

The 44th Chinese Control Conference



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# From Model-based to AI-Empowered Cyber-Physical Multi-Agent Systems

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30 July 2025







# Outline

**1) Introduction and Challenges of CPMAS**

**2) Model-Based Control in CPMAS**

**3) AI-Empowered Approaches for CPMAS**

**4) Future Research Directions in CPMAS**





# Outline

**1) Introduction and Challenges of CPMAS**

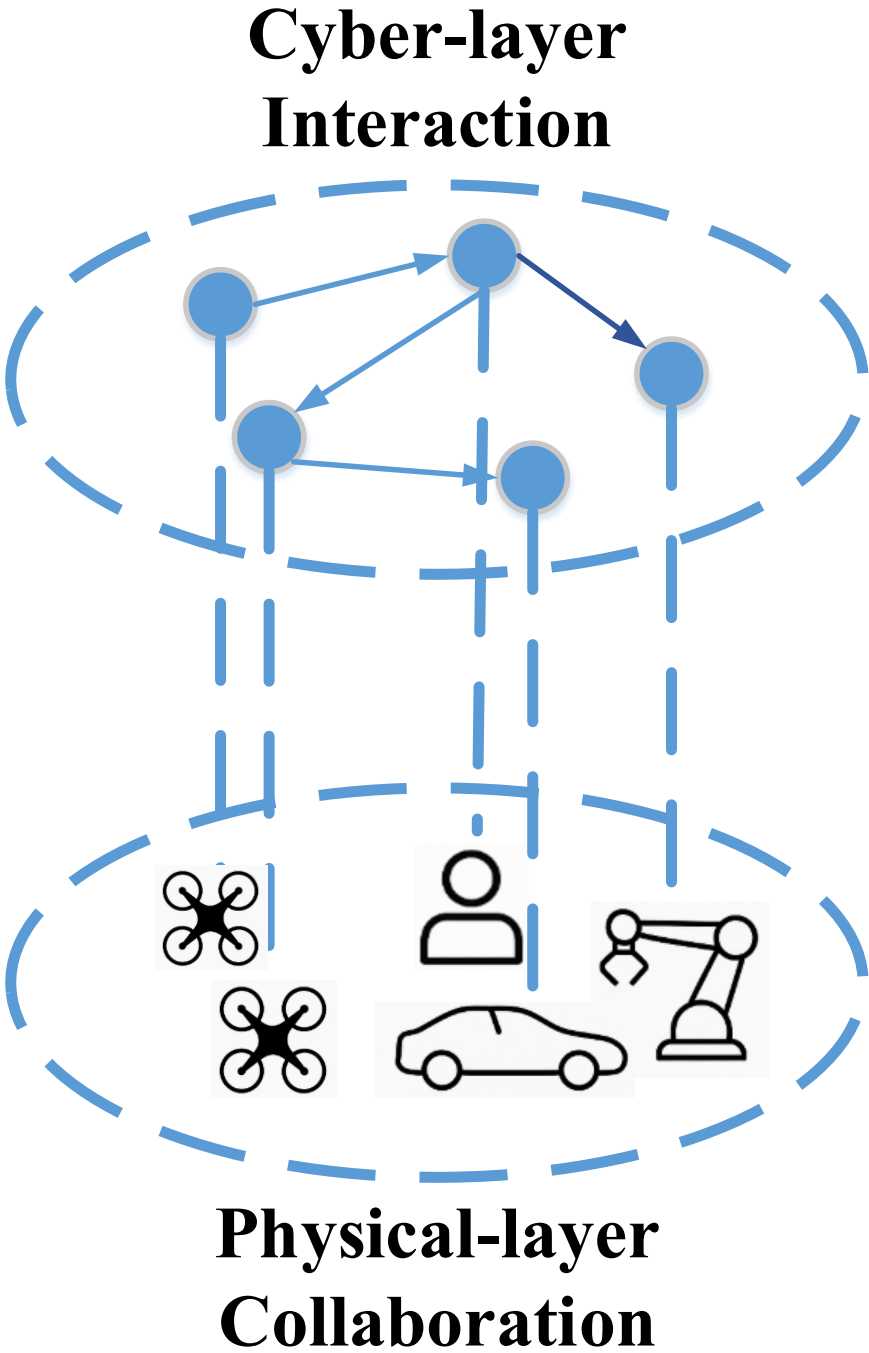
**2) Model-Based Control in CPMAS**

**3) AI-Empowered Approaches for CPMAS**

**4) Future Research Directions in CPMAS**

# 1.1 Cyber-physical Multiagent Systems (CPMAS)

CPMAS integrates cyber and physical layers across multiple intelligent agents to enable resilient, cooperative behaviour in dynamic, real-world environments



System Type	Key Focus	Strengths & Weaknesses
MAS	Distributed coordination	<div>✓ Decentralized, scalable</div> <div>✗ Limited physical interaction</div>
CPS	Cyber-physical coupling	<div>✓ Real-time control</div> <div>✗ Centralized or partially distributed, less adaptive</div>
CPMAS	Cyber-physical-agent collaboration	<div>✓ Adaptive, robust in complex environments</div> <div>✓ Wider application</div>



# 1.2 Examples of CPMAS

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**UAV formations**



**Heterogeneous satellite system**



**Autonomous cars in intersection**



**Human-machine collaboration**



# 1.3 Advantages of CPMAS

6



**Save average energy**



**Improve survivability**



**Complete complex tasks**



**Extend functions**



# 1.4 Significance - Frontier Field

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## 125 Questions from Science



**How does group intelligence emerge?**

## Covers from Science and Nature



**Swarm learning, AI, etc.**



# 1.4 Significance - Strategic Needs



中华人民共和国中央人民政府  
www.gov.cn

### 国务院印发《新一代人工智能发展规划》

2017-07-20 17:12 来源： 新华社

字号：默认 大 超大 | 打印

新华社北京7月20日电 国务院近日印发《新一代人工智能发展规划》（以下简称《规划》），提出了面向2030年我国新一代人工智能发展的指导思想、战略目标、重点任务和保障措施，部署构筑我国人工智能发展的先发优势，加快建设创新型国家和世界科技强国。

《规划》指出，要全面贯彻党的十八大和十八届三中、四中、五中、六中全会精神，深入学习贯彻习近平总书记系列重要讲话精神和治国理政新理念新思想新战略，坚持科技引领、系统布局、市场主导、开源开放等基本原则，以加快人工智能与经济、社会、国防深度融合为主线，以提升新一代人工智能科技创新能力为主攻方向，构建开放协同的人工智能科技创新体系，把握人工智能技术属性和社

China



Australian Government

## AUSTRALIA'S CYBER SECURITY STRATEGY 2020

Australia



### UNMANNED SYSTEMS INTEGRATED ROADMAP 2017-2042

USA

## Defence Technology Framework

Defence Science and Technology  
September 2019

UK



# 1.5 Applications - **Intelligent Transportation**

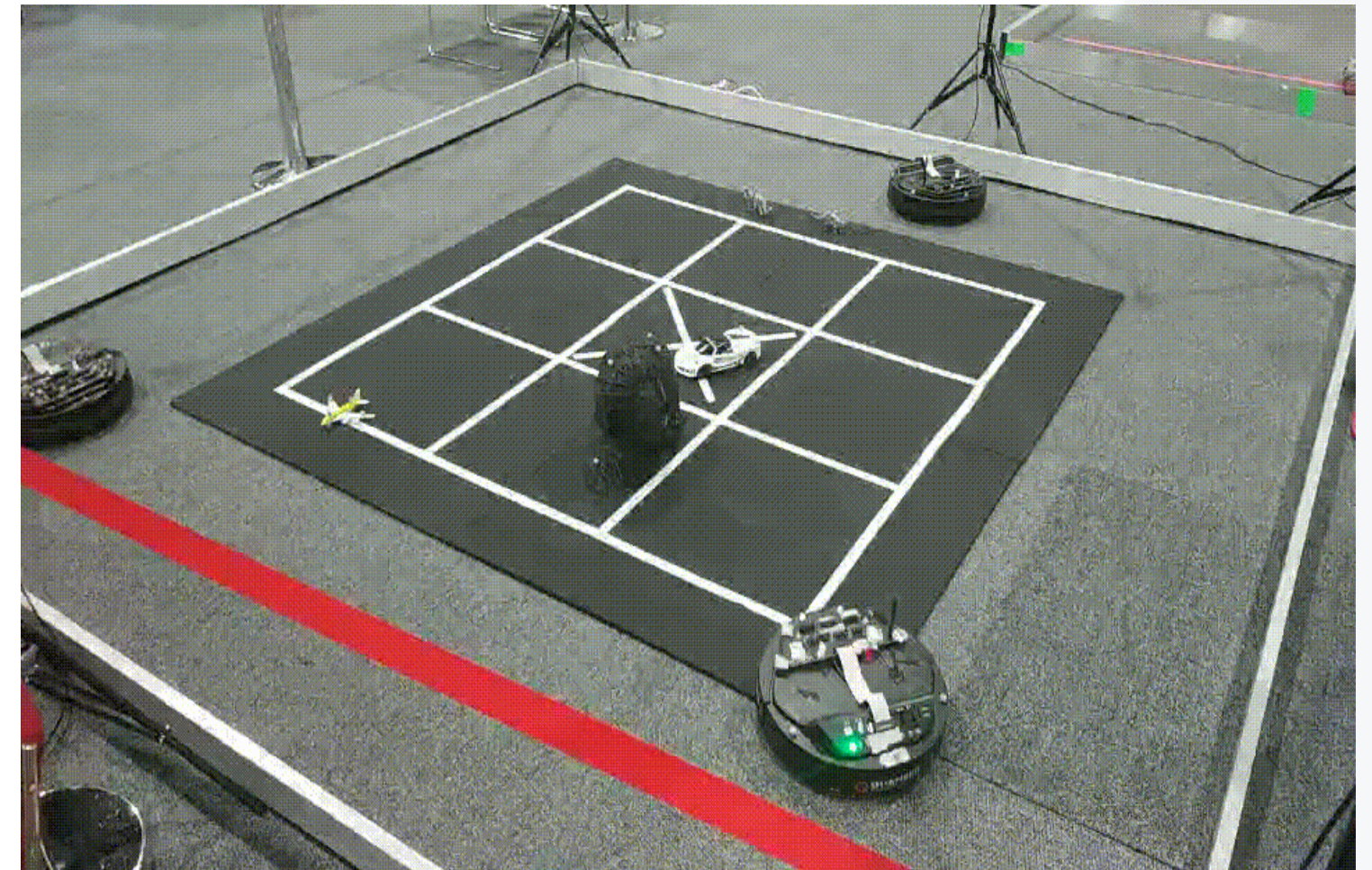
9

- Traffic signal control, reducing congestion and optimizing traffic flow
- Autonomous parking systems, optimizing decision-making



**Intelligent transportation systems-self-drive  
AlphaBus**

Source from: <https://news.sina.cn/2017-12-05/detail-ifyphtze4406603.d.html>



**Autonomous parking system  
(University of Adelaide (UoA))**



# 1.5 Applications - **Defense**

10

- Autonomous attack and defense, enhancing combat efficiency while reducing human involvement in dangerous environments



**Unmanned vehicle formations  
for attack and defense**



**Israel-Iran conflict**

Source from: <https://news.sina.cn/2017-12-05/detail-ifyphtze4406603.d.html>



# 1.5 Applications - **Defense**

11

- Autonomous attack and defense, enhancing combat efficiency while reducing human involvement in dangerous environments



**MineSwarm for efficient detection  
of land mines (UoA)**



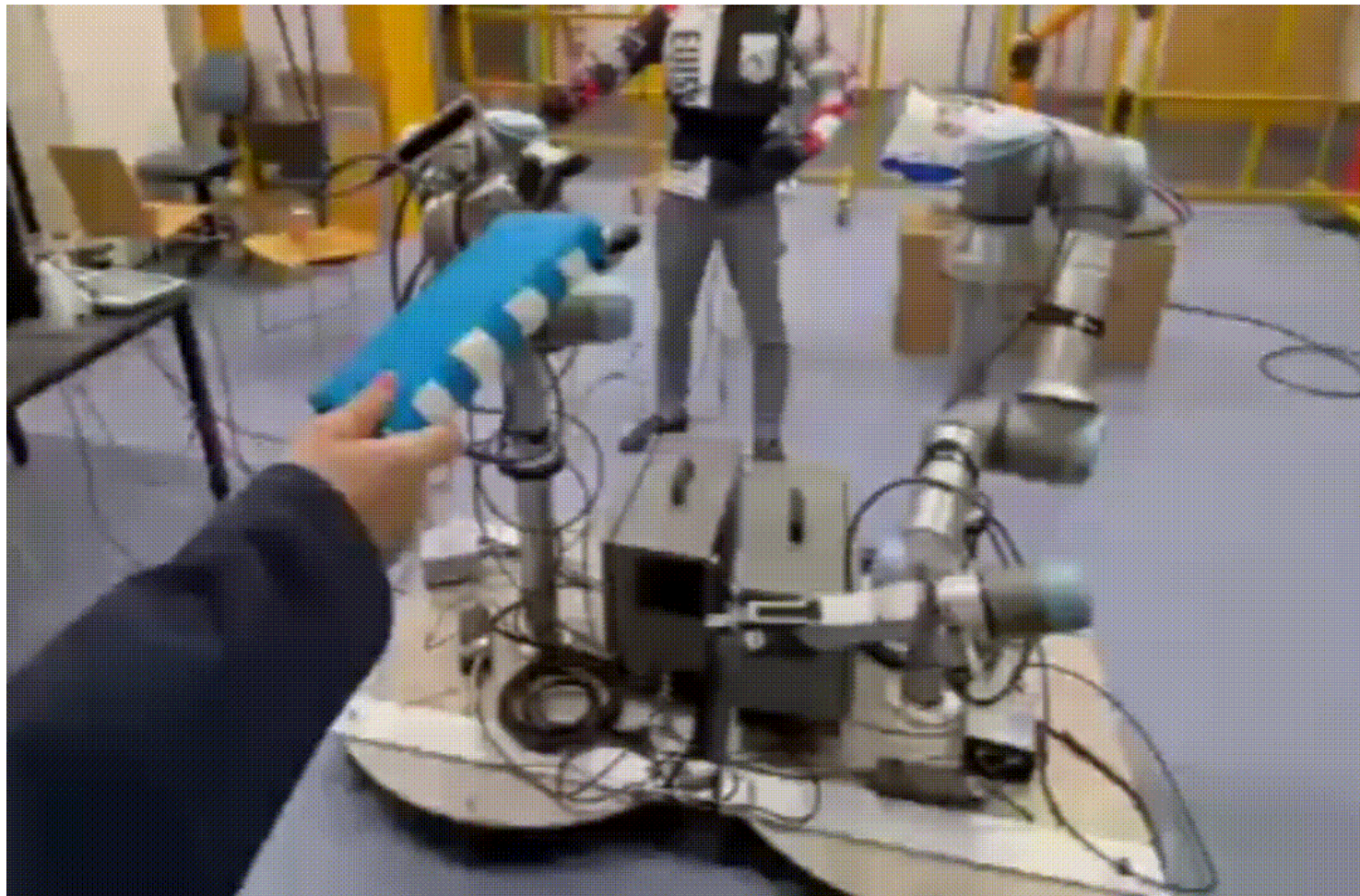
**Ground-air switching vehicle tracking  
a target drone (UoA)**



