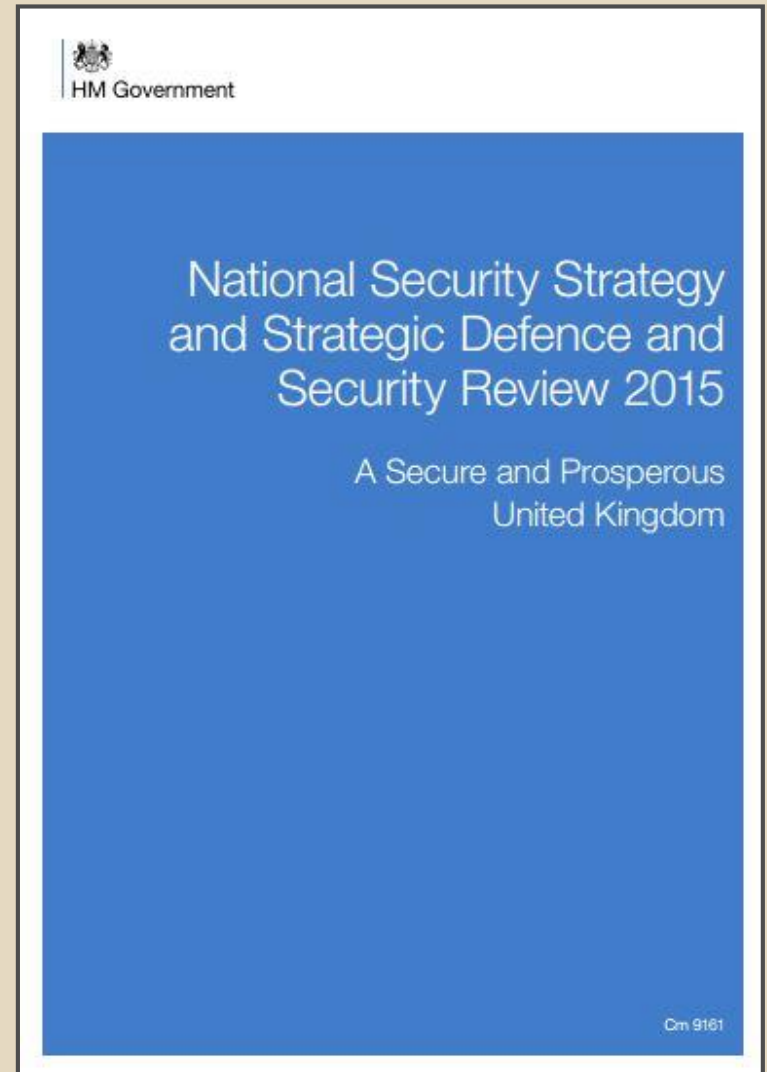




Uncertainty in the Security Environment

‘We are increasingly likely to have to deal with unexpected developments . . . In this *dynamic and uncertain* context, we will have to work to ensure our security and to exploit opportunities’.

NSS and SDSR 2015, p. 15.



