

# maTLS: How to Make TLS middlebox-aware?

Hyunwoo Lee, [Zach Smith](#), Junghwan Lim, Gyeongjae Choi,

Selin Chun, [Taejoong Chung](#), Ted “Taekyoung” Kwon

Seoul National University, [University of Luxembourg](#), [Rochester Institute of Technology](#)



# Middleboxes

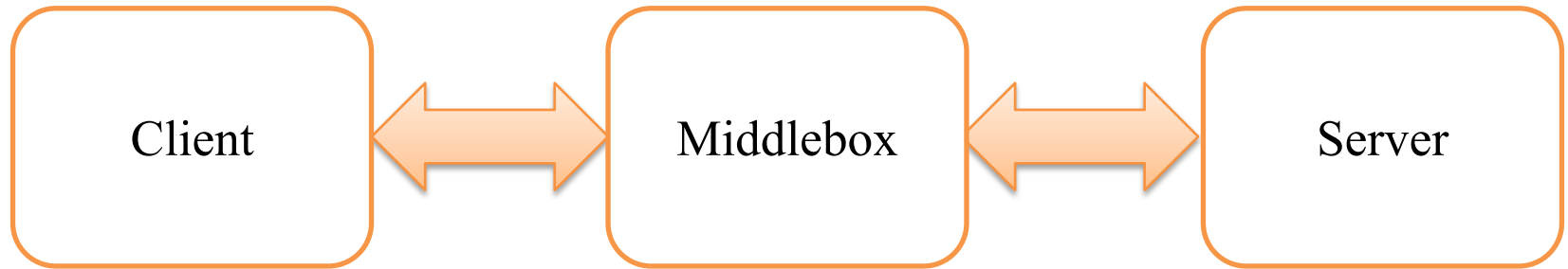
---

Client

Server

# Middleboxes

---



- Web Application Firewalls
- Security Gateways
- Parental Controls

⋮

# Middleboxes and Transport Layer Security



- Web Application Firewalls
- Security Gateways
- Parental Controls

⋮

*Cannot work!*



# Motivation for SplitTLS

To perform their functions  
Middleboxes **split** the TLS session

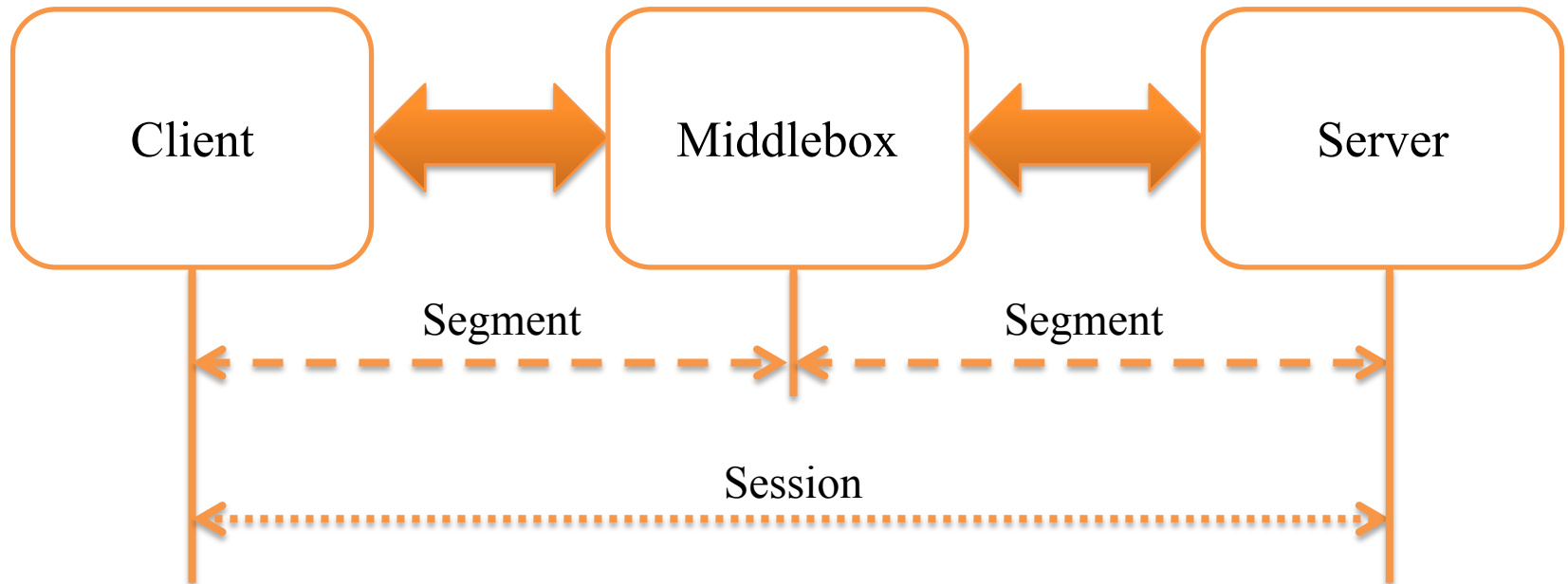
- Private key sharing
- Custom root certificate



