

## EVENING CONFERENCE

Dear Madam, Sir,

We have the pleasure to inform you that the Royal Higher Institute for Defence is organising an evening conference on **Tuesday 26 March 2019**.

### ***Bots, Social Media and Political Propaganda***

**Dr Gillian BOLSOVER**  
**University of Leeds**  
**Oxford Internet Institute**

Social bots – automated programs that run over social media and influence human behaviours – are increasingly widespread and worrisome in the age of the internet, inducing the need for an ever stronger cybersecurity. They have imposed their pervasive presence on social media platforms, and their use has been documented in a variety of scenarios, including manipulation of public opinion and social spam campaigns. Bots have gained an increasing amount of attention in the U.S. media since the 2016 United States presidential election, yet the consensus is that the general public does not really understand what they are. Bots were also used during the 2017 French presidential and German federal elections, but they had a different effect on them than they did on the aforementioned U.S. election. Last but not least, they have already been used for years in cyberwarfare tactics, especially by Russia.

The purpose of this conference is to explain how bots are exploited through social media and how they influence political debates. Dr Gillian Bolsover, from the University of Leeds, will compare the strategies developed by individuals and organisations hiding behind these automated programs. She will also give more details about the types of bots used and their effects on global politics.

This conference will take place on **Tuesday 26 March 2019 at 17:00 hours** in the conference centre of the Campus Renaissance (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8, 1000 Brussels**). The lecture will be given in **English** with **simultaneous translation** into **Dutch** and **French**. Parking is available on the Cinquantaire esplanade in front of the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History. We are looking forward to welcoming you and kindly ask you to confirm your participation by registering online on the RHID's website: [www.rhid.be](http://www.rhid.be).

**Pre-registration is mandatory to access the premises and must reach us not later than Wednesday 20 March 2019.**

**Programme:**

16:30	Registration
17:00	Conference and Q & A
18:30-19:30	Reception

(Signed)

Tim VAN LANGENHOVE, MSc Eng  
Colonel GS  
Director-general  
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