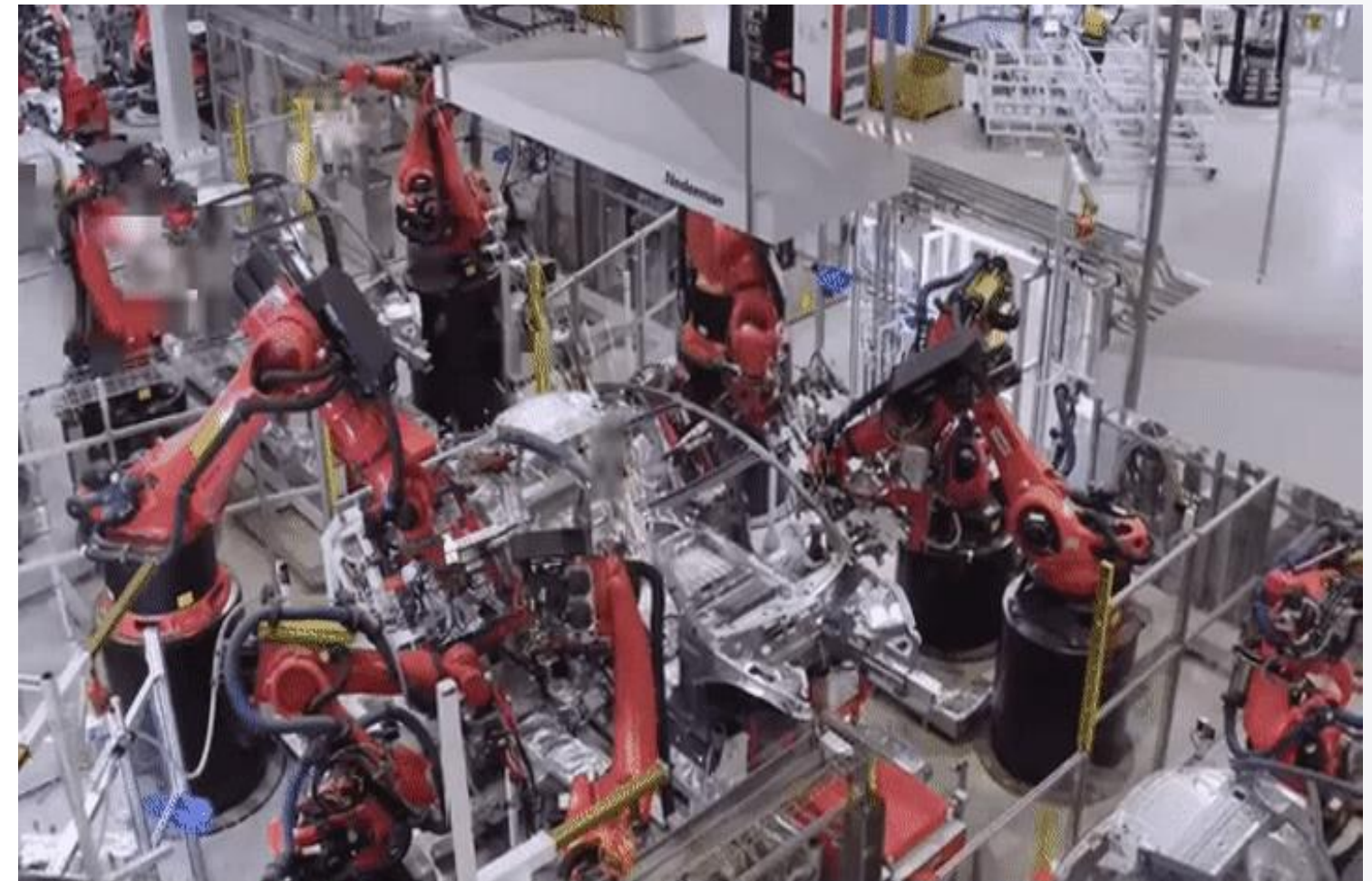
# 1.5 Applications - **Industrial Automation**

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- Collaborative manufacturing, handling, and inspection, enabling real-time optimization on complex production lines



Show robot human-machine smart manufacturing (UoA with Australian Meat Processor Corporation)



Tesla's automated vehicle production



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Source from: <https://www.tesla.cn/>; <https://www.iimt.org.cn/h-nd-611.html>



# 1.5 Applications - **Environmental Monitoring**

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- Collaborative environmental data collection, disaster assessment, improving real-time monitoring performance and area coverage



**Australian bushfire monitoring (UoA)**



**Multi-UAV agricultural monitoring and irrigation**

Source from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcbJTiiimO-w>



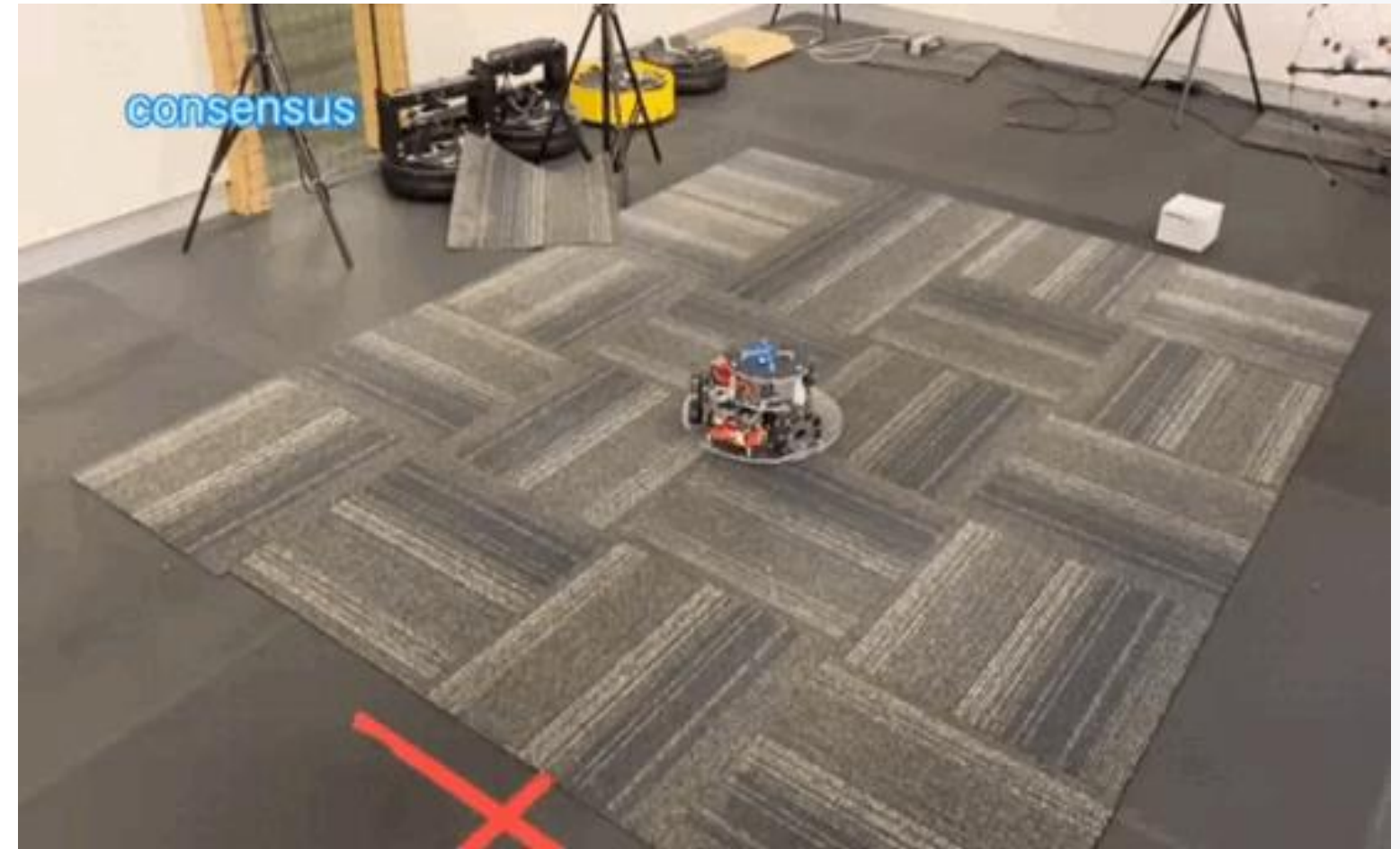
# 1.5 Applications - **Smart logistics**

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## ■ Collaborative logistics, optimizing goods distribution and logistics operations



**Unmanned warehouse**



**UAV-UGV consensus (UoA)**

Source from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBlmGOwxHsE>



# 1.6 Current Challenges

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## Chall. 1 Unstable communication networks

Traditional cooperation struggles with limited network resources and malicious attacks

→ **Cyber-layer: insecure interaction**



Limited networks Cyber-attacks

## Chall. 2 Multi-physical constraints

Existing cooperative methods fail under heterogeneity, non-cooperative obstacles, and faults

→ **Physical-layer: unsafe cooperation**



Dynamic obstacles Multi-faults

## Chall. 3 Complex and unknown environment

Most methods are model-sensitive and have limited autonomy in complex dynamic environment

→ **Both layers: low autonomy**



Unknown model Dynamic env.



## From model-based to AI-empowered cooperative control

### Model-based cooperative control



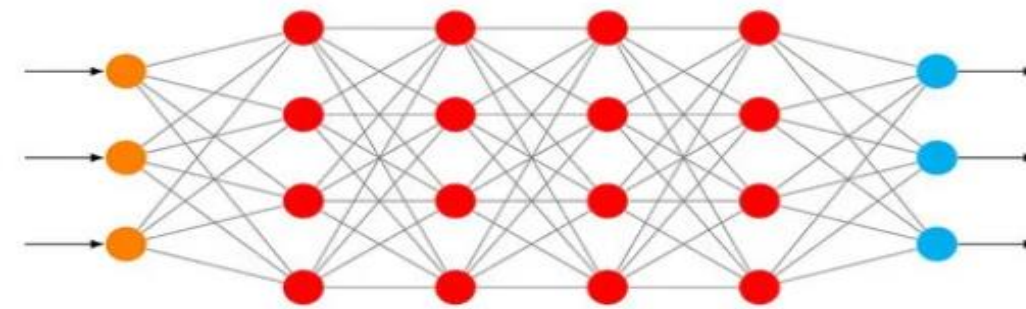
$$\begin{cases} F_x = (\dot{u} + wq - vr)m \\ F_y = (\dot{v} + ur - wp)m \\ F_z = (\dot{w} + vp - up)m \end{cases}$$



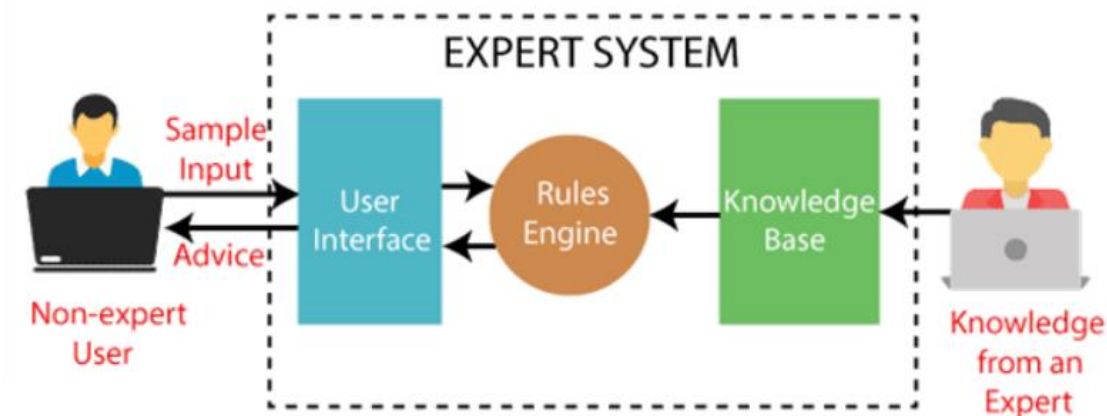
$$\begin{cases} \dot{x} = v \cos \theta \\ \dot{y} = v \sin \theta \\ \dot{\theta} = \frac{v}{L} \tan \delta \end{cases}$$

- Safety-critical applications
- Known or partially known model
- Good theoretical guarantee

### AI-empowered cooperative control



Neural network



Expert system

- Partially known/unknown environment
- Complex environment
- Data-rich environment