# Session and Segment

To perform their functions  
Middleboxes **split** the TLS session

- Private key sharing
- Custom root certificate



# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing

Client

Middlebox

Server

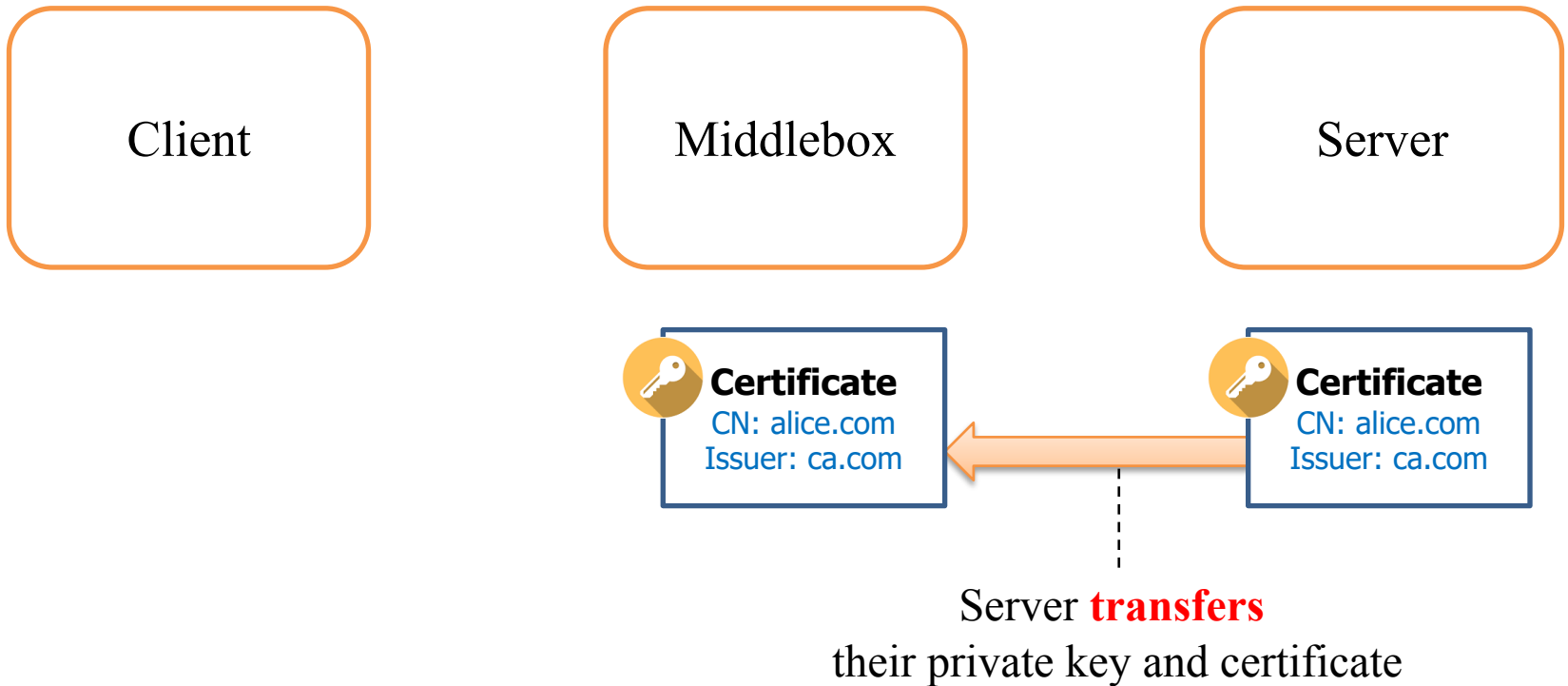


**Certificate**

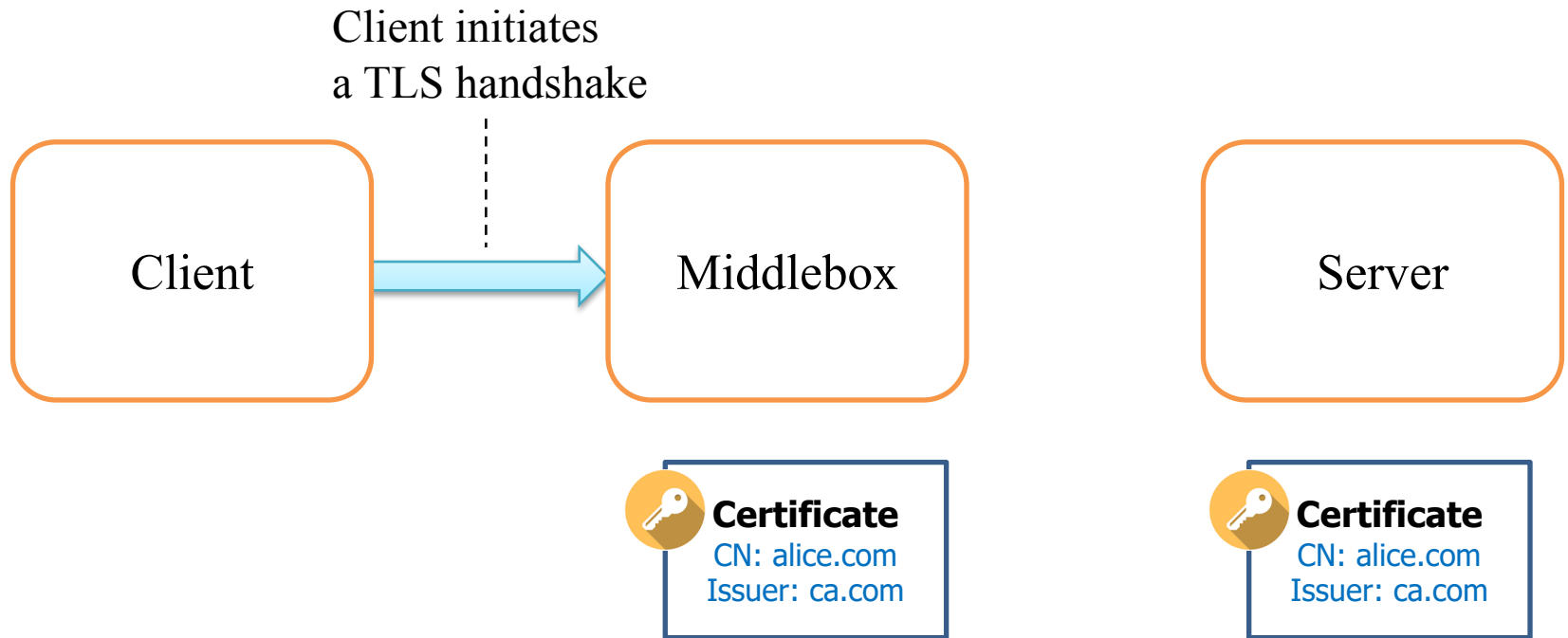
CN: alice.com

Issuer: ca.com

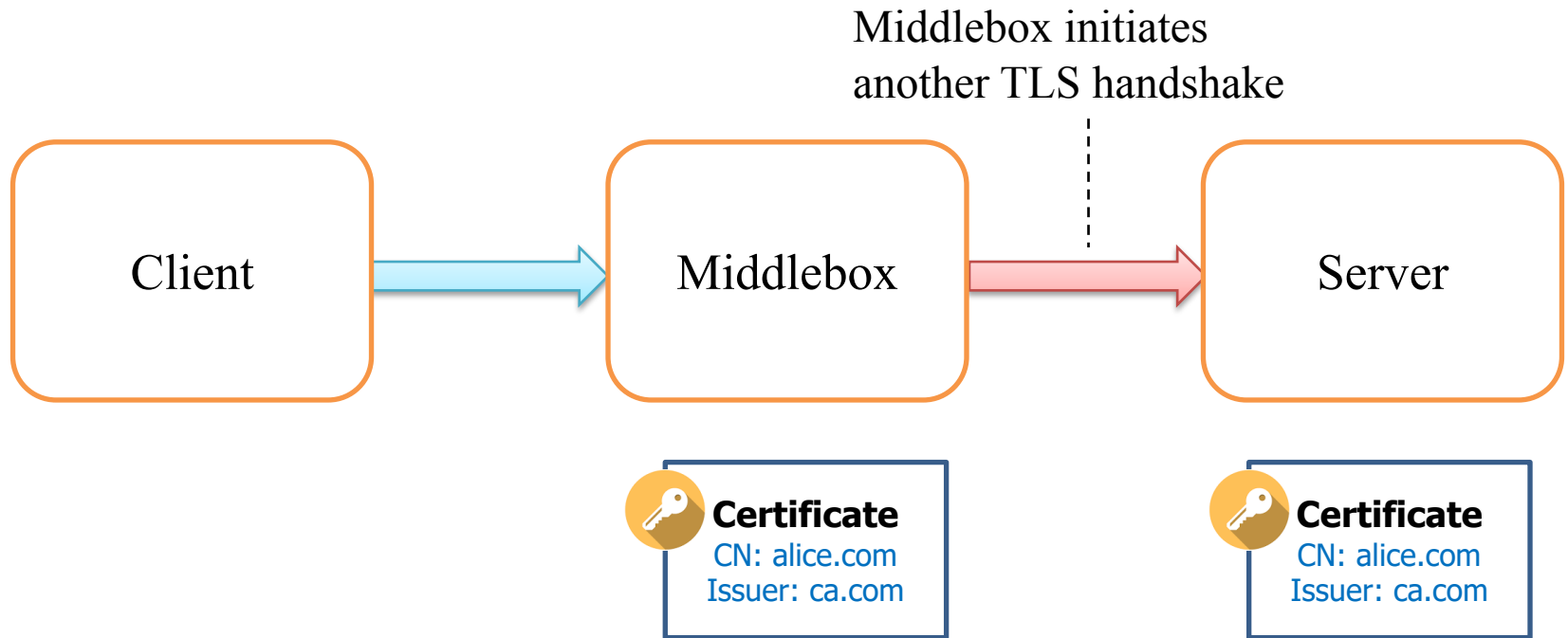
# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing



# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing

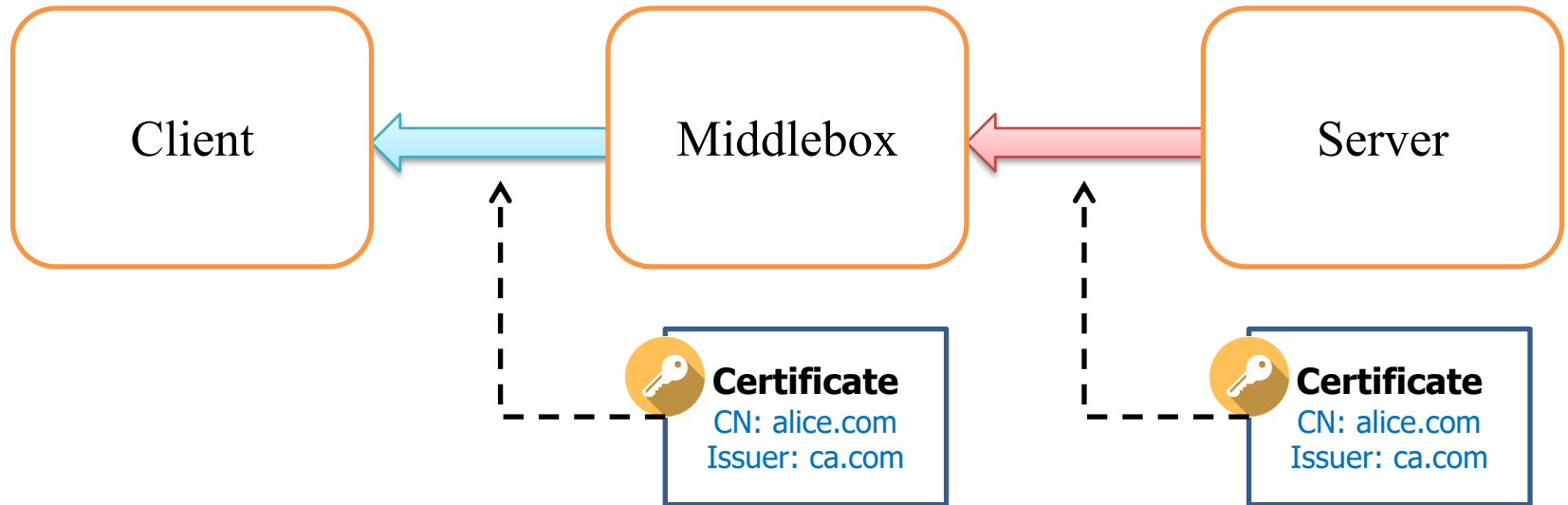


# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing



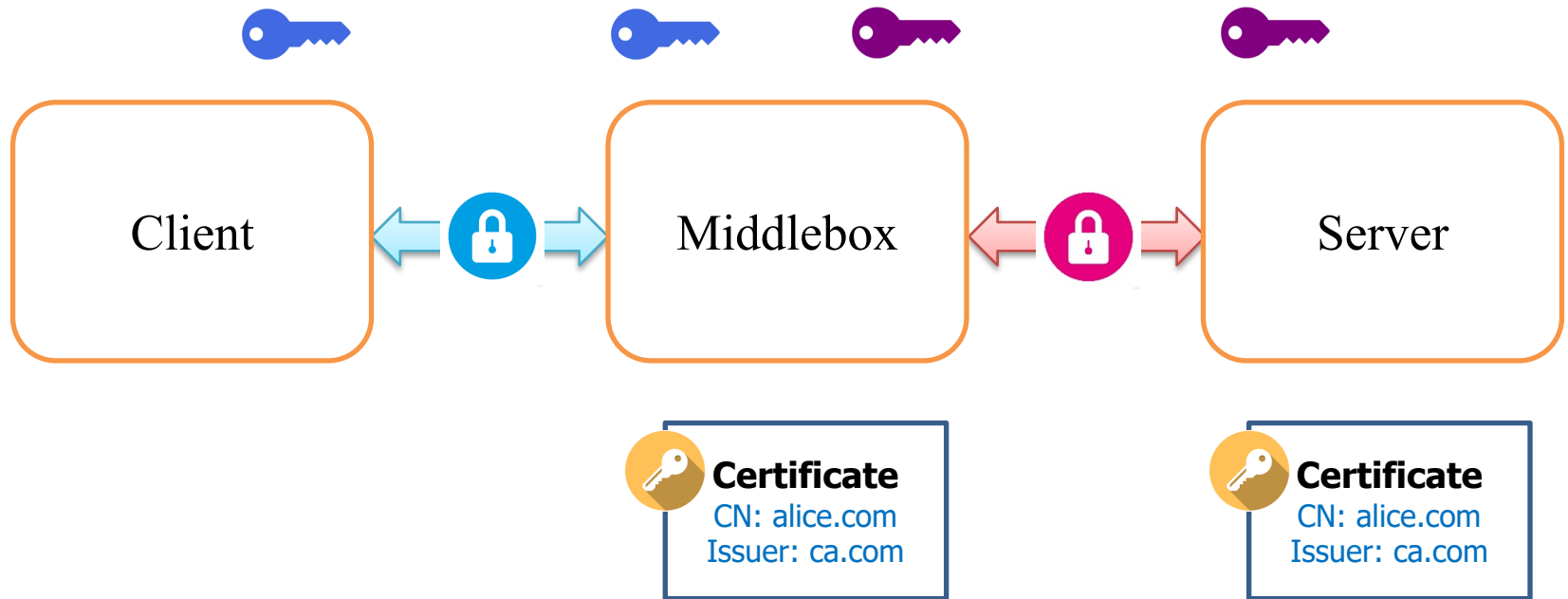
# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing

Middlebox **impersonates** Server with the **tranferred** key pair



# SplitTLS (1) Private Key Sharing

Client believes they have established a TLS session **with Server, not Middlebox!**





# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

Client

Middlebox

Server



**Custom  
Root Certificate**

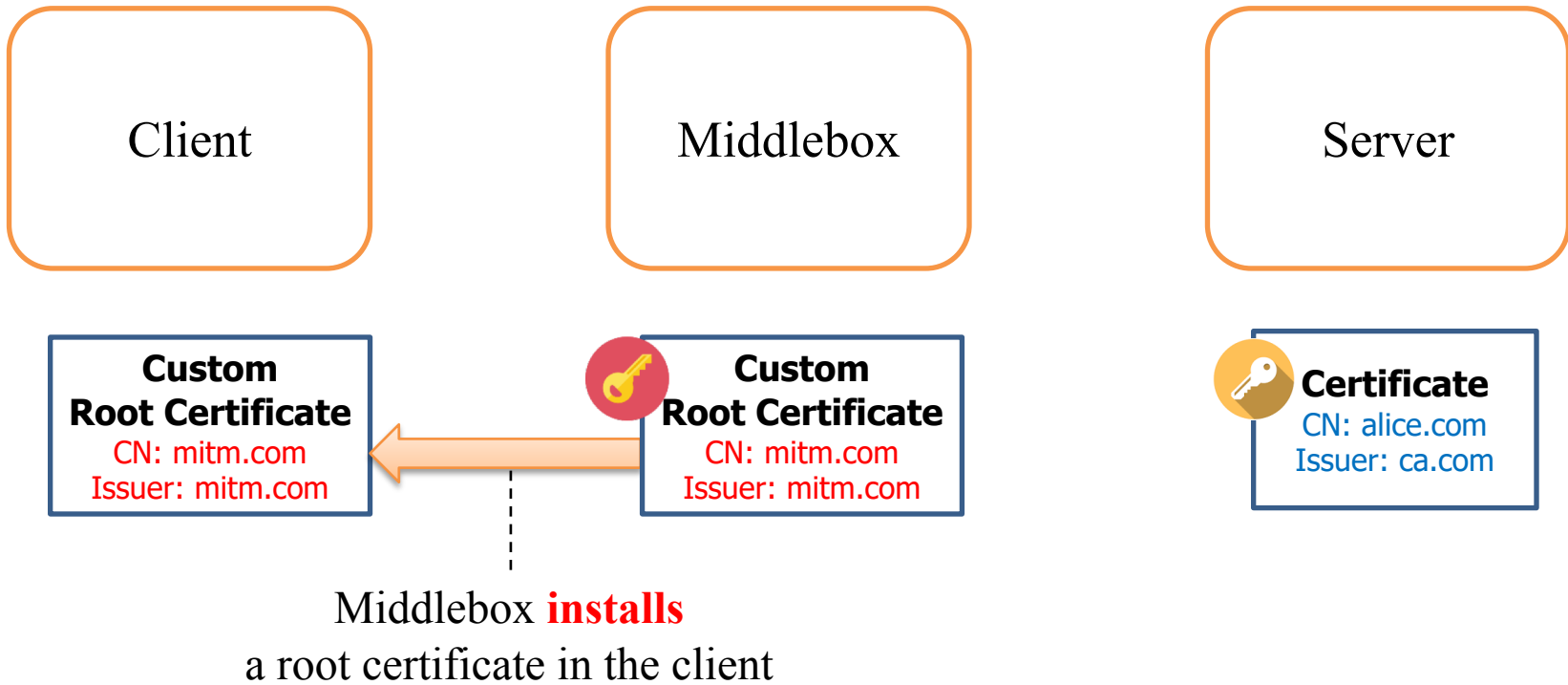
CN: mitm.com  
Issuer: mitm.com



**Certificate**

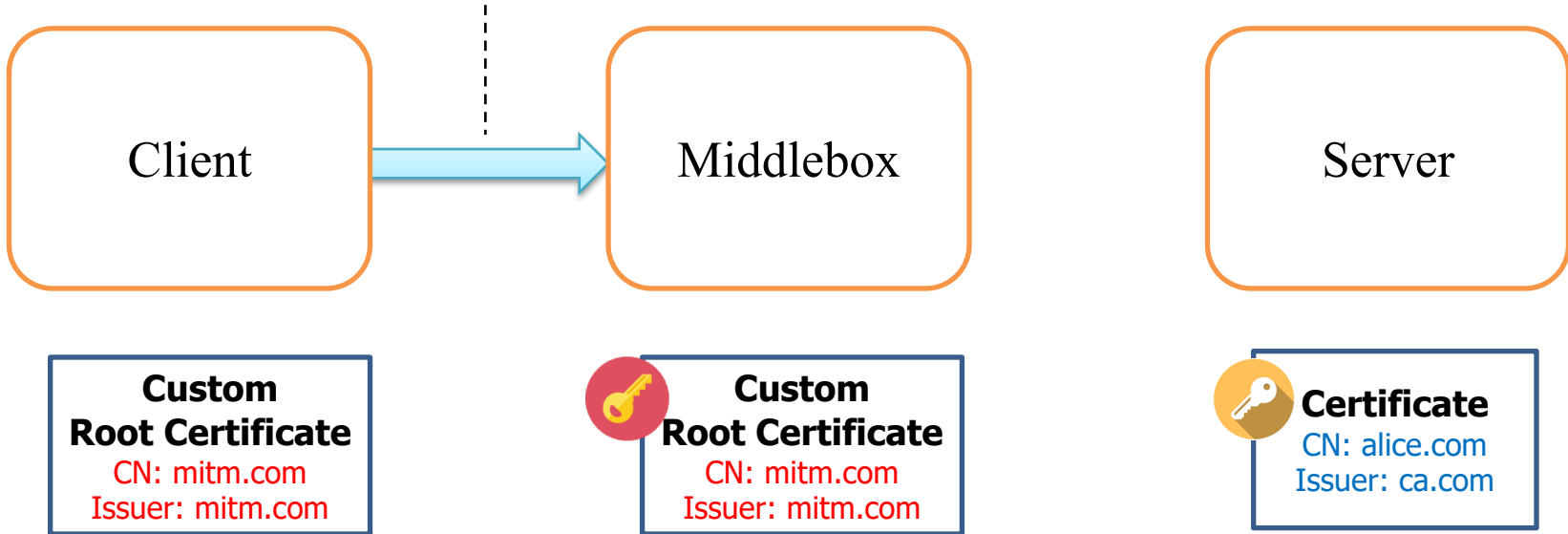
CN: alice.com  
Issuer: ca.com

# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