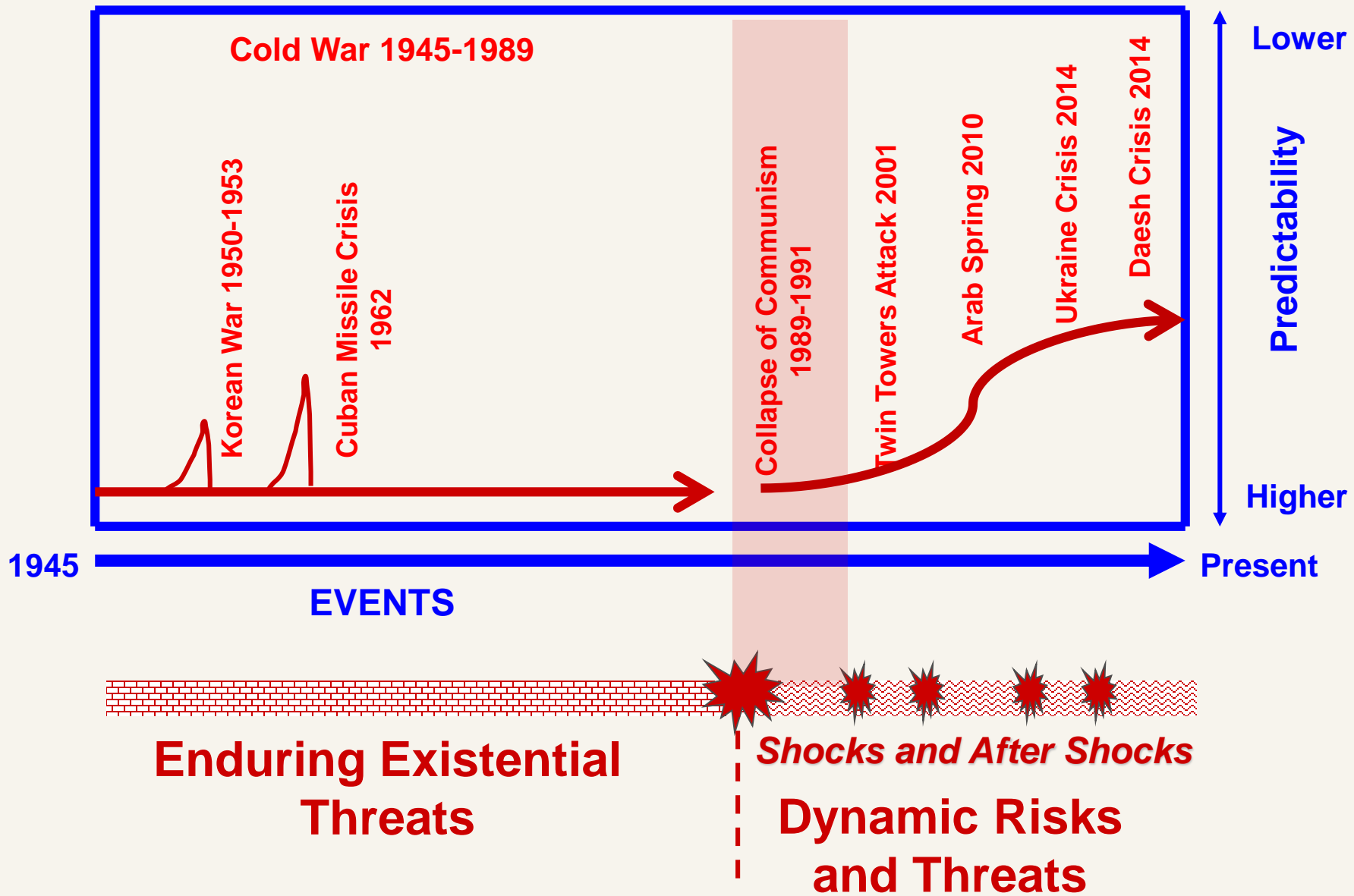
Clausewitz on Uncertainty in War

‘The art of war deals with living and with moral forces. Consequently, it cannot attain the absolute, or certainty; it must always leave a margin for uncertainty, in the greatest things as much as in the smallest’.

Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 86.