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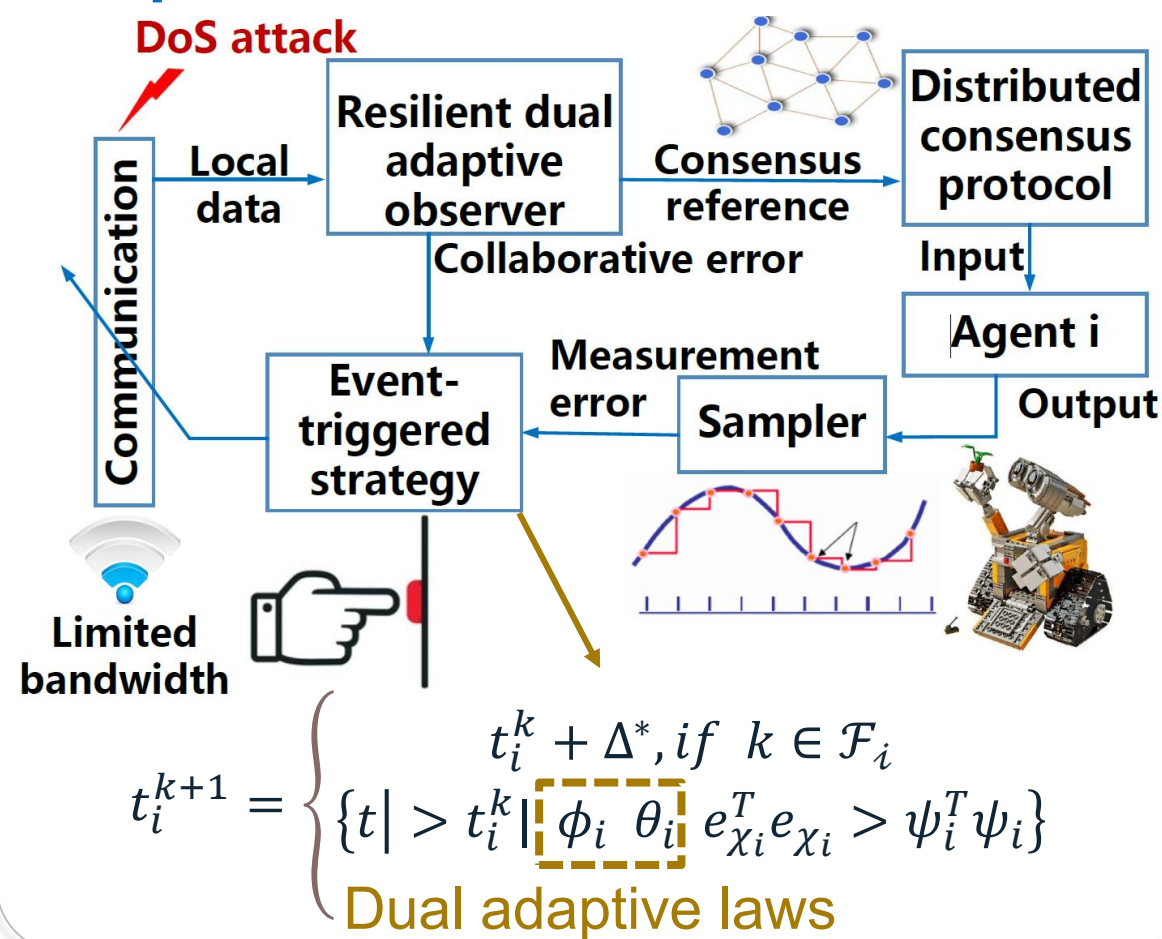
# 2.1 Model-Based Control under Cyber-Layer Constraints

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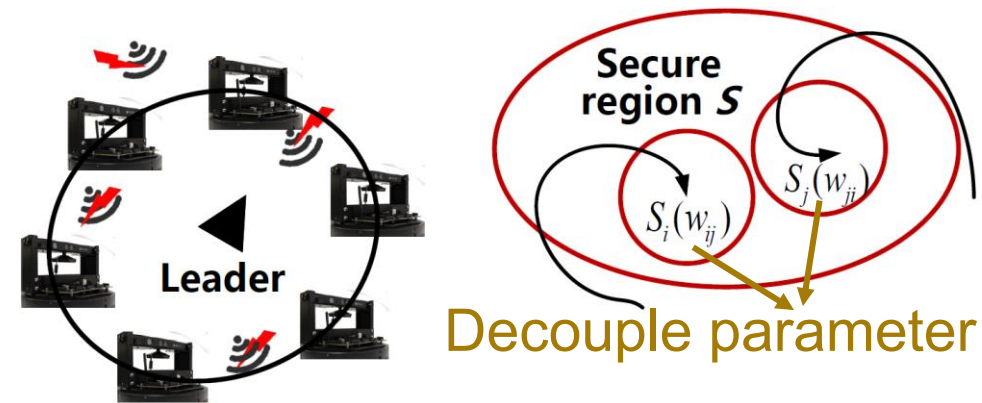
## (1) Distributed resilient consensus under limited bandwidth and DoS attacks

- Technical Hurdles**
- Limited communication and local information hinder timely cooperation
  - DoS attacks disrupt links and threaten consensus resilience

### Adaptive and Event-based Scheme



### Distributed Resilient Control



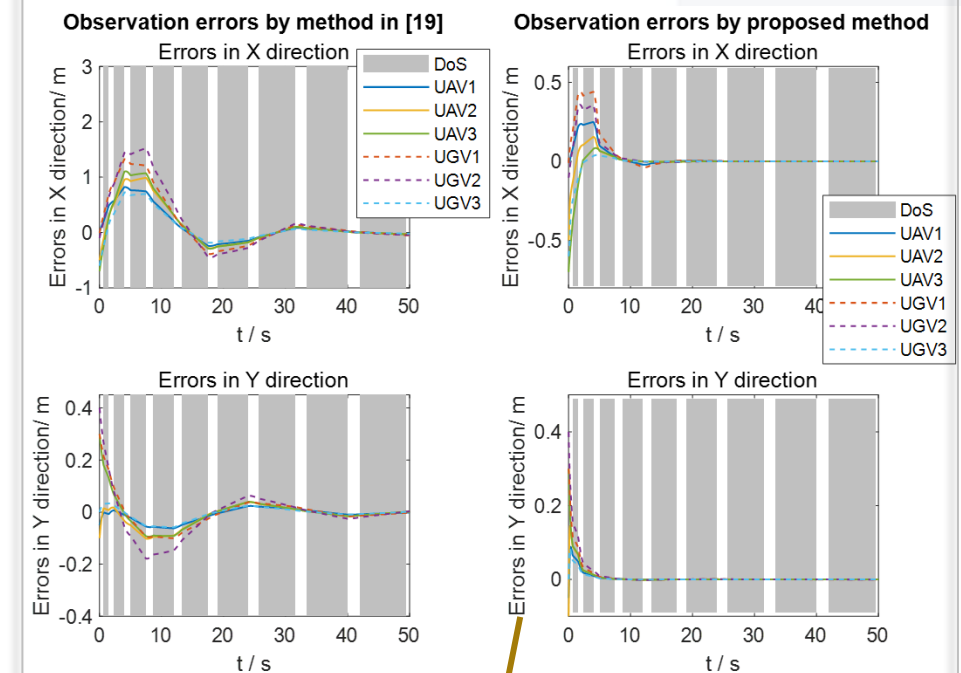
Distributed convergence to each agents' secure regions

- Fast convergence without DoS:  

$$A_i^\eta u_i^\eta + d_{ij}^\eta b_{ij}^\eta < d_{ij}^\eta \bar{\delta}_v, j \in \mathcal{N}_i, \beta_1 > 0$$
- Slow divergence with DoS:  

$$\eta_i^T ((A^\eta)^T P + P A^\eta - \beta_2 P) \eta_i < \delta_v, \beta_2 > 0$$

### Experimental Results



Improved convergence speed almost twice under DoS attack

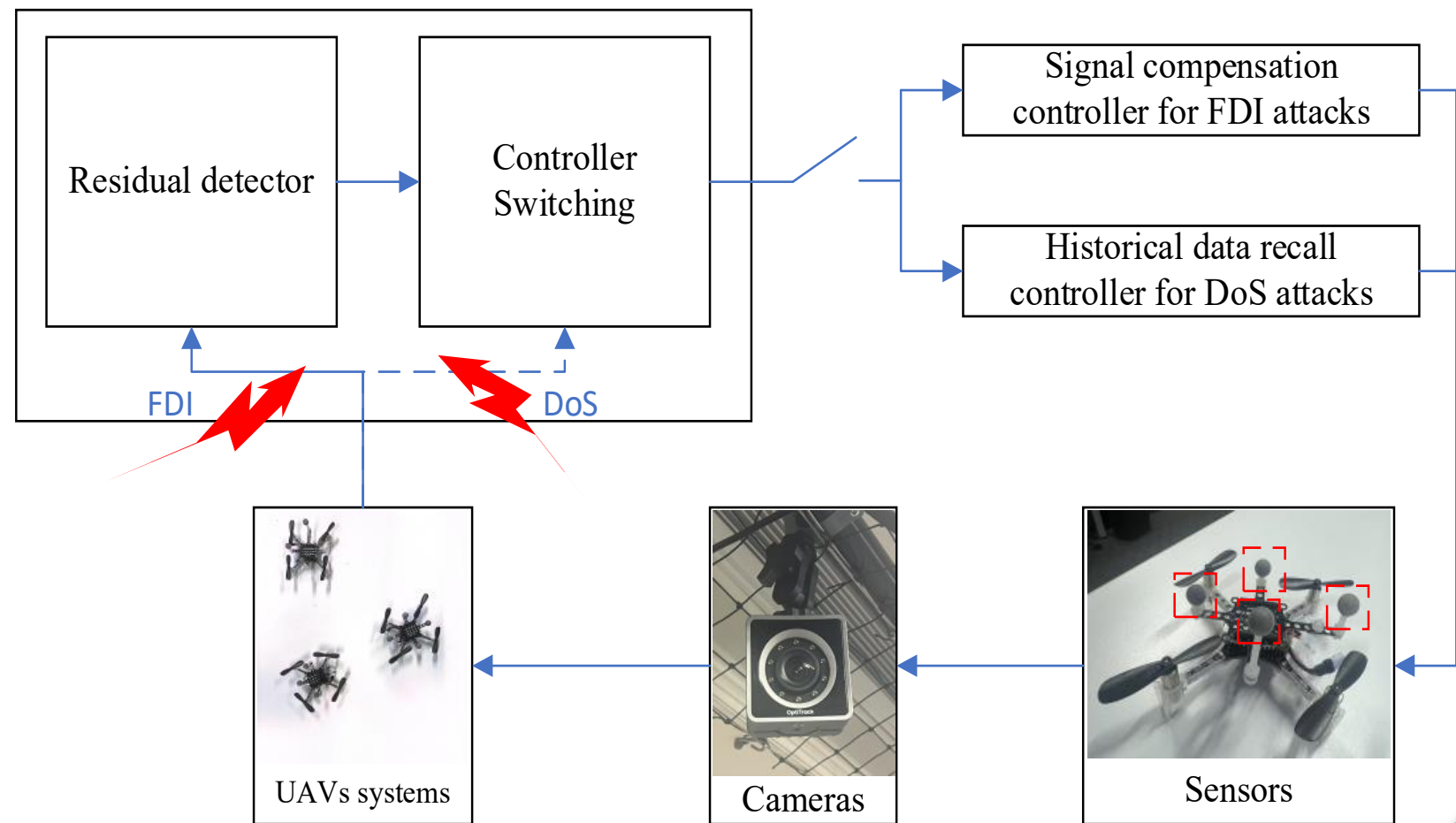
Enable resilient interaction under cyber-layer constraints



## (2) Distributed formation control for UAVs under DoS and FDI attacks

- Technical Hurdles**
- Distributed architectures communicate under malicious network attacks
  - Attack detection and control switching for nonlinear system models

### Distributed Control Framework



### Two Controller Designs

- DoS attacks case

$$u_i = -\frac{k_{i1}}{(2\tau_i)^p} x_i^{2p-1} - l_{i1} e_i^a - \frac{1}{2} x_i - \hat{\theta}_{i1}^T \psi_{i1}(\xi_i)$$

Called data

$$\dot{\hat{\theta}}_{i1} = x_i^T \psi_{i1}(\xi_i) - \gamma_{i1} \hat{\theta}_{i1} - \gamma_{i1} \hat{\theta}_{i1}^{2q-1}$$

- FDI attacks case

$$u_i = -c\varphi_i - \varepsilon_i\phi_i - f_i(\hat{v}_i)$$

Compensation data

$$\varphi_i = \sum_{j \in N_i} a_{ij} (p_i - p_j) + d_i p_i$$

$$\phi_i = \sum_{j \in N_i} a_{ij} (h_i - h_j - F_i + F_j)$$

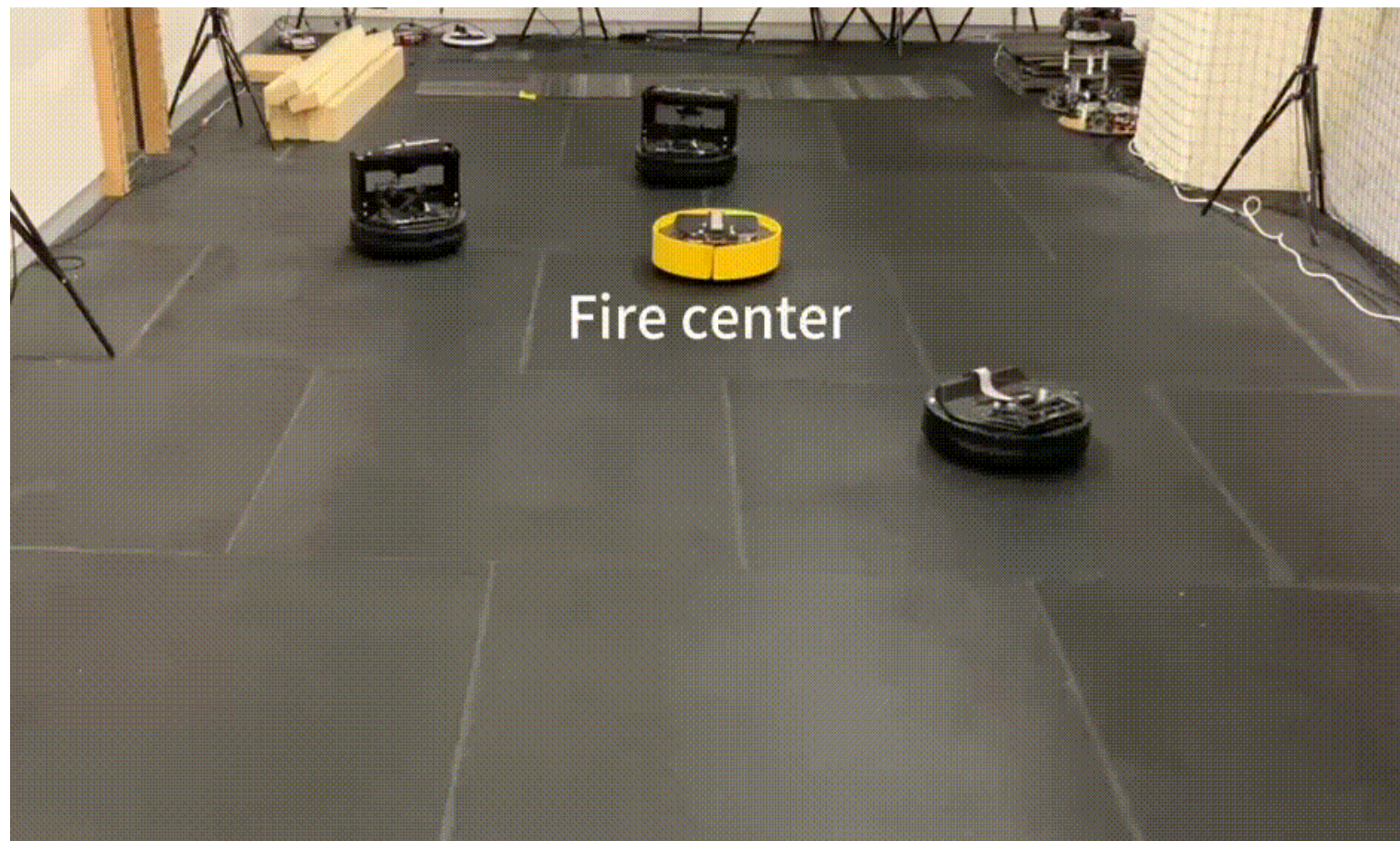
Ensure distributed detection and secure communication under hybrid attacks



