“However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.” Winston L. S. Churchill

**ENDS: the study of strategy**

The first core module, named “Ends”, aims at developing students’ understanding of various concepts of international security studies as well as strategy in an initial take on the challenges of defence policy development.

**Theoretical frameworks**

Whilst traditional frameworks of international studies such as liberal and realist theories appear to be very valuable, other more recent ones’ purpose are hazier: for example, constructivism or the Copenhagen school (securitization theory) might be useful for academic analysis of past events but seem to offer little benefits to military leaders to decide in uncertainty.

**International relations “grammar”**

Thus, the course focuses on defining international powers & legal frameworks, international and regional governance, different types of states (including failed states, even though this concept is quite difficult to handle: for example, depending on definition criteria of such state, even the United States of America could have been considered as failed after “Katrina” hurricane).

**Defining a national strategy**

Through the analysis of Civil – Military relations, domestic influence on strategy, national strategic cultures, ACSC students are exposed to the challenges of developing the UK national strategy. This step is key to the defense policy, as it defines the national goals from which capabilities (the “Means”) and operational directions (the “Ways”) will be set.

**Key take-away**

- British approach to analysis is quite puzzling for a French rational mind: the rational can star in various forms and is progressively built-up through concrete steps to shape very elaborate concepts (the famous “empiric process”)
- Understanding national biases is particularly relevant (its owns, allies and potential adversaries). Nowadays, the UK focus on equality gender seem particularly dogmatic; moreover, the British have developed a form of strategic obsession on Russia (long before “Salisbury poison attack”). This experience is insightful, to keep in mind an awareness of our own national biases.