Post Cold War Security Trends: Lack of Predictability Fuels Uncertainty



Uncertain Security Environment: Defining Key Variables

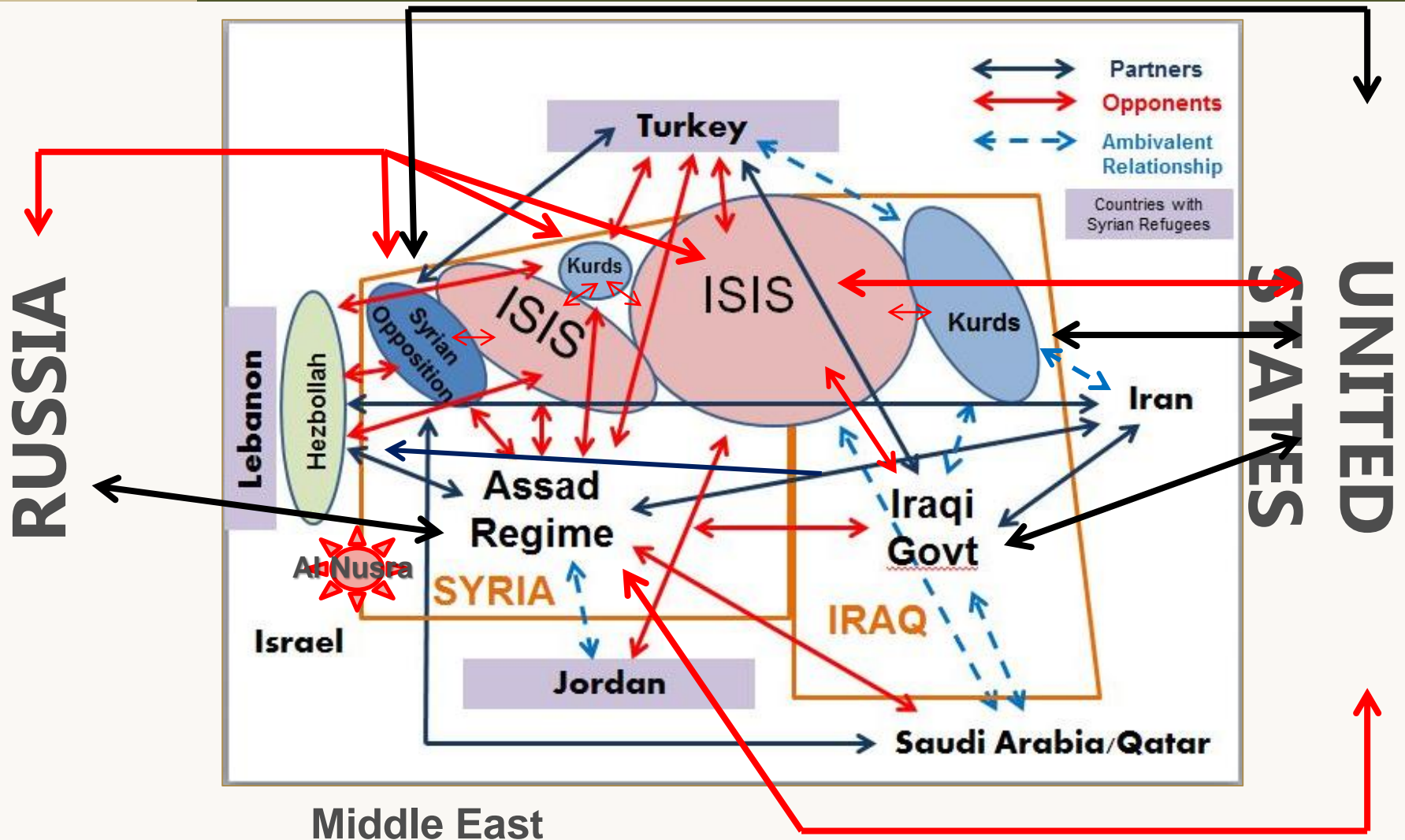
Predictability – The degree to which specific events can be forecasted in order to plan, prepare, prevent or respond to a risk or threat. Predictability is underpinned by what is known or cannot be known.



Complexity – The condition in which the security environment is characterized by ambiguity, fluidity, confusion and the intricate obscurity of actors and their interactions in the emergence and evolution of risks and threats.

