



**RAIFFA
ACADEMY**



Austrian
Academy of
Sciences

Inaugural Howard Raiffa Lecture

The Ethics of National Security Decisions: Lessons from the Social Sciences

DATE

15 July 2026

TIME

17:30 CEST

PLACE

Johannessaal,
Austrian Academy of Sciences,
Dr. Ignaz Seipel-Platz 2,
1010 Vienna



Avril Haines

President-elect, Carnegie
Endowment for International Peace

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Inaugural Howard Raiffa Lecture

The Ethics of National Security Decisions: Lessons from the Social Sciences

In her lecture titled, The Ethics of National Security Decisions: Lessons from the Social Sciences, Haines will examine how insights from decision science and related fields can help strengthen ethics programs in public institutions.

Most institutional ethical frameworks rest on the implicit assumption that officials, when confronted with an ethical choice, will reason their way to the correct answer if they have been adequately trained, clearly instructed, and appropriately incentivized. This rationalist model of moral decision-making is compelling, but it doesn't take into account substantial research that makes clear such choices are driven at least as much by intuition, social context, and situational pressure as by deliberate reasoning. In fact, research has demonstrated that conscientious individuals are likely to behave in ways that violate their own stated values when placed in institutional structures that normalize or demand such behavior. Despite this, the application of behavioral science to public sector ethics remains limited. Haines will explore how this manifests itself in national security institutions and discuss what it might look like to more effectively integrate insights from various fields into an ethics program design.

Program

17:00-17:30 Guests arrive

17:30 Welcome to the Academy

*Christian Köberl, Committee Chair,
Austrian IIASA Committee*

17:35 Introduction to the Howard Raiffa Academy
Inaugural Raiffa Lecture

Margaret Goud Collins, Executive Director, Friends of IIASA

17:40 Introduction of Avril Haines

Daniel Goroff, President, Social Science Research Council

17:45 Inaugural Howard Raiffa Lecture
The Ethics of National Security Decisions: Lessons from
the Social Sciences

*Avril Haines, President-elect of the Carnegie Endowment
for International Peace and former United States Director
of National Intelligence*

18:15 Responses and moderated discussion

Respondents:

*Ambassador Martin Eichinger, Director,
Diplomatic Academy Vienna*

*Professor Elke Weber, Gerhard R. Andlinger Professor of
Energy and the Environment, Princeton University*

Moderator: Daniel Goroff

18:45 Q and A with the audience

19:00 Event close and reception

About Howard Raiffa and the Academy

Howard Raiffa was one of the world's most influential thinkers in decision science, negotiation analysis, and game theory. He served as IIASA's founding Director from 1972, helping establish the Institute as a unique platform for scientific cooperation across Cold War divides. His experience at IIASA shifted his focus toward applying analytical methods to what he described as "the complex art and science of getting things done in the real world."

The Howard Raiffa Academy, anchored at IIASA, builds on this legacy. Shortly before his death in 2016, Raiffa entrusted his daughter, Judy Raiffa, with creating a program at IIASA that would help maximize the impact of the Institute's work on the world's most pressing challenges. The Academy is the culmination of a decade-long effort by Judy Raiffa and partners at Friends of IIASA to bring that vision to life.

About the speaker

Avril Haines is the President-elect of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a job she will be starting in the autumn. She is currently a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College in Oxford, a Carnegie Distinguished Fellow at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, and a Senior Fellow at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

Previously, she served as the US Director of National Intelligence, where she led the US Intelligence Community and served as the President's principal intelligence adviser. She has held senior roles across government, including Principal Deputy National Security Advisor, Deputy Director of the CIA, and Legal Adviser to the National Security Council. She holds degrees in physics and law and serves on a number of boards, including the Atlantic Council's International Advisory Board, the Vodafone Foundation, and the Bletchley Park Trust.