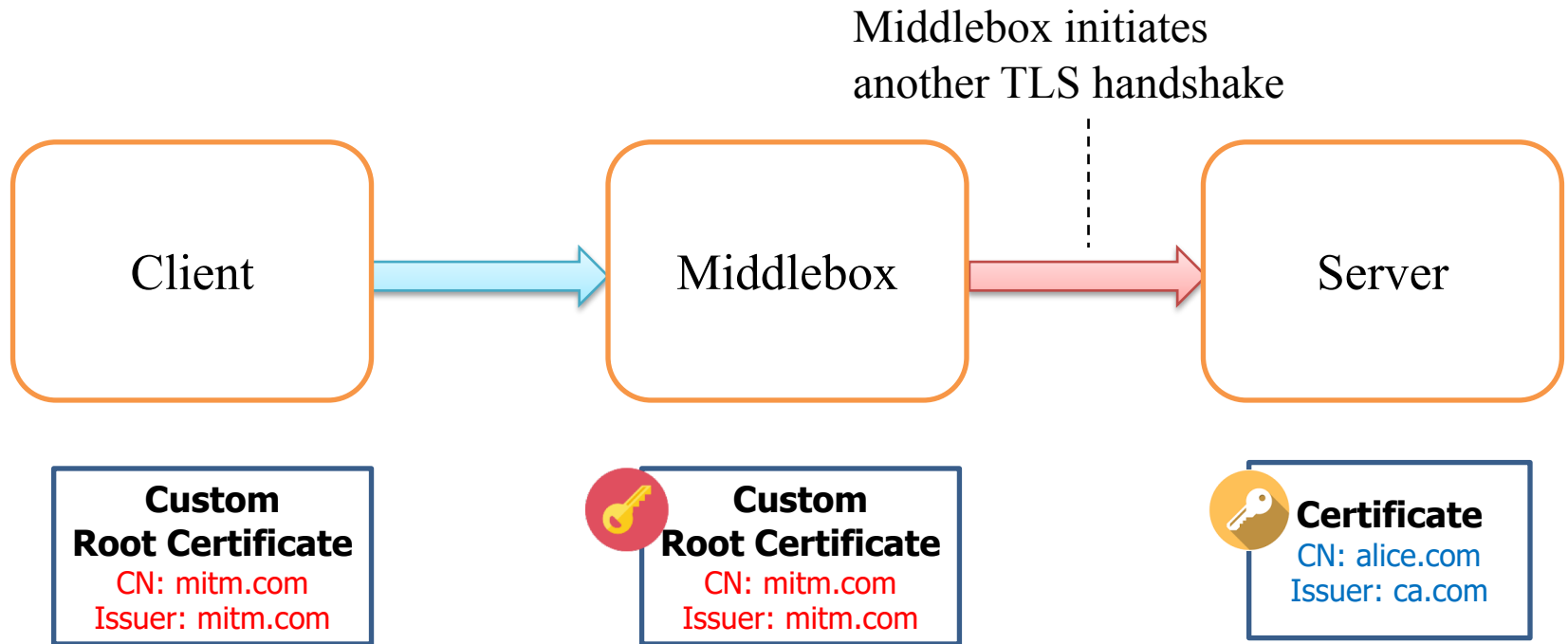


# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

Client initiates  
a TLS handshake

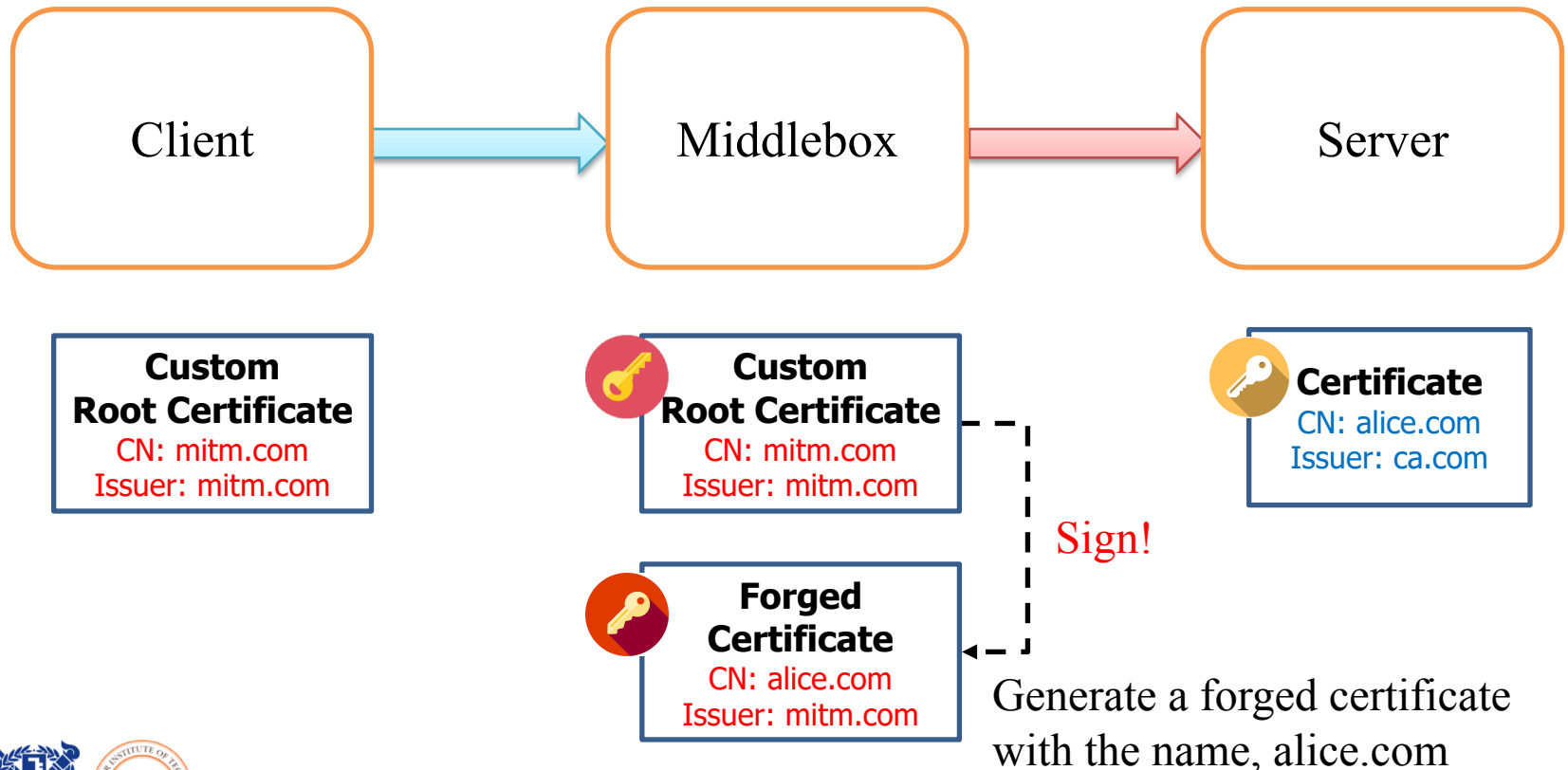


# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

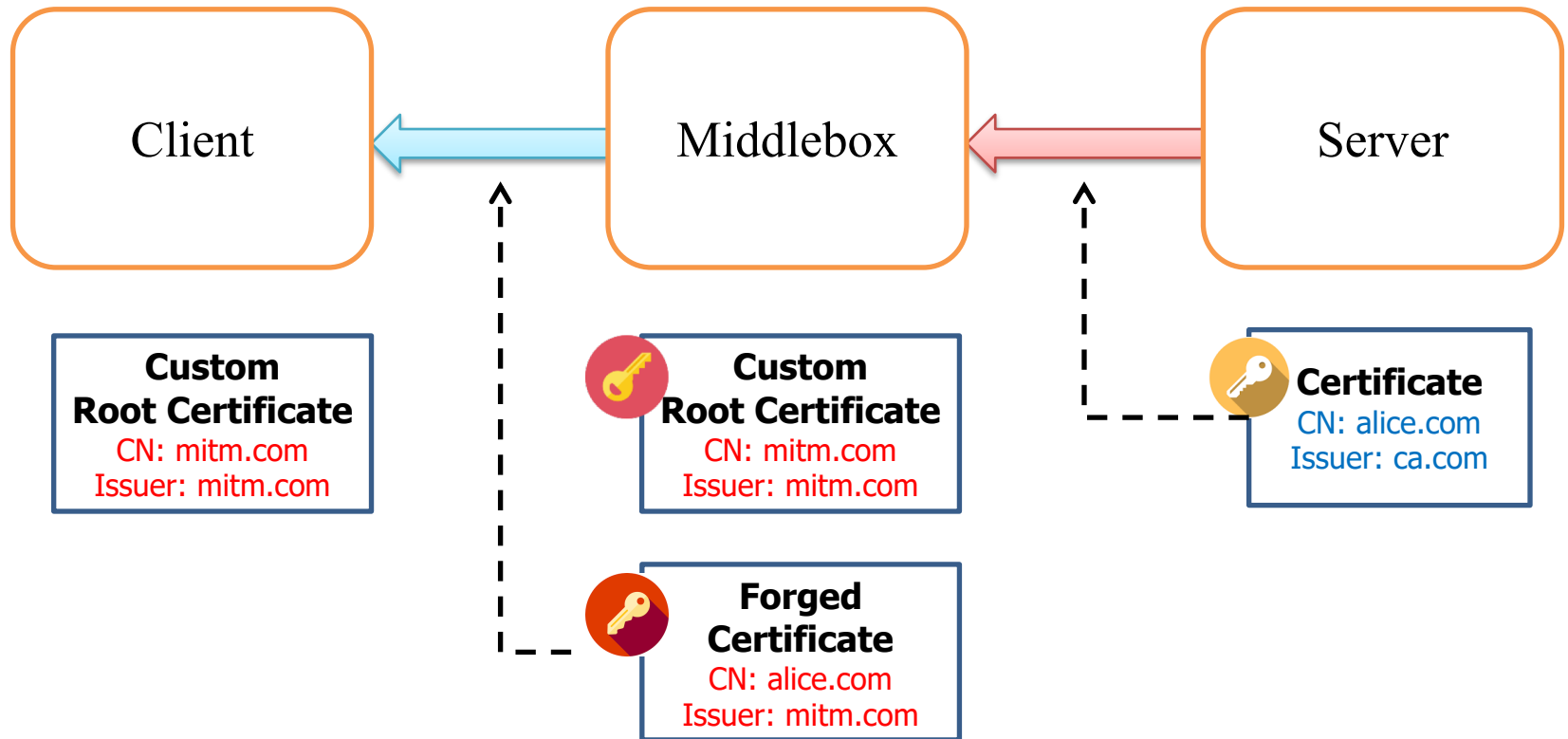


# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