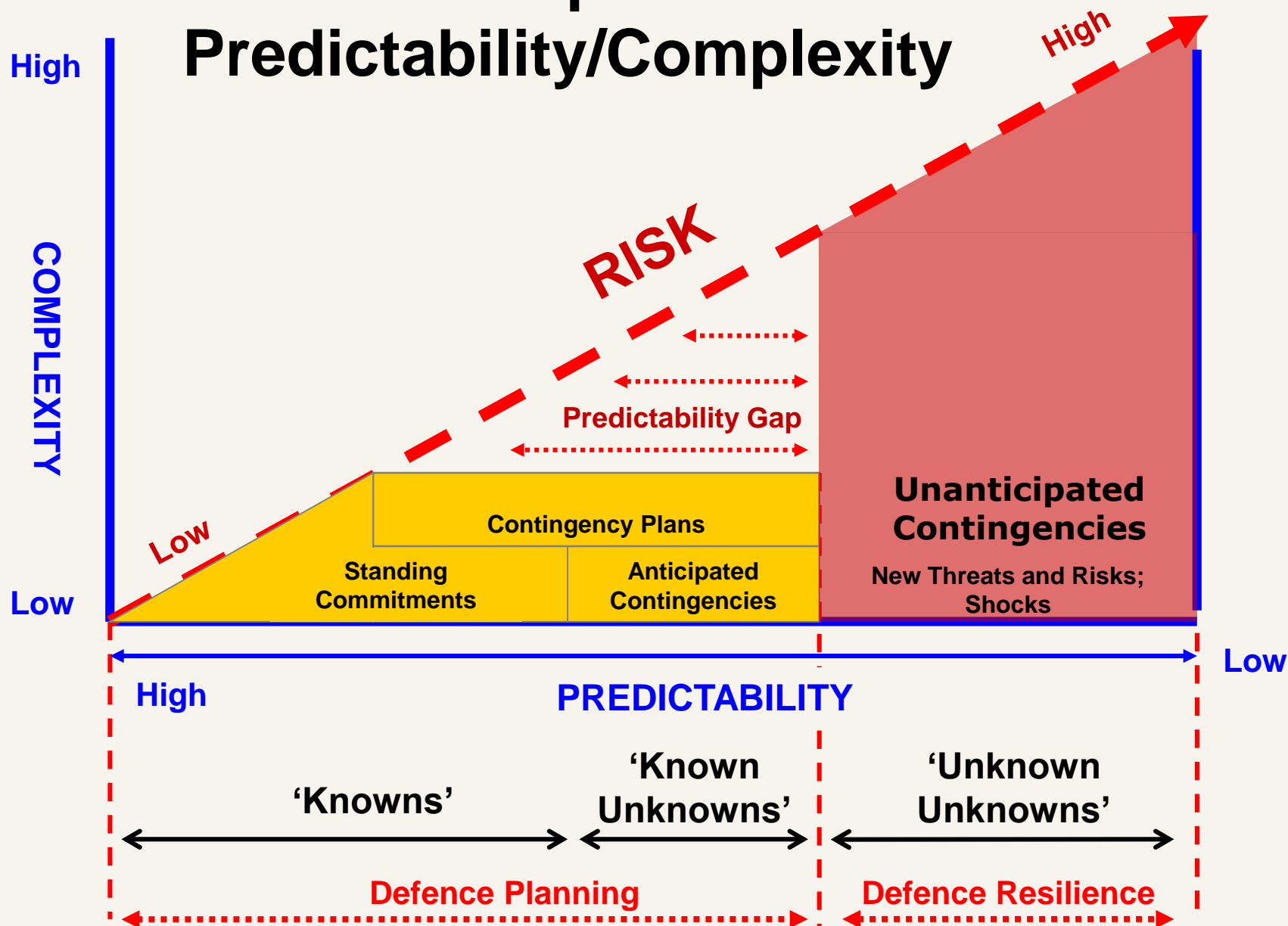


Syria/Iraq: Relationships between Internal, Regional and Global Actors

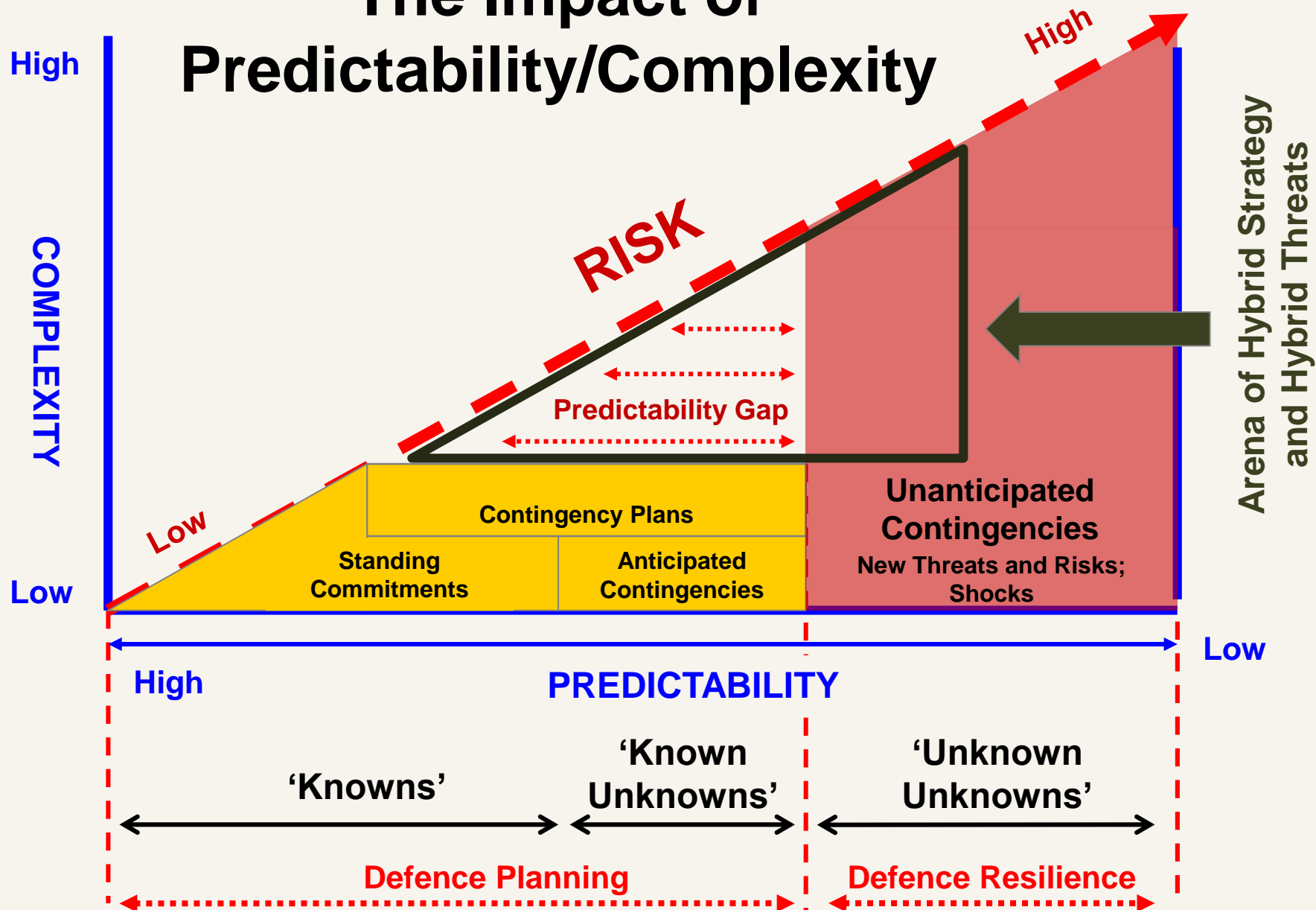


Security Environment: Low Predictability/High Complexity