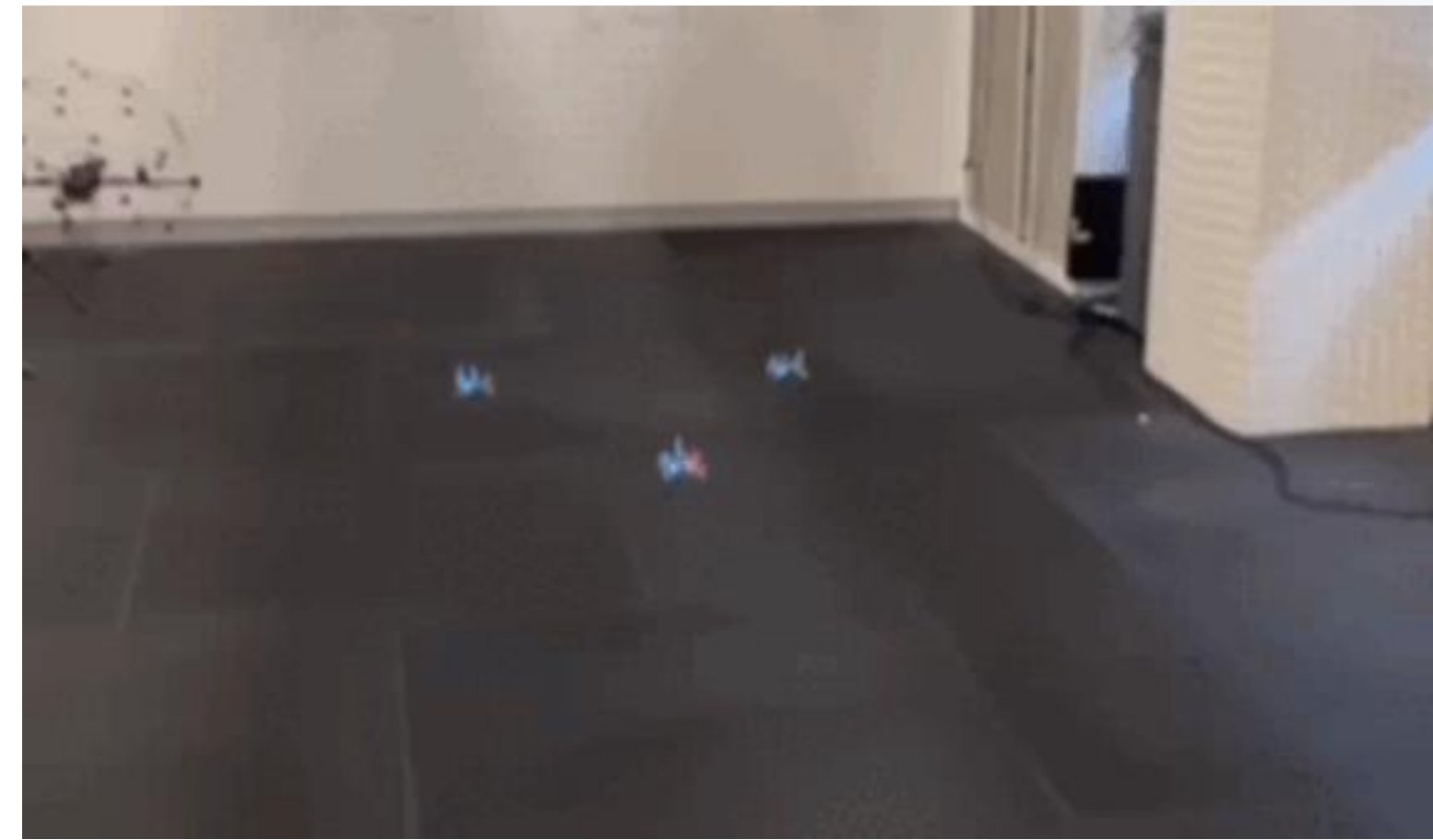
# 2.1 Model-Based Control under Cyber-Layer Constraints

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- Verifications — applied to build information security for UGVs and UAVs



Collaborative target tracking and patrolling under communication constraints and DoS



Formation control of micro-UAVs under DoS and FDI attacks

**Efficient Interaction**

Overcome  
→

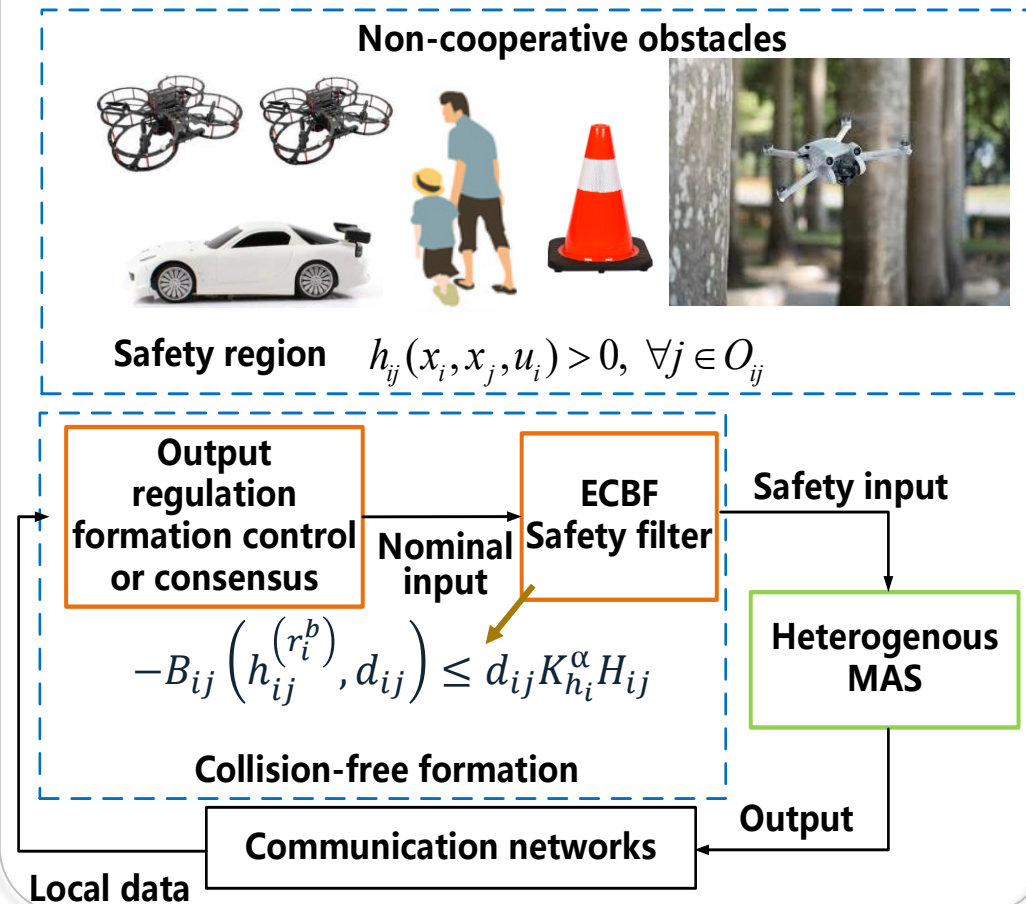
**Chall.1 Cyber-Layer:  
insecure interaction**



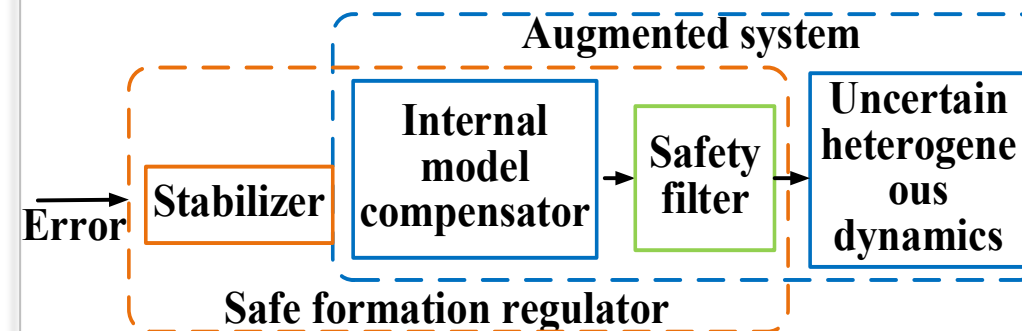
## (1) Safe heterogeneous formation control via exponential control barrier function (ECBF)

- Technical Hurdles**
- Heterogeneous agents with different-order and nonlinear dynamics
  - Non-cooperative dynamic obstacles causing unpredictable collisions

### ECBF-based Formation control



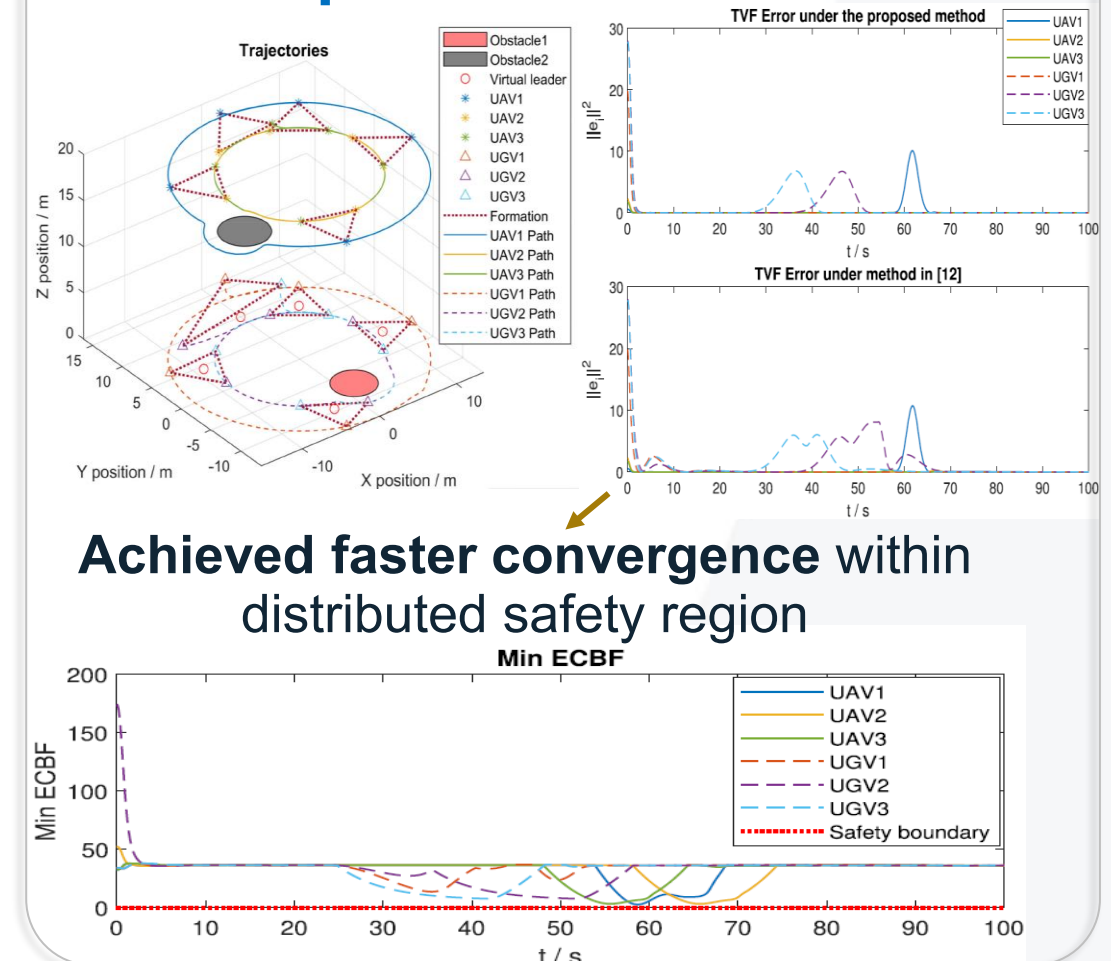
### Safe heterogeneous control



- Heterogenous nonlinear CPMAS
 
$$\dot{x}_i = [\tilde{f}_i(x_i) + \tilde{g}_i(x_i)] u_i, \quad \text{Different order \& dynamics}$$

$$y_i = \tilde{h}_i(x_i), \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, n$$
- Internal model compensator
 
$$\dot{z}_i = \Sigma_{i1} z_i + \Sigma_{i2} \hat{e}_i \quad \hat{e}_i = y_i - C_i^\eta \hat{\eta}_i - C_i^f f_i$$

### Experimental Results



Empower safe cooperation for heterogeneous CPMAS in obstacle-rich environments

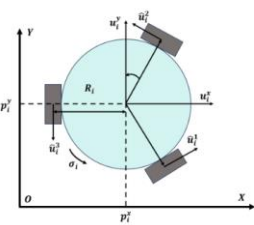
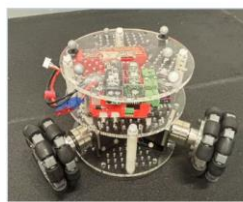