Middlebox **impersonates** Server with the **forged** key pair

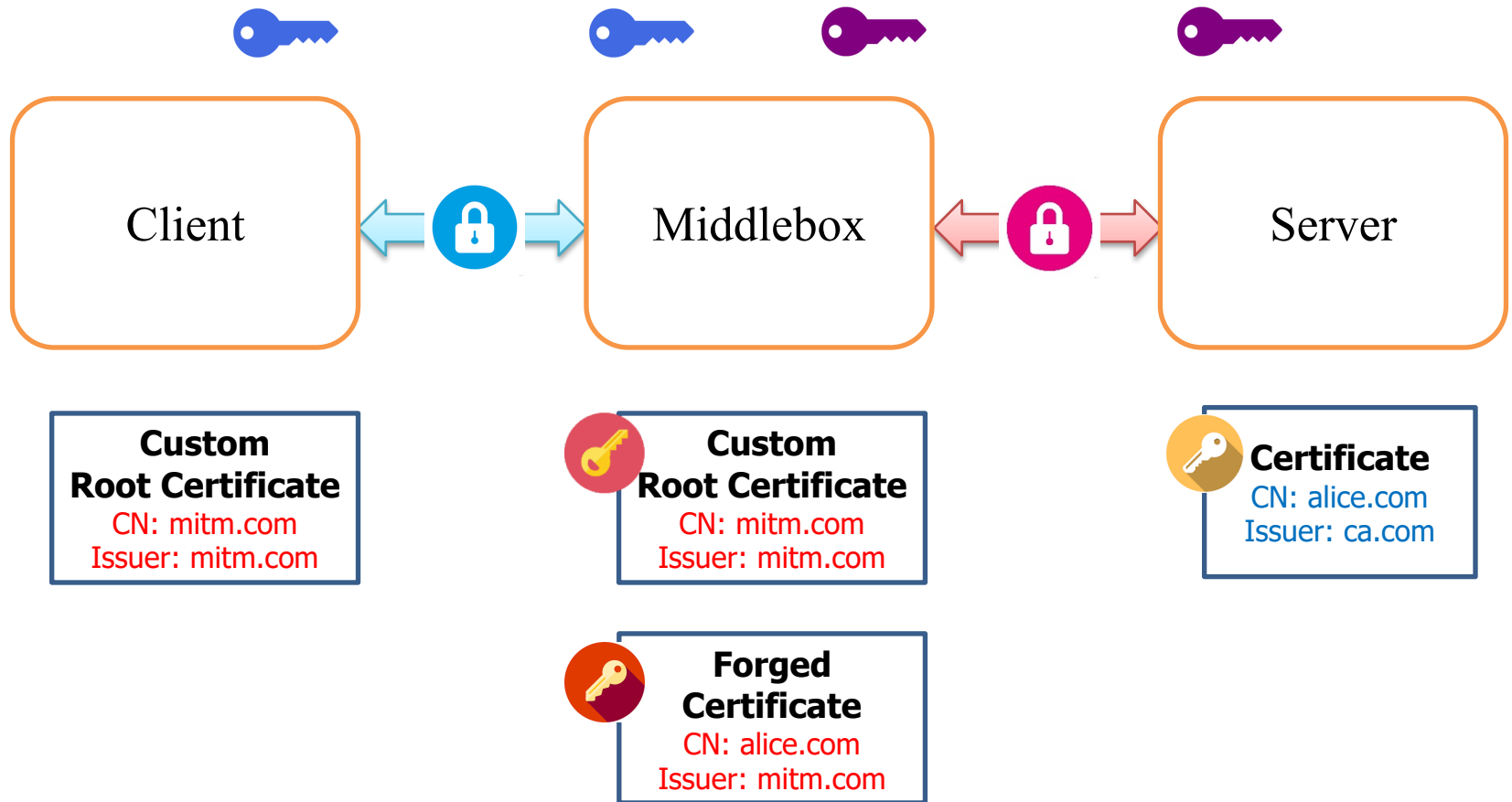


# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate



# SplitTLS (2) Custom Root Certificate

Client believes they have established a TLS session **with Server, not Middlebox!**