The Impact of Predictability/Complexity



The Impact of Predictability/Complexity





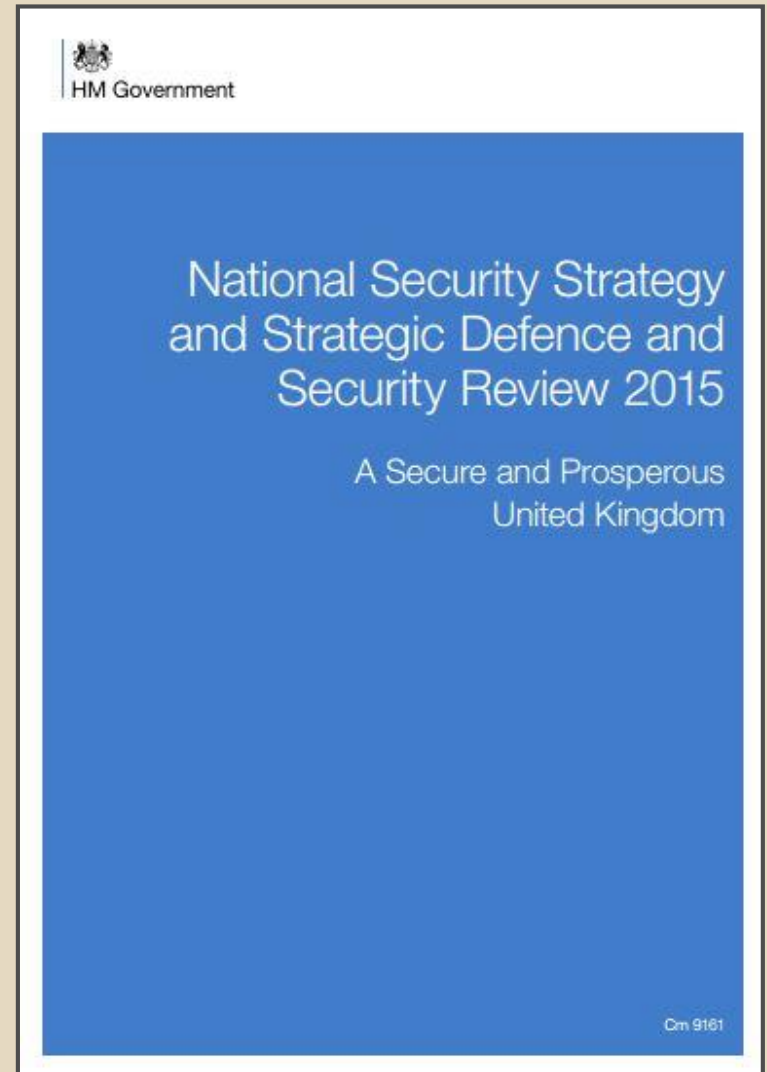
State, Non-state Actors and Hybrid Strategies and Threats in the Future Security Environment



