The "generations of war" model

Peace of
Westphalia

Nuclear
Weapons
Proliferate

Fall of
USSR

state vs. state

Precursor activities – going
back to Alexander & Sun Tzu
(and before)

2 GW

1
GW

3 GW

States &
non-states
wage war

State-vs-state—
only "legal" form of
war

New commo
& transport
networks

Ideological
purpose

4 GW

Nonstate armed groups:
partisans, insurgents,
anarchists, criminal
organizations, etc.

States & non-
states wage
war

1600   1700   1800   1900   2000