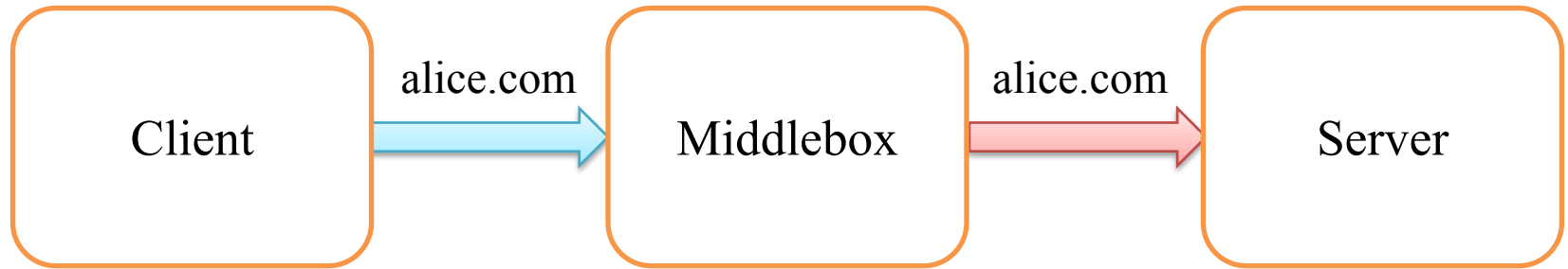
# Problems in SplitTLS

No information for Client





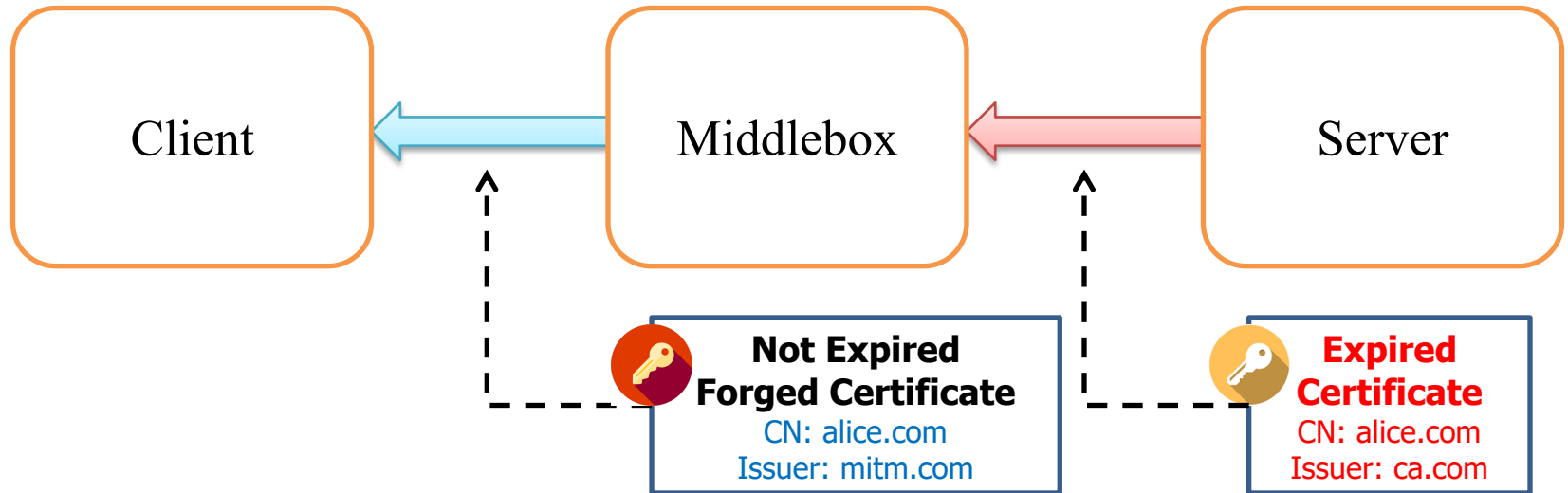
# Problems in SplitTLS - Authentication



*Authentication*

Client does not authenticate Server

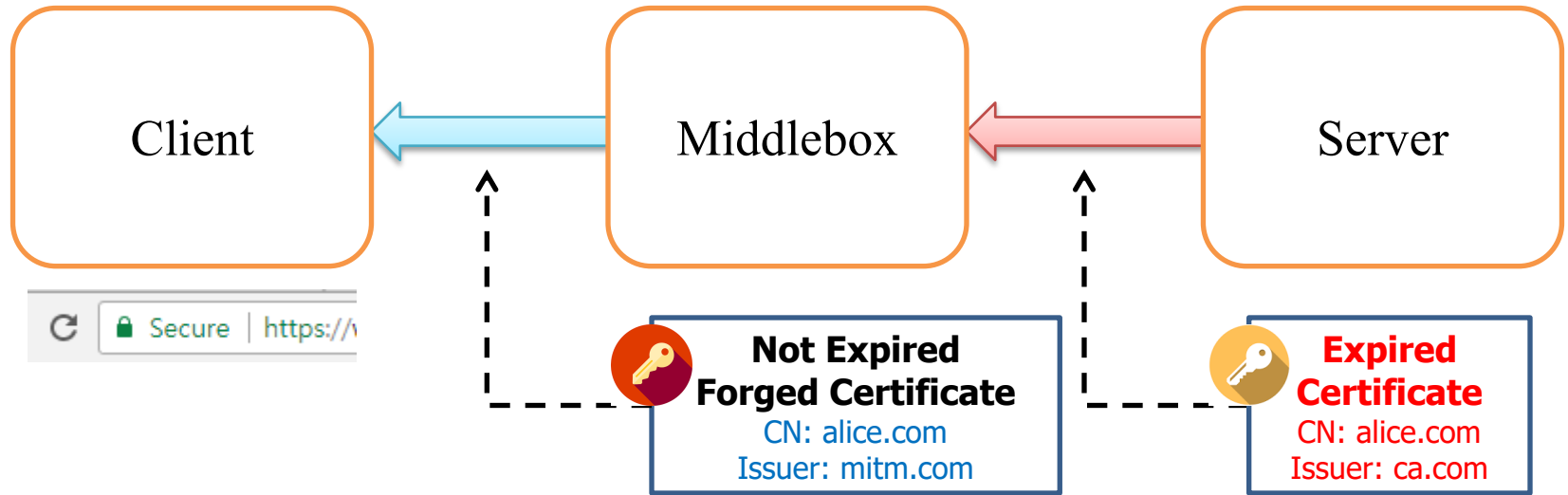
# Problems in SplitTLS - Authentication



**Authentication**

Client does not authenticate Server

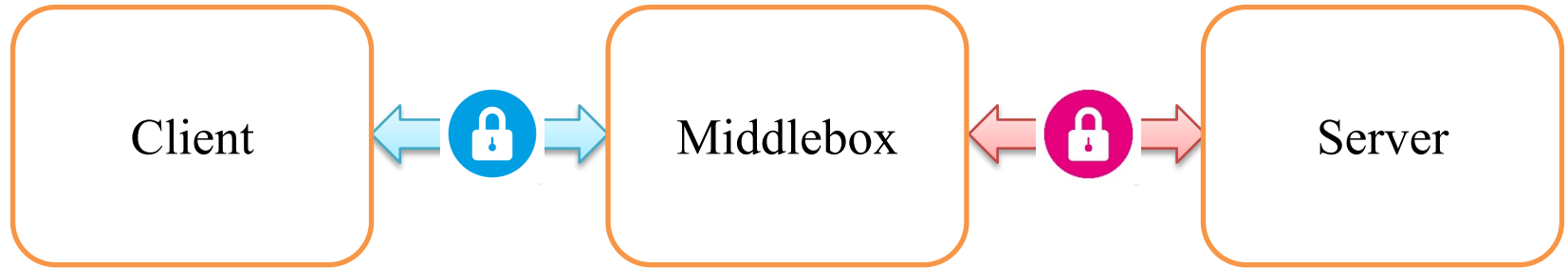
# Problems in SplitTLS - Authentication



*Authentication*

Client does not authenticate Server

# Problems in SplitTLS - Confidentiality



*Authentication*

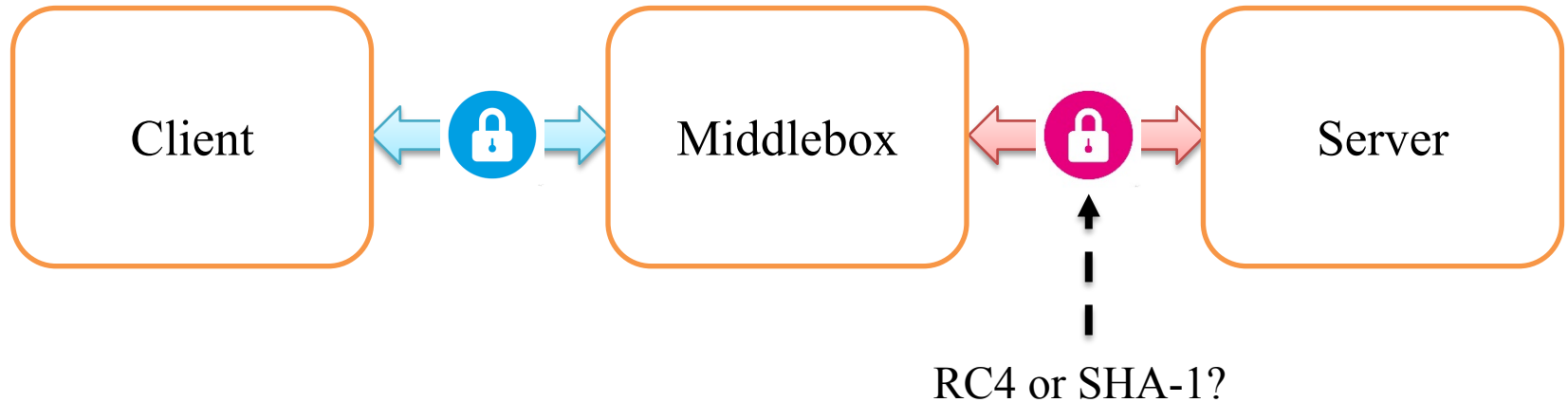
Client does not authenticate Server



*Confidentiality*

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite

# Problems in SplitTLS - Confidentiality



*Authentication*

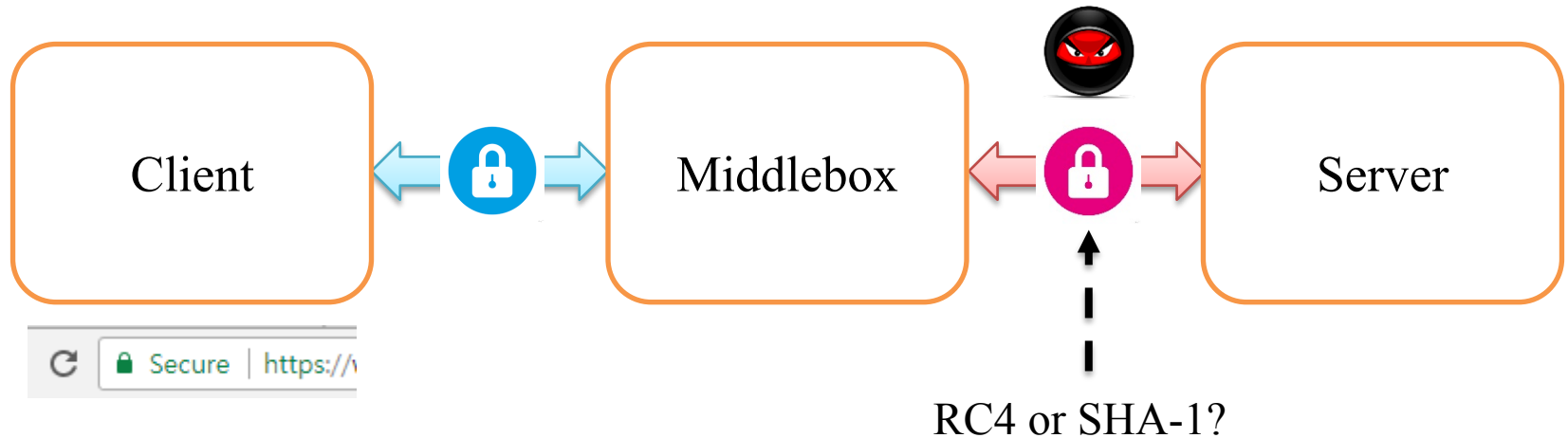
Client does not authenticate Server