NSS and SDSR 2015: State and Non-State Actors

‘The world is changing rapidly and fundamentally. We are seeing long-term shifts in the balance of global economic and military power, increasing competition between states, and the emergence of more powerful non-state actors.’

NSS and SDSR 2015, p. 15.



Challenge: State Actors Pursuing Hybrid Strategies/Posing Hybrid Threats

Who is weak and who is strong?

- Why do state actors adopt a hybrid strategy?
 - Because they are fundamentally weaker than their adversaries or cannot compete with their adversary's strengths.
 - Hybrid strategies followed by tradition or necessity



State Actor Challenging Status Quo with a Hybrid Strategy

- Revisionist agenda – seeking **political** and territorial changes
- Economic activity to cause economic instability in target state or foster economic dependency
- State controlled media disinformation – plausible but misleading narrative
- Use of proxy non-state actors and ‘volunteers’
- Military modernization; capability enhancement
- Peacetime military activity (deployments, training and exercises) used to intimidate or mask covert/ clandestine operations
- Military action deniable through use of proxies or below an easily definable threshold for escalation



Challenge: Non-State Actors Pursuing Hybrid Strategies/Posing Hybrid Threats

Who is weak and who is strong?

- Why do non-state actors adopt a hybrid strategy?
 - Because they are fundamentally weaker than their adversaries or cannot compete with their adversary's strengths.



Established Models of the Non-State Actor

- Warlords
- Militia
- Paramilitary Group
- Insurgents
- Terrorist Groups
- Rebels
- Separatists
- Criminal Gangs



The State-Like Non-State Actor - - The Hezbollah/Daesh Model

- Unifying Ideology (religion) or identity
- Unbounded Geographical Ambitions of Statehood
- Effective Governance/Command Structures
- Utilizes a hybrid strategy
 - Employs sophisticated organized violence across a spectrum of tactics and capabilities
 - Makes effective use of information / influence operations (social media, internet etc)
- Operates inside or outside state and/or international legal/ethical norms as interests dictate
- Varying levels of external support
- Transnational: Varying levels of state, regional or global influence
- Capable of relations with other non-state actors and states
- Capable of mobilizing economic resources





Caveat Emptor: The Threat of Non-State Actors ≠ the Threat of State Actors following a hybrid strategy

How to do you respond to a state actor employing a hybrid strategy to challenge and alter the international status quo?