## (2) Distributed fault-tolerant cooperative output regulation

### Technical Hurdles

- Traditional methods require agents to access full exosystem information – unrealistic
- Existing protocols cannot convergence within a desired time, especially under multi-faults

### Fixed-Time Observer & Control



Efficiency Loss

Outage Fault

Bias Fault

Exosystem

Fixed-Time Observer 1

Fixed-Time Observer 2

Multi-agent system

Adaptive Fault-Tolerant Controller

Guarantee that the multiagent networks can achieve output regulation control despite the impact of faults

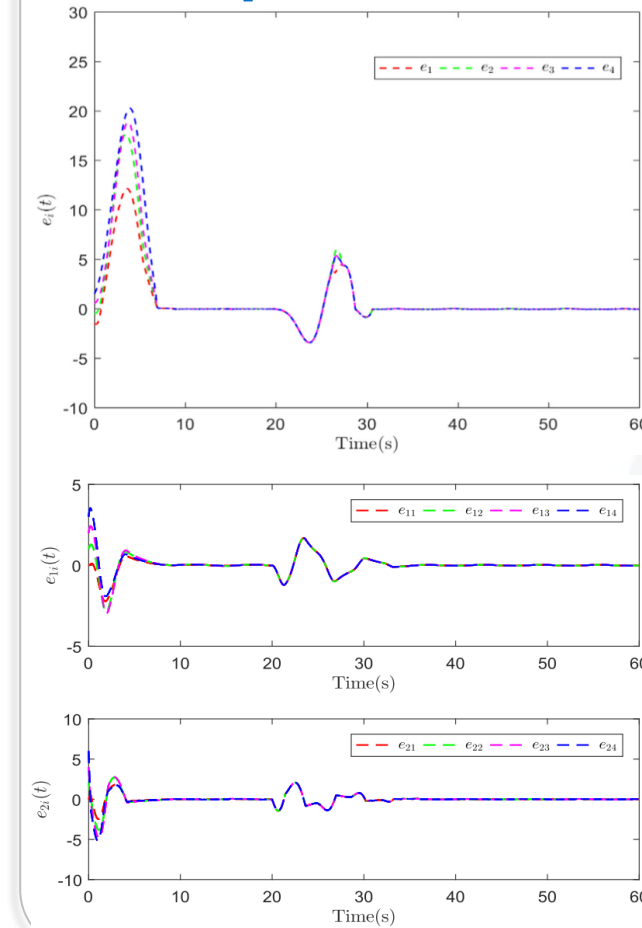
### Fault-Tolerant Control Strategy

- Observer 1: Estimate the matrix  $S$   
 $\dot{S}_i^{lk}(t) = -c_1 \text{sign}(\eta_i(t)) - c_2 \text{sig}(\eta_i(t))^2$
- Observer 2: Estimate the state  $v(t)$   
 $\dot{v}_i(t) = S_i(t)v_i(t) - c_3 K \xi_i(t) - c_4 \text{sign}(K \xi_i(t)) - c_5 \text{sig}(K \xi_i(t))^2$
- Adaptive Fault-Tolerant Controller

$$u_i(t) = -\frac{\hat{d}_{2i}^2(t) \|v_i(t)\|^2 B^T P_2 \varphi_i(t)}{\hat{d}_{2i}(t) \|\varphi_i^T(t) P_2 B\| \|v_i(t)\| + \epsilon(t)} - \frac{\hat{f}_i^2(t) B^T P_2 \varphi_i(t)}{\hat{f}_i(t) \|\varphi_i^T(t) P_2 B\| + \epsilon(t)} - \hat{d}_{1i}(t) B^T P_2 \varphi_i(t)$$

Tolerant multi-faults

### Experimental Results



- Improved resilience to **all 3 faults**
- Fixed-time convergence **regardless of initial conditions**
- Quicker** observation speed, **Higher** precision, **More robust**

Enable fast and adaptive fault-tolerant control under multi-faults



- Verifications — applied to heterogeneous systems and omnidirectional rovers



UAV-UGV collaborative area scanning  
under non-cooperative obstacles



Omnidirectional rover formation for area  
searching under faults

**Reliable Cooperation**

Overcome  
→

**Chall.2 Physical-layer:  
Unsafe cooperation**





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# 3. AI-Empowered Cooperative Control

## (1) Fuzzy control for MAS under hybrid cyber-attacks

- Technical Hurdles**
- Hybrid cyberattacks in both S-C and C-A channels are difficult to model
  - Hybrid cyberattacks complicate event-triggered control design

Key Idea

### Hybrid Attack Model and control scheme

S-C channel

$$y(t) = \begin{cases} b_s(t)F_s(t) + (1 - bs(t))y(t), & t \in I_{1,n} \\ \emptyset, & t \in I_{2,n} \end{cases}$$

C-A channel

$$u(t) = \begin{cases} b_c(t)F_c(t) + (1 - bc(t))u_c(t), & t \in I_{1,n} \\ \emptyset, & t \in I_{2,n} \end{cases}$$

Controller design  $u(t) =$

$$\begin{cases} \sum_{j=1}^2 \mathfrak{h}_j(\eta_h(t_h^s h)) (bc(t)C_j^c f_c(x_c(t_{g,n}^c h)) \\ + (1 - bc(t))C_j^c x_c(t_{g,n}^c h), & t \in L_{1,n} \cap Q_{k,n}^c \\ \emptyset, & t \in I_{2,n} \end{cases}$$

**DoS**

**FDI**

### Experimental Results

Methods	The proposed AETS	ETS 1	ETS 2
Threshold $\sigma_s$ and $\sigma_c$	0.05 , 0.2	0.05 , 0.05	0.2 , 0.2
TN from S-C	31	29	17
TN from C-A	78	140	56
Total TN	109	169	73
Transmission rate	36.3%	56.3%	24.3%

- Accurate path tracking
- Good control performance,
- Improved network utilization

Ensure distributed autonomous control in insecure network environment



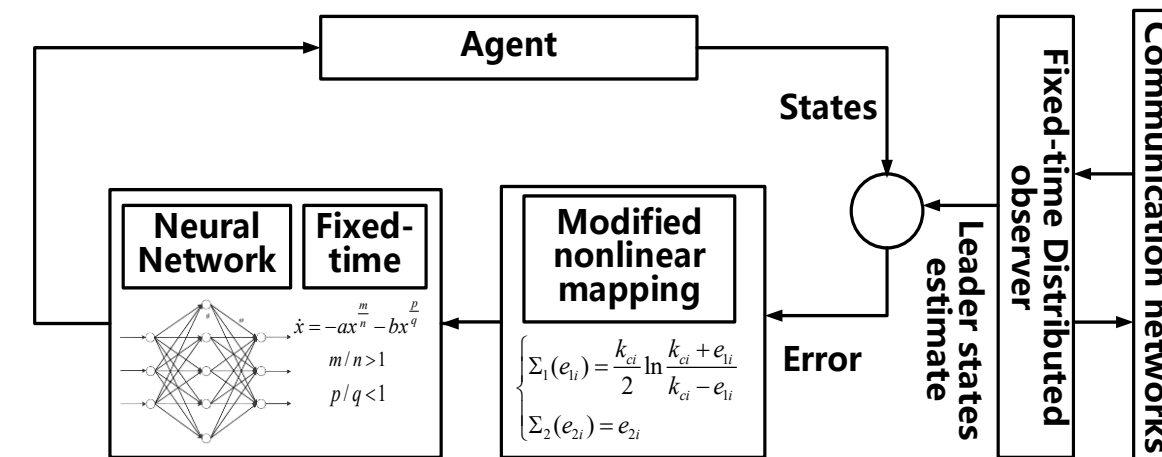
# 3. AI-Empowered Cooperative Control

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## (2) Fixed-time neural network control under physical constraints

- Technical Hurdles**
- Simultaneous handling of multiple constraints complicates controller design
  - Existing methods cannot guarantee fixed-time performance

### Distributed control framework



Distributed observer-based framework for physical constraints and unknown dynamics

### Fixed-time NN Control

- Neural network approximation  $(f_i(x_i) - f_0(x_0) + [g_i(x_i) + 1]u_i + d_i) \leq \sqrt{r+3} \|\bar{\Theta}_i\|$  **Unknown sign**

$$\leq \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{m_{\min}}{m_{\max}} (r+3) + \frac{m_{\max}}{m_{\min}} \|\bar{\Theta}_i\|^2 \right)$$

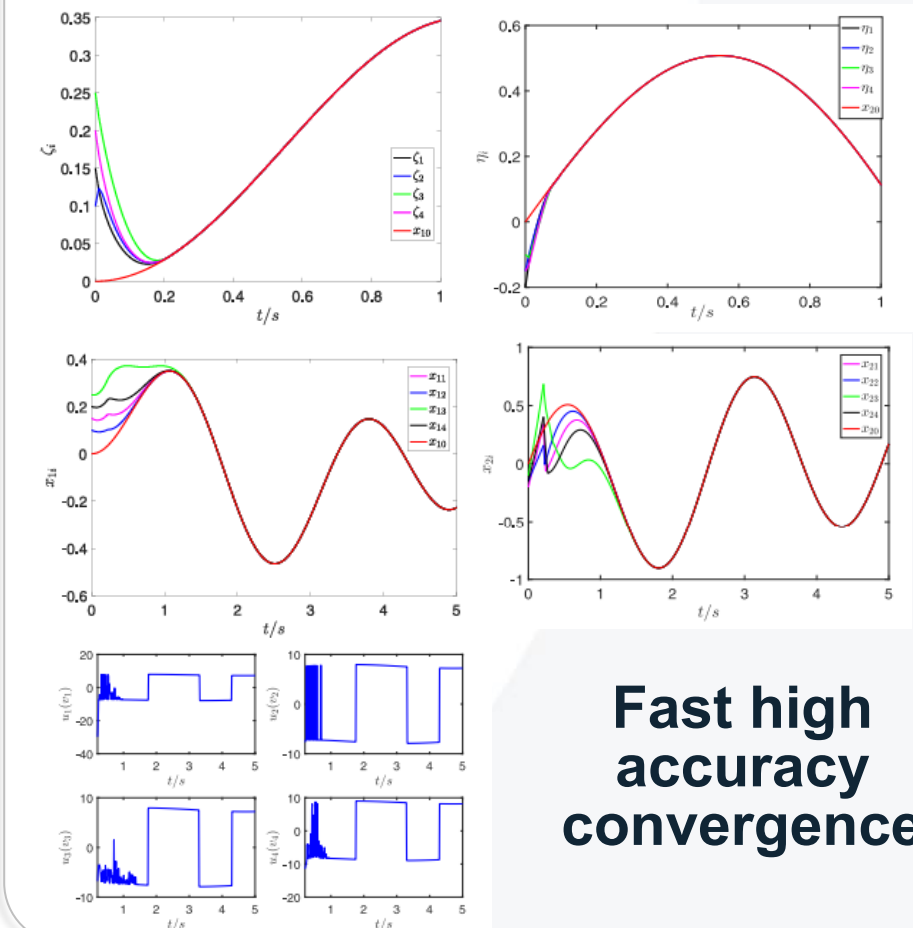
- Fixed-time control

$$u_i^* = - \left( \frac{m_{\min}}{2m_{\max}} \hat{\Pi}_i + \frac{m_{\max}}{2m_{\min}} (r+3) + \delta_i \right) \text{sign}(\xi_2) - (k_2 + l_2(1 + \xi_2^2) + \chi_1(\xi_1) + \chi_2(\xi)) [\xi_2]^{1/q_3}$$

$$v_i = \frac{u_i^*(v_i) - \Psi_i \text{sign}(\xi_2)}{m_{\min}}$$

**Deadzone inverse**

### Experimental Results



Enable distributed autonomous control in constrained environment



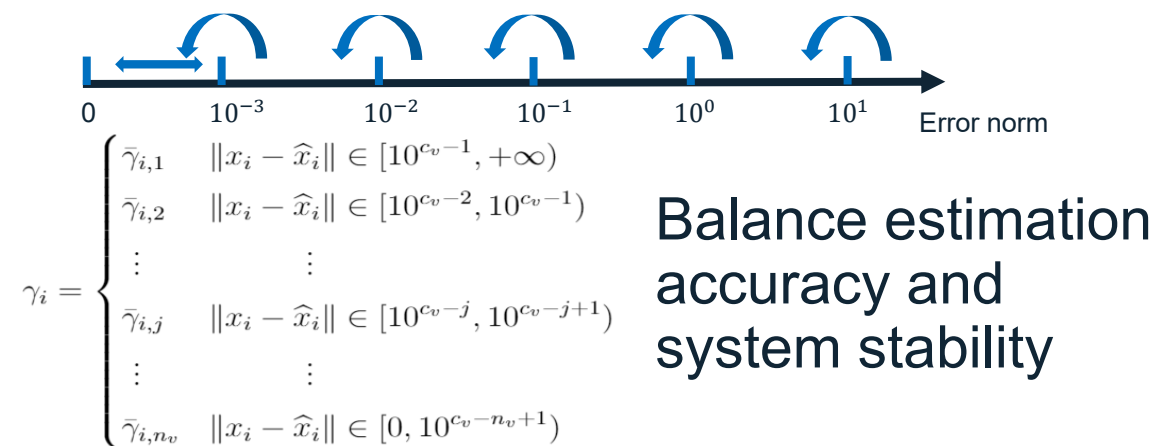
# 3. AI-Empowered Cooperative Control

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## (3) Uncertainty estimation based on neural networks

- Technical Hurdles**
- Static parameters induce chattering
  - Saturated systems cause delay and oscillation

