

# Grey Zone to the new War Zone

The Changing Character of War

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# Resistance to Change



"I don't have time to see any crazy salesman; I have a battle to fight."

- War itself has not changed in its nature - it is still violent, political, human, and driven by fear, power, and uncertainty.
- But the *character* of war - how it is fought, by whom, with what tools, and at what speed - is changing dramatically.



**Warfare is becoming faster.  
(change accelerates)**

**Warfare is becoming more transparent  
(nowhere to hide).**



**Warfare is becoming more contested in every domain.  
(Space, maritime, land, air, cyber, homefront)**

**Warfare is becoming less predictable  
(outcomes).**

**Warfare is becoming robotic.  
(humans removed from frontline)**

**Warfare is becoming more entangled with civilian technology.  
(Democratisation of technology)**

# Drones: From Niche Capability to Everyday Weapon

- Make the battlefield far more transparent.
- Compress the gap between finding and striking.
- Drones democratise airpower.
- Impose cost asymmetry.
- Have psychological effects.



# Commercial Satellite Communications: Connectivity as Combat Power



# Smart Munitions: Precision is Spreading

- Precision is becoming more widespread.
- Precision changes the economics of destruction.
- Precision also shifts the burden to sensing and targeting.





## **Artificial intelligence: assistance, acceleration, and autonomy**

- Accelerates war beyond comfortable human decision cycles.
- Humans no longer making decisions.
- Legal dilemma.
- Accountability becomes blurred.
- Access to all (adversaries).
- What we see today is just the start.

## “So what?”

# What problems does this create for Governments and Ministries of Defence?

- Procurement systems are often too slow.
- Defence organisations struggle to integrate commercial innovation.
- Sovereignty becomes more complicated.
- Legal and ethical frameworks lag behind technology.
- Vulnerability is spreading through the whole system.
- Mass is back - but in a new form.
- The boundary between peace and war is less clear (Grey Zone).
- Governments will seek cost savings, opportunities and quick wins.



# So how will the *Character of War* evolve from here?

- Automated **Decision Making**
- Legal debates
- ‘Unmanning’ of the battlefield
- Continued Automation
- More Integration (Synthesis)
- Further Acceleration
- Global Competition
- Rapid Adaptation
- Beware the Law of Unintended Consequences
  - Grey Zone
  - Terrorism
  - Criminality
- ***The future is already here.....***