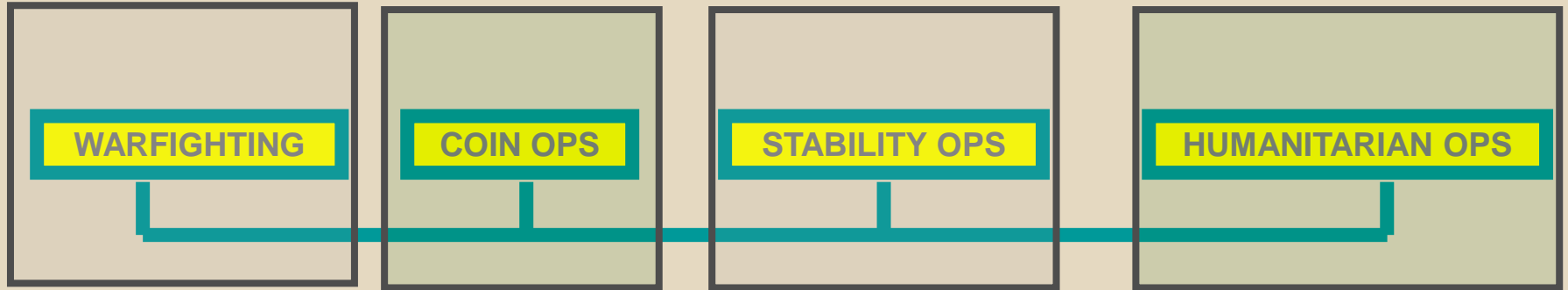


Responding to Hybrid Strategies



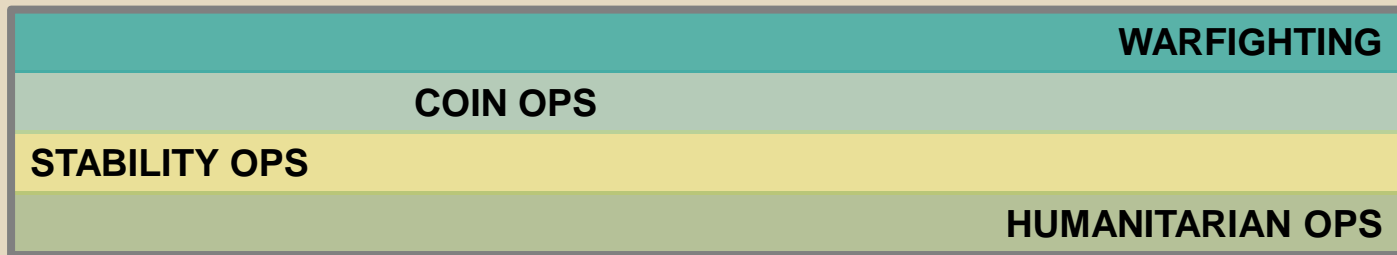
How do we view military activity?

In compartments?



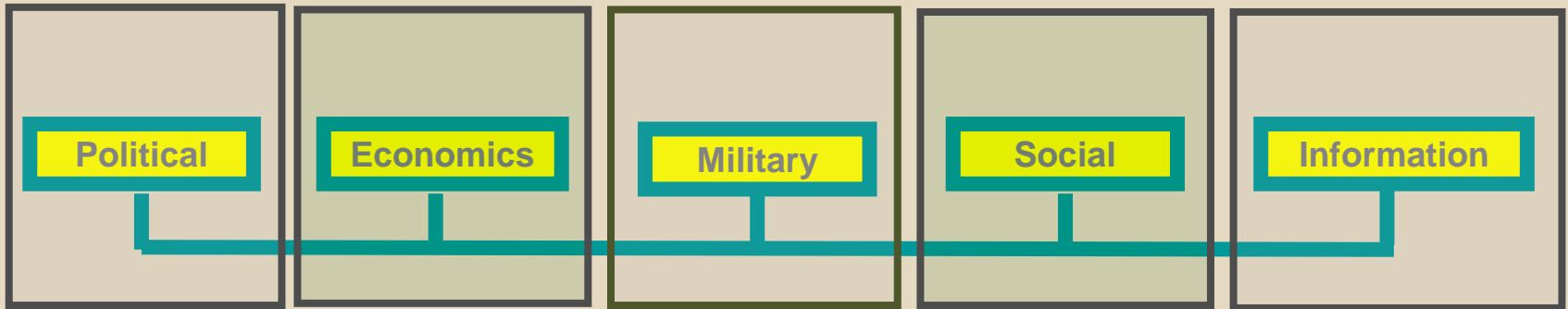
OR

An integrated whole?