### Fractional Sensitivity Parameters

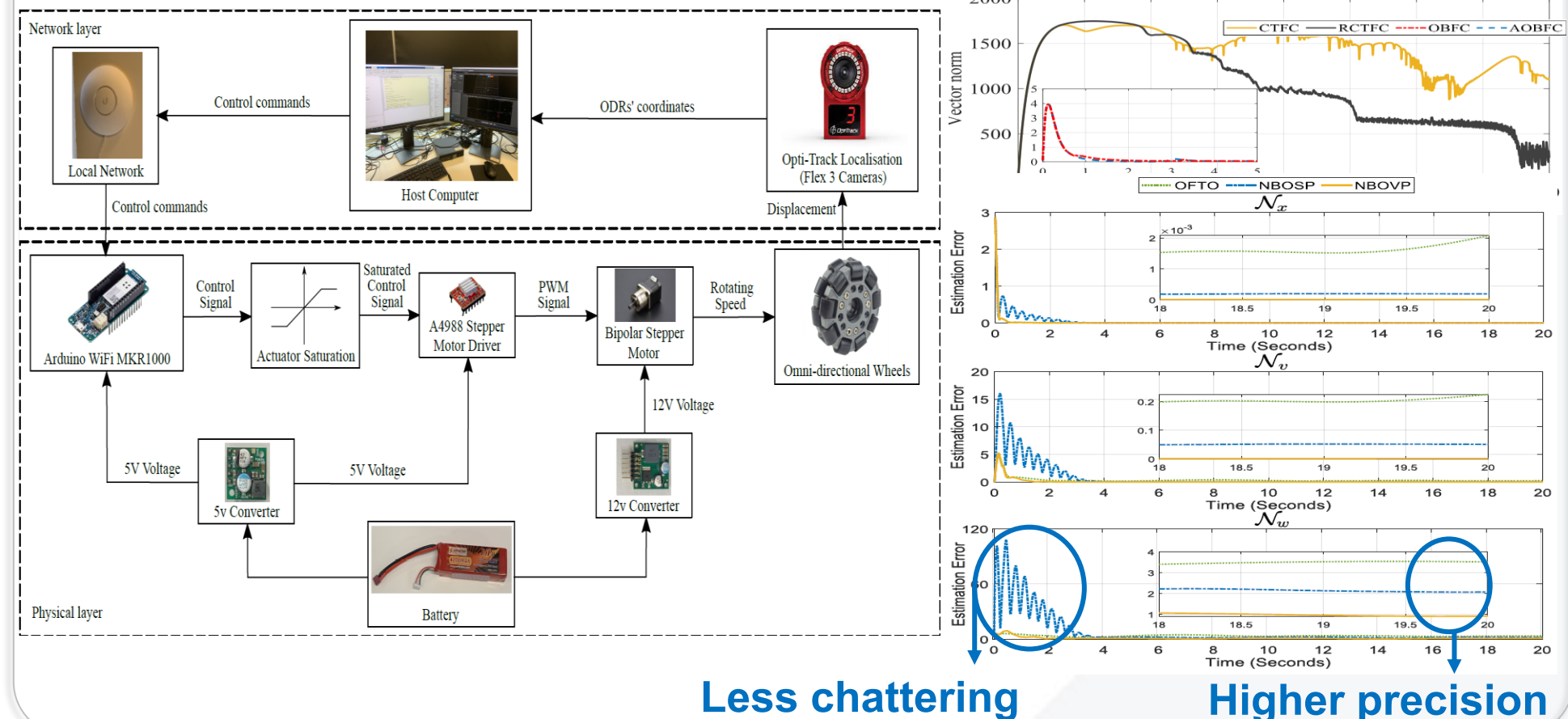


### Neural-Based Observer

- Actual model  $\dot{x}_i = g_i u_i + w_i$
- Fictitious system  $\dot{\hat{x}}_i = g_i u_i - \tilde{x}_i + \hat{W}_i^T \varphi_i(Y_i)$
- Adaptive law  $\dot{\hat{W}}_i = \gamma_1 \varphi(Y_i) \tilde{x}_i^T - \gamma_2 \|\tilde{x}_i\| \hat{W}_i$

Achieve a faster & more stable tuning process

### Experimental Results



Improve uncertainty estimation performance and accuracy



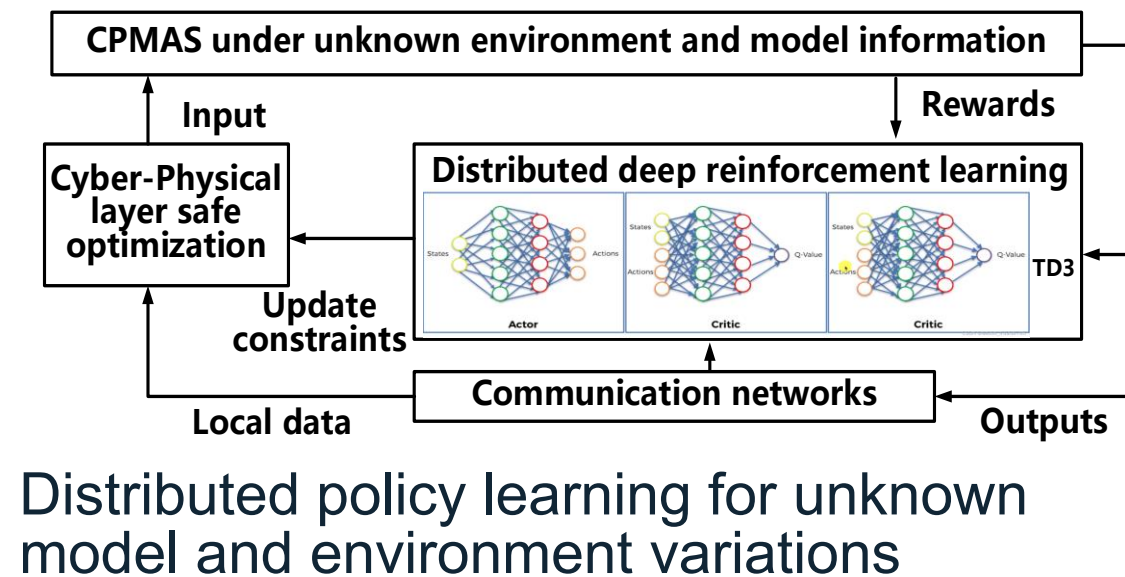
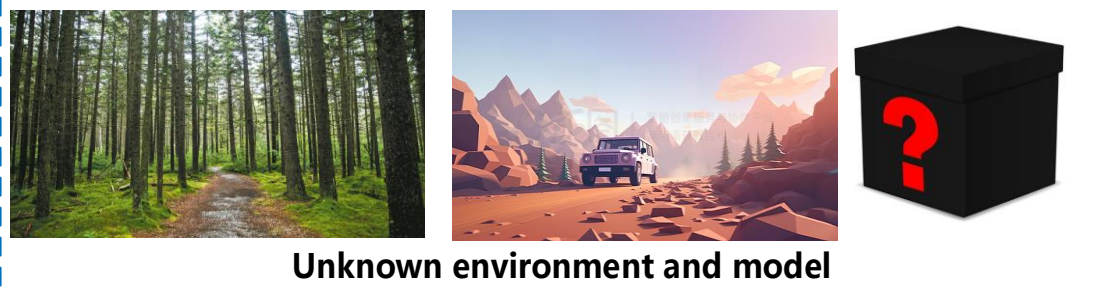
# 3. AI-Empowered Cooperative Control

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## (4) Distributed safe reinforcement learning and control optimization

- Technical Hurdles**
- Unknown environment and model limit traditional methods
  - Distributed systems hinder safe coordination and optimization

### Distributed Deep RL Framework



### Safe Optimization Strategy

- Distributed control optimization

$$u_i^* = \arg \min |u_i - u_i^{\text{ref}}|^2$$

$$\text{s.t. } -\dot{\hat{h}}_{ij} \leq \frac{a_i u_i}{a_i + a_j} \gamma_h h_{ij}^3, \forall j \in \mathcal{O}_i \cap \mathcal{M}$$

$$-\dot{\hat{h}}_{ik} \leq \gamma_h h_{ik}^3, \forall k \in \mathcal{O}_i \setminus \mathcal{M}$$

- Reward function for DDRL

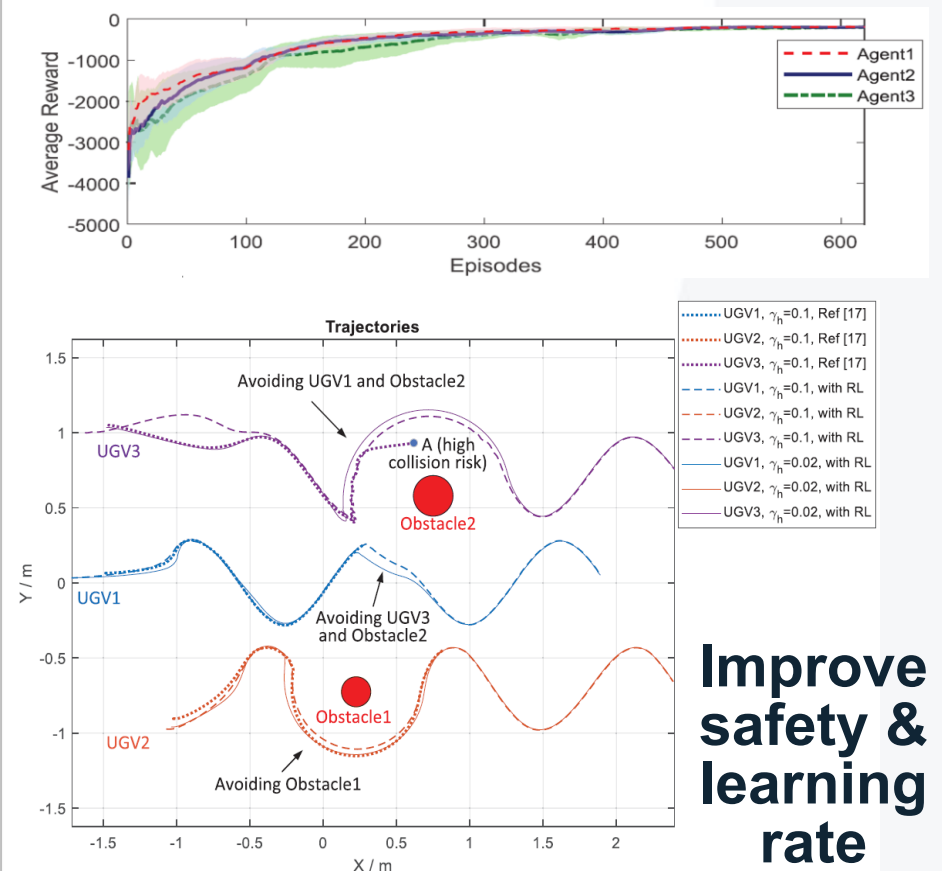
$$R = - \sum_{j \in \mathcal{O}_i \cap \mathcal{M}} |h_{ij} - \hat{h}_{ij} - \boxed{\hat{h}_{ji}}|^2$$

Local data

$$- \sum_{k \in \mathcal{O}_i \setminus \mathcal{M}} |h_{ik} - \boxed{\hat{h}_{ik}}|^2 - \boxed{P_c}$$

Env changes      Safety penalty

### Experimental Results



Empower distributed autonomous optimization in complex environment

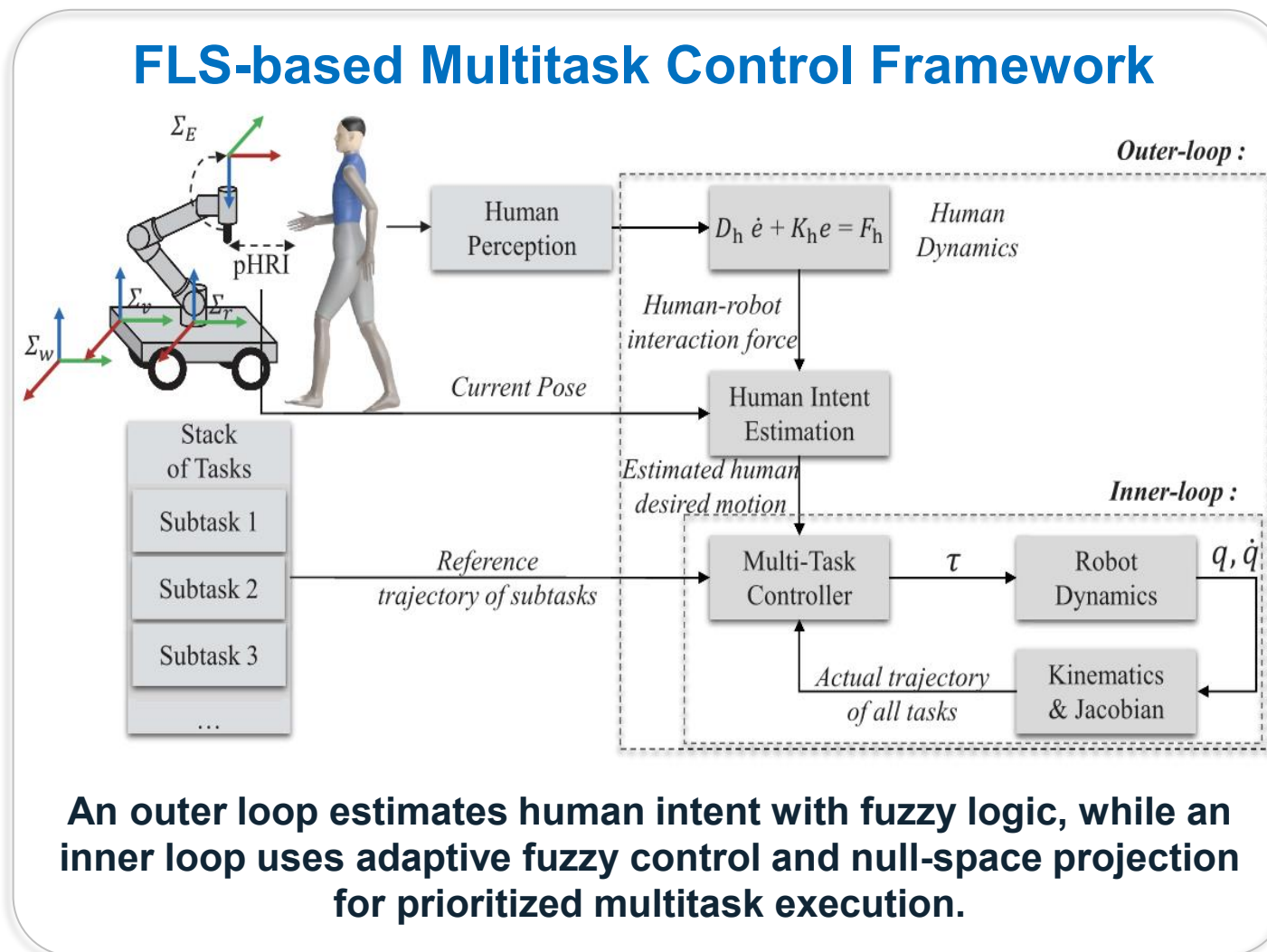


# 3. AI-Empowered Approaches

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## (5) Fuzzy-based control for human-machine collaboration

