

Strategic Uncertainty in National Security

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Theses and approaches. The following approaches, among others, for managing strategic uncertainty will be presented by the lecturers and discussed by all participants.

1. **Flexibility.** One cannot plan for what one cannot anticipate, so one must plan for agility in responding to surprise. The emphasis is bottom-up: initiative in responding to surprise must come from the locus of action. Centralized planning or control are of limited value.
2. **Diversity.** Joint operations of diverse highly trained and carefully chosen specialists can respond to diverse challenges. The emphasis is top-down: centralized planning of specialities, thorough training for inter-operability, and coordination of their actions in real time underlie the comprehensive response to surprise.
3. **Technology.** Technological advantage, supported by sophisticated training, is the basis for Western countries to prevail over non-Western and especially non-state adversaries, regardless of the surprises they initiate.
4. **Robustness.** Strategic uncertainty is managed by identifying critical goals and formulating security policy to achieve those goals over the widest range of surprise. The goal is to optimize the confidence in achieving good enough outcomes, rather than to optimize the outcomes.