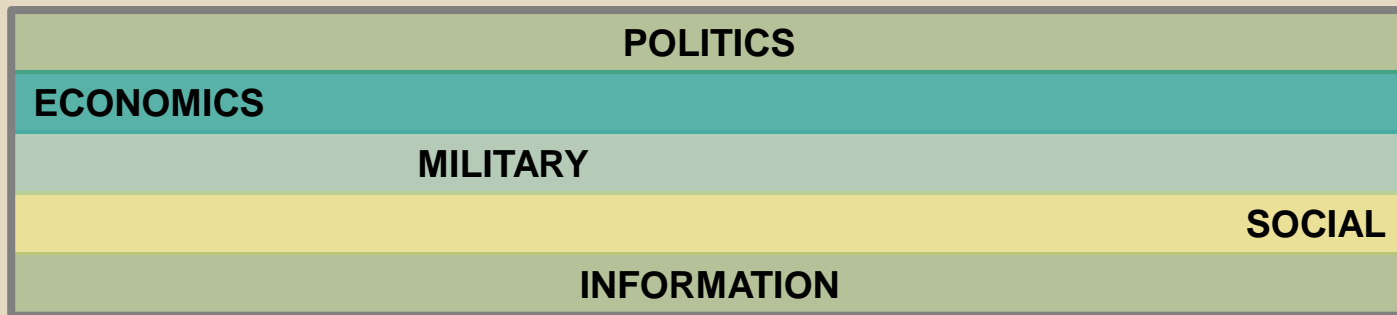
How do we view the conflict spectrum?

In compartments?



OR

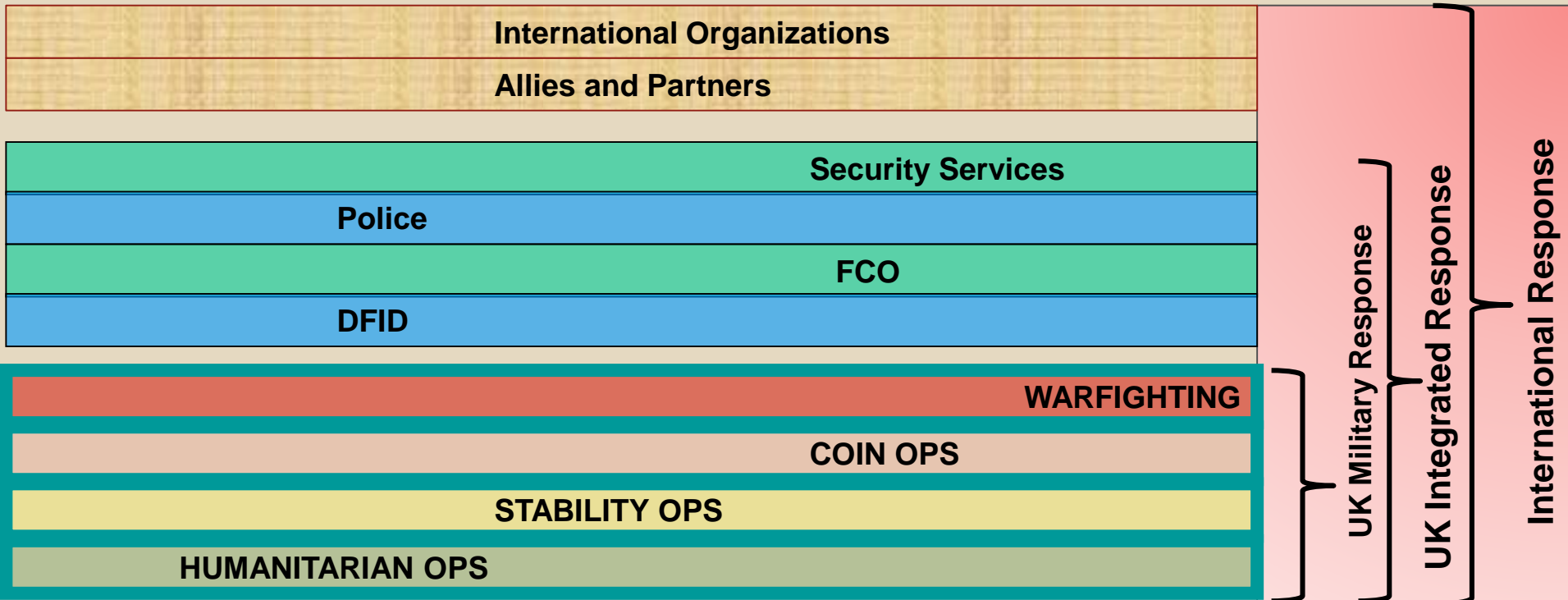
An integrated whole?





Caveat Emptor: War ≠ Only Military Operations

How to do you integrate your military and non-military response to a state or non-state actor following a hybrid strategy across the conflict spectrum, in the same time and space?





Questions and Discussion