- Technical Hurdles**
- Hierarchical fuzzy control integrates human intention estimation and multi-task coordination
  - Unmeasurable intention, task interference, and uncertain robot dynamics



### Fuzzy-Based Control Strategy

- Outer-loop: Human Intention Estimation

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_{hd}^T, \dot{x}_{hd}^T, k_h^T, d_h^T \end{bmatrix}^T = W_d^T h_d(u_d, c_d, \sigma_d) + \epsilon_d$$

- Inner-loop: Task-Space Mapping

$$\dot{x}_i = J_i(q)\dot{q}$$

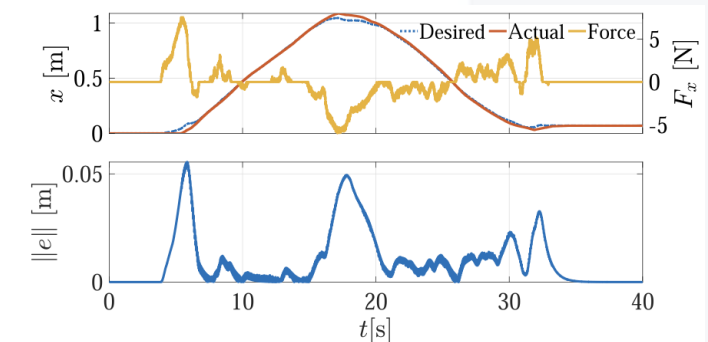
- Inner-loop: Adaptive Fuzzy Control Law

$$F_{ctrl} = K_v r + \hat{W}_\psi^T h_\psi + K_r \text{sgn}(r) + F_v$$

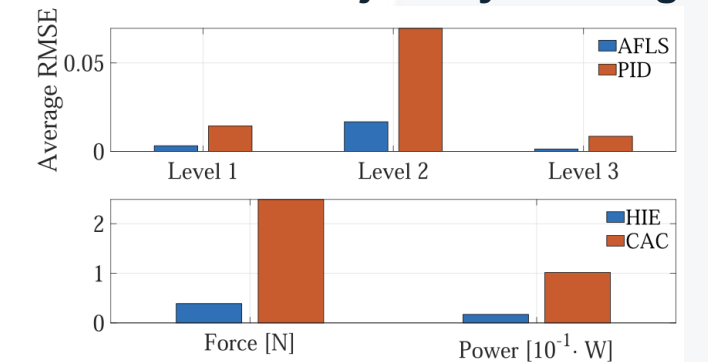
- Inner-loop: FLS Weight Tuning

$$\dot{\hat{W}}_{\psi i} = \beta_{\psi i} (h_{\psi} r_i - \delta_{\psi i} \|r\| \hat{W}_{\psi i})$$

### Experimental Results



#### Effective trajectory tracking



Prevail over the PID controller on multitask tracking

Enable adaptive human-robot collaboration with unified intention estimation and multi-task control



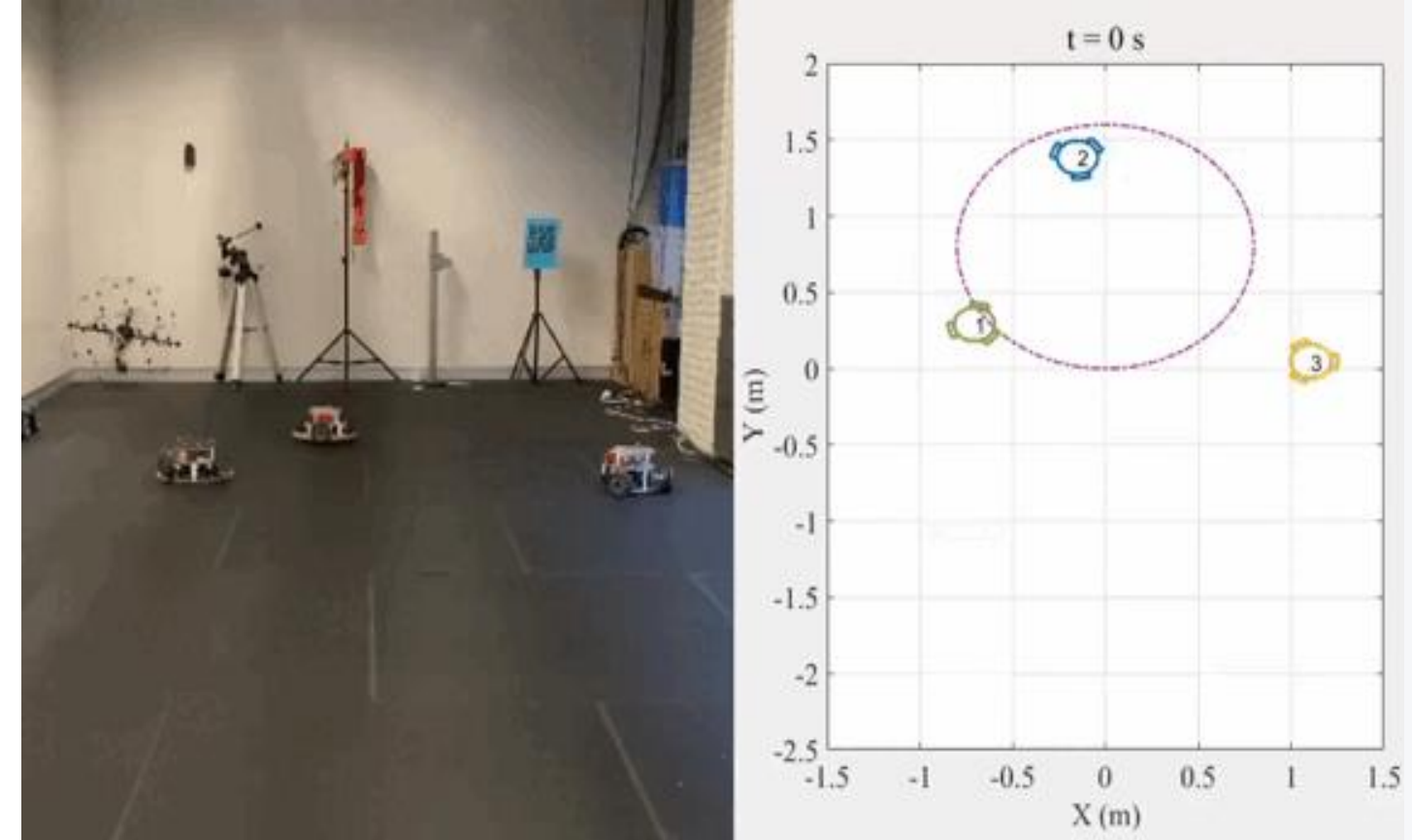
# 3. AI-Empowered Approaches

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- Verifications — applied to drone swarms and multi-robot systems



Done swarm passing through a bounded window



Formation control in the networked multi-robot system

**Autonomous optimization**

Overcome  
→

**Chall.3 Both layers:  
low autonomy**





# Outline

**1) Introduction and Challenges of CPMAS**

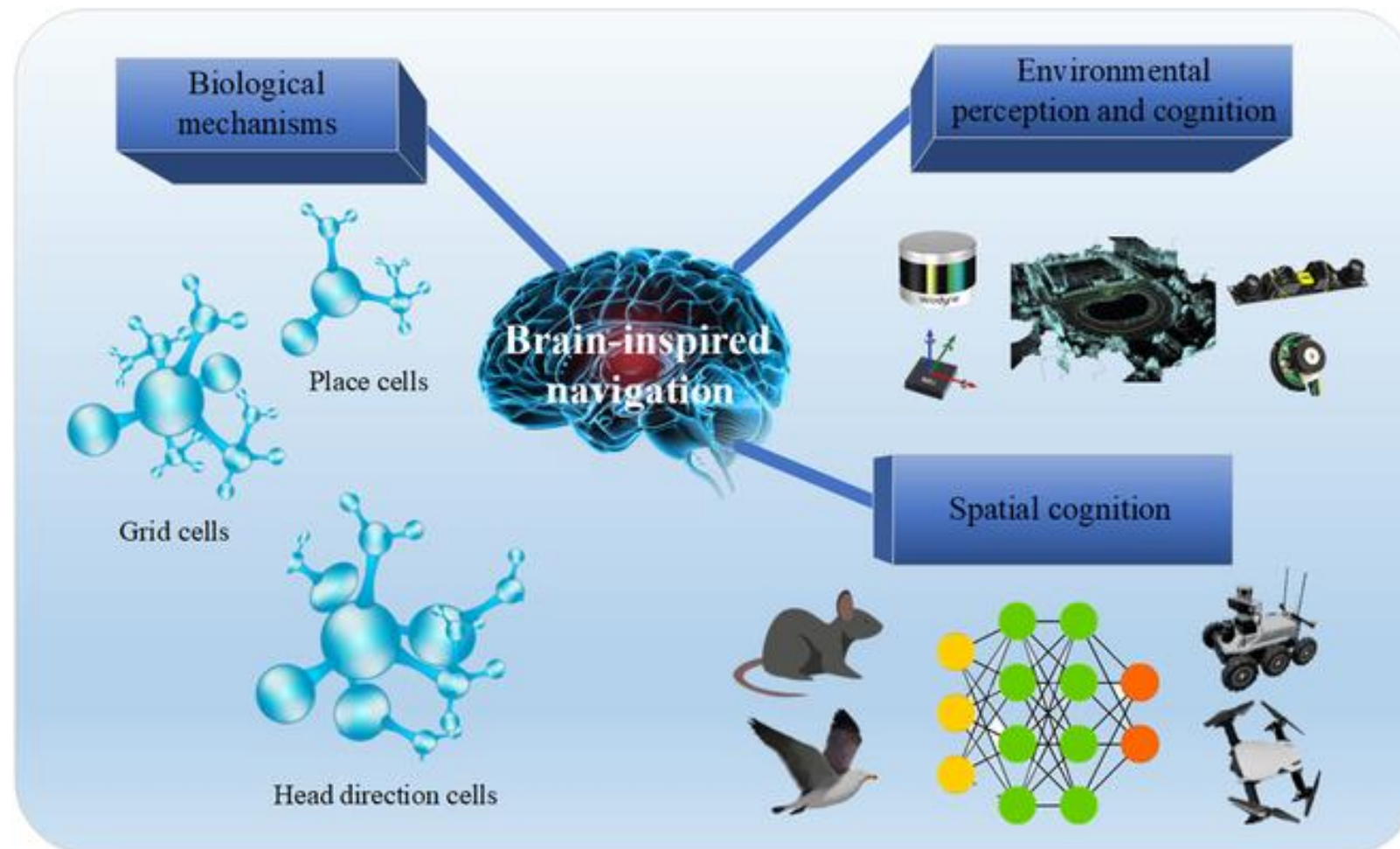
**2) Model-Based Control in CPMAS**

**3) AI-Empowered Approaches for CPMAS**

**4) Future Research Directions in CPMAS**



## (1) Brain-inspired human-cyber-physical collaborative intelligence



Brain-inspired navigation

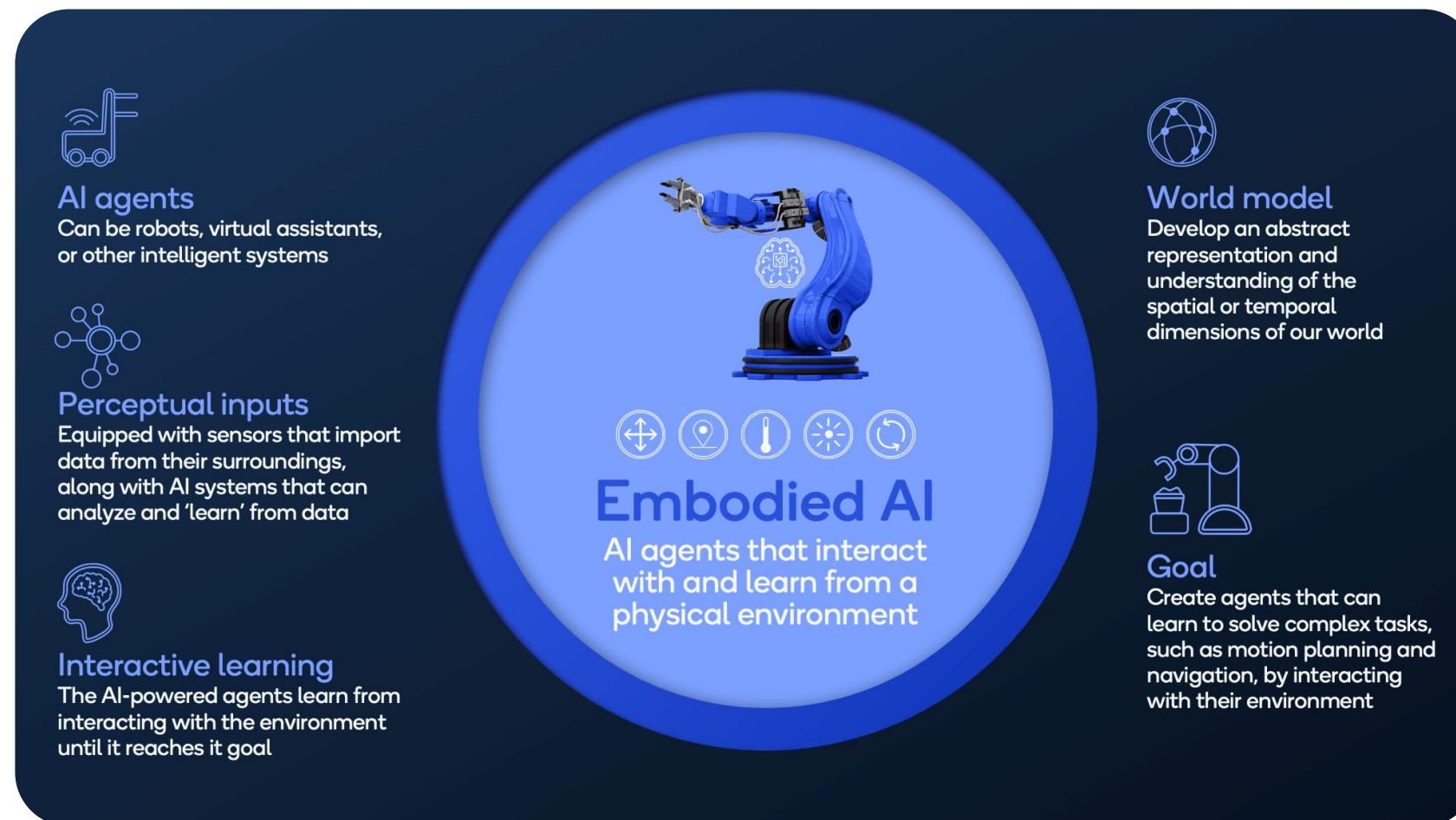
Source from: <https://spj.science.org/doi/10.34133/cbsystems.0128>



Human-cyber-physical collaborative Combat



## (2) Multimodal embodied perception and co-decision among agents



Embodied AI



Large language models enabled space exploration



## (3) Explainable and trustworthy autonomy architecture



Companion robots for emotional support



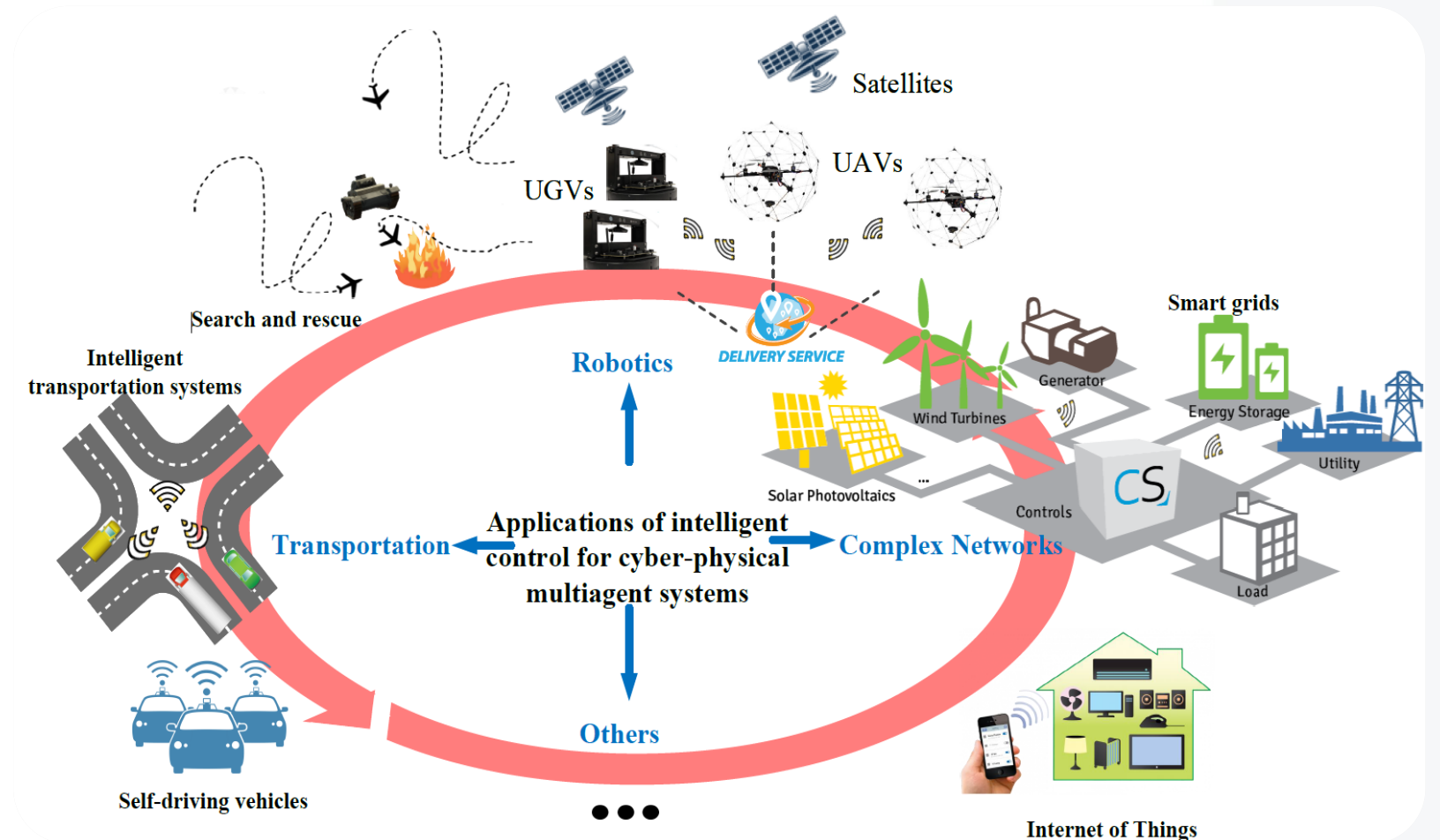
Trust intelligent healthcare systems



## 4.4 Large-scale heterogenous CPMAS control and cross-field applications



## Large-scale CPMAS in smart cities



## Cross-field application



# Acknowledgement

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**Bing Yan**



**Xin Yuan**



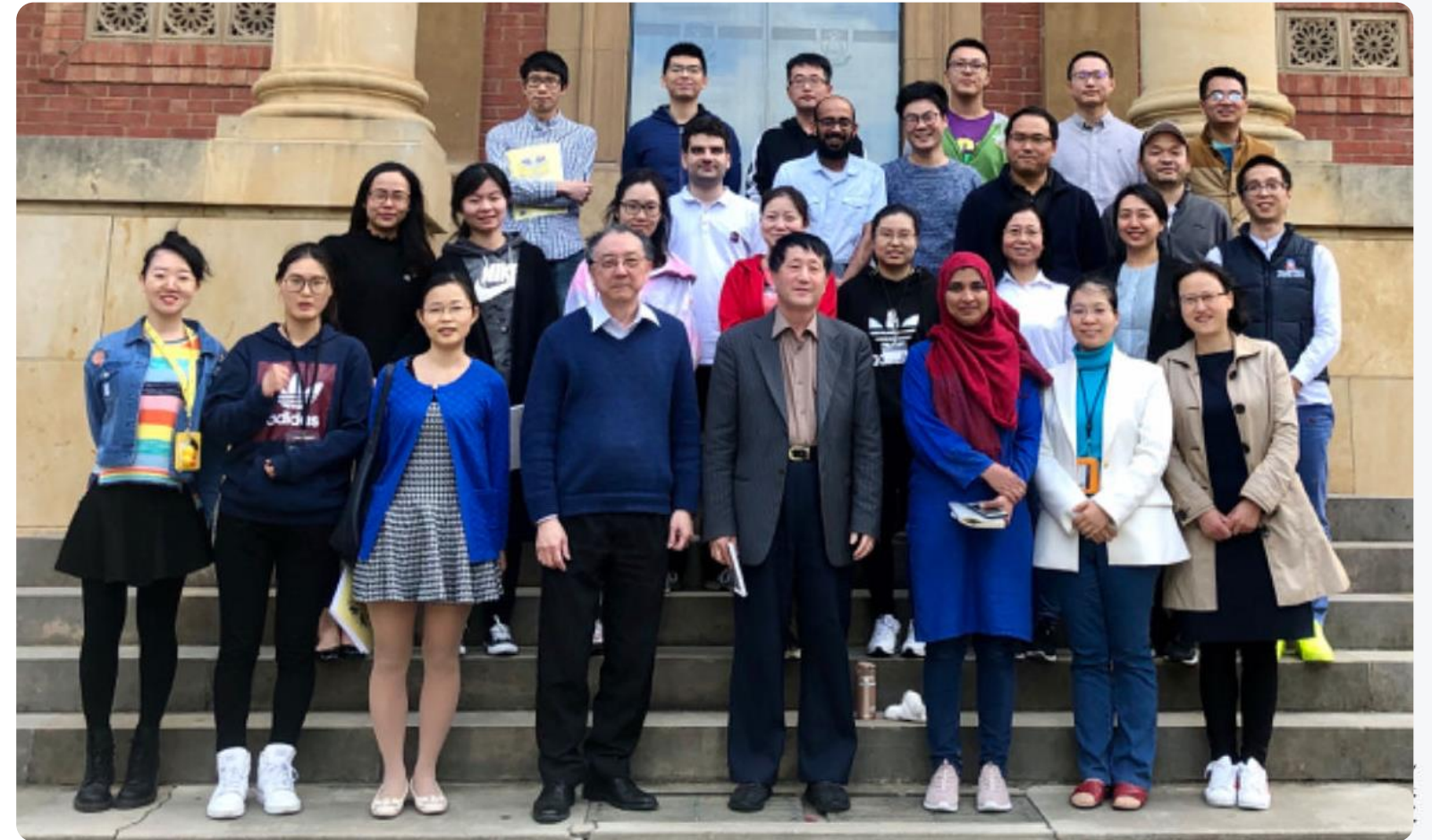
**Md Tagor Hossain Kamal Mammadov**



**Yize Yang**

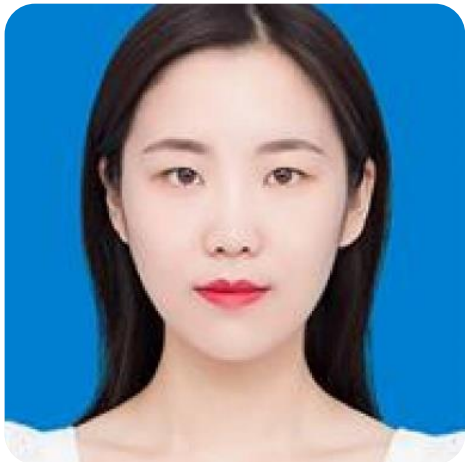


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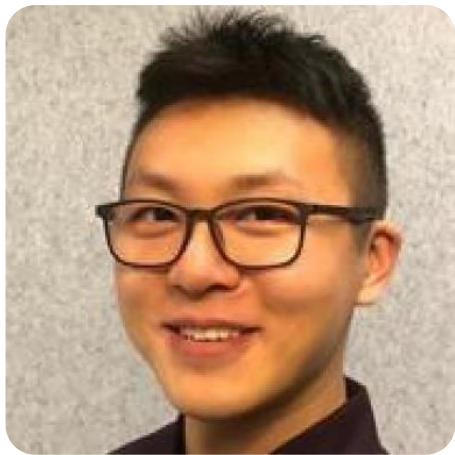




# Acknowledgement



Zhi Lian



Yang Fei



Saeed Aslam



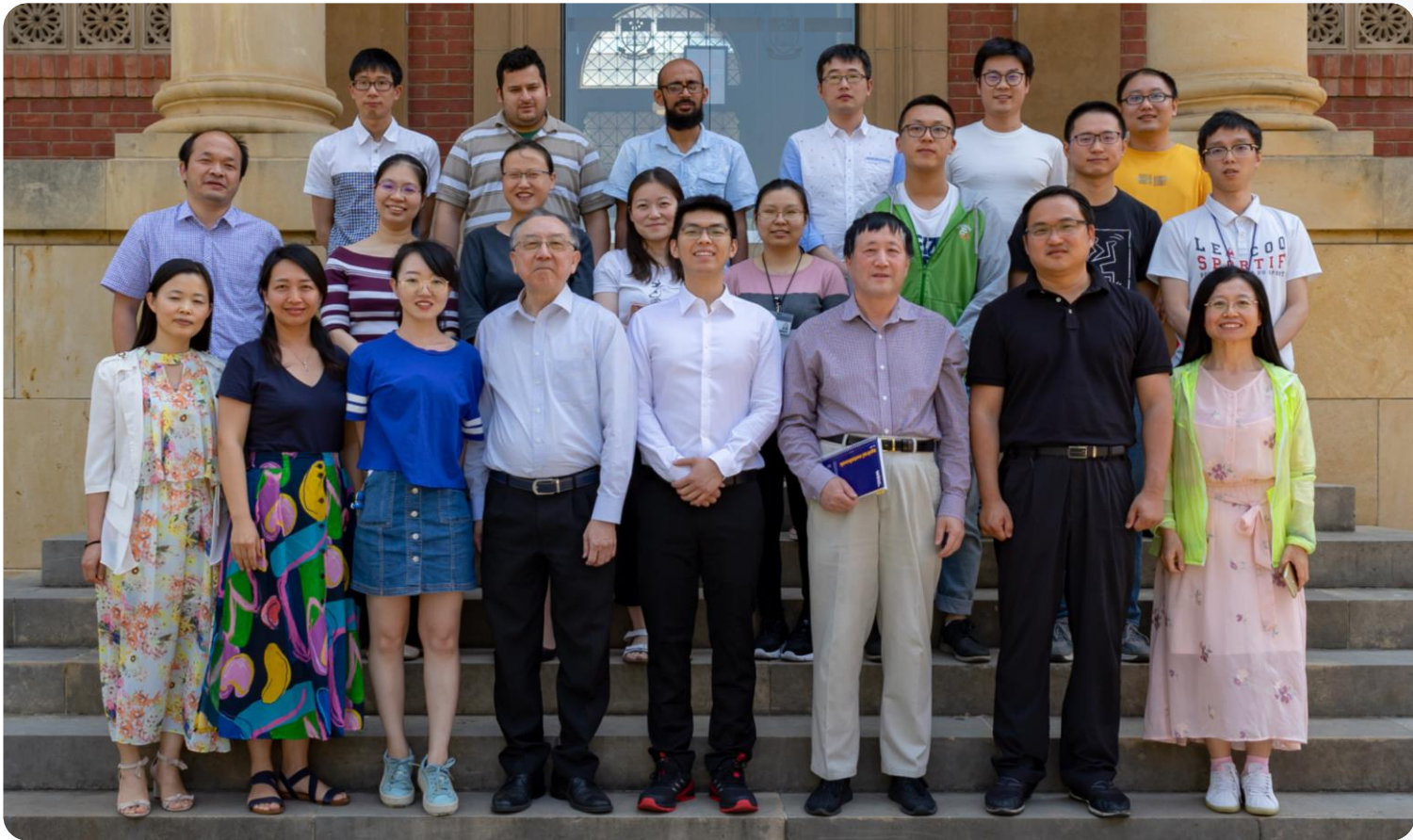
Yuan Sun



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Isira Naotunna





**Thank you so much for  
your listening!**