*Confidentiality*

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite

# Problems in SplitTLS - Confidentiality



**✘ Authentication**

Client does not authenticate Server

**✘ Confidentiality**

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite

# Problems in SplitTLS - Integrity



*Authentication*

Client does not authenticate Server



*Confidentiality*

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite



*Integrity*

Client cannot confirm that Server sent the message, or which middleboxes have modified it

# Problems in SplitTLS - Integrity



Middlebox inserts the unwanted script!



***Authentication***

Client does not authenticate Server



***Confidentiality***

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite

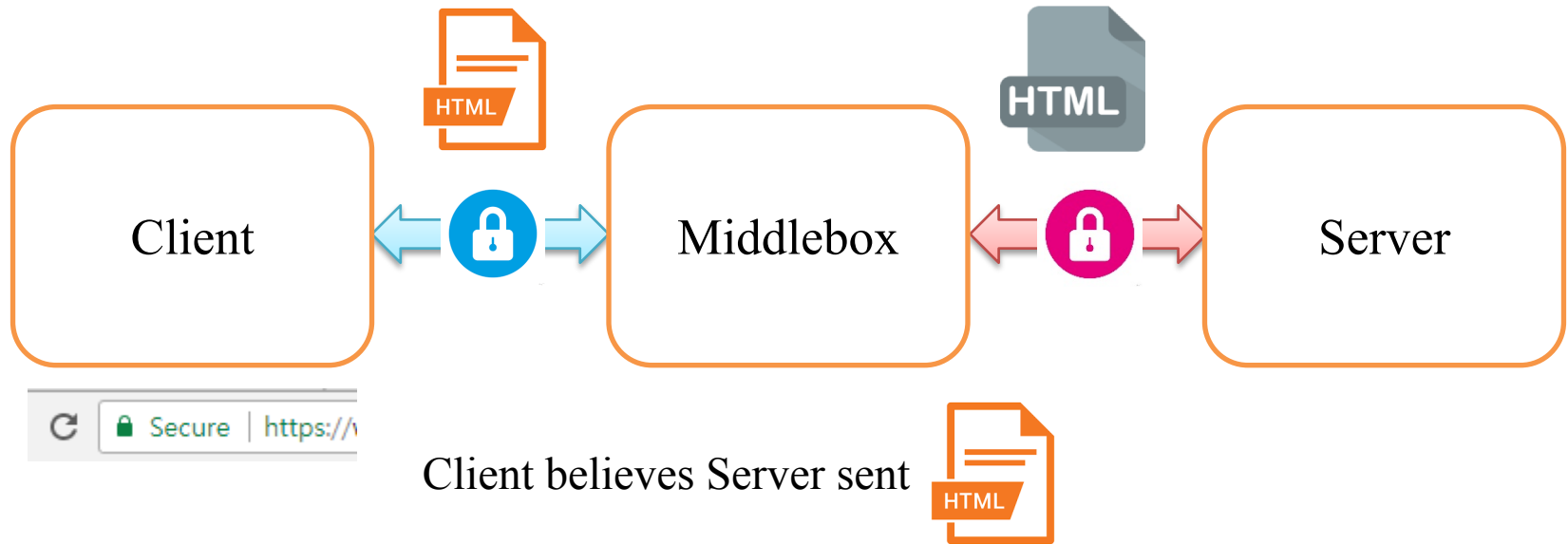


***Integrity***

Client cannot confirm that Server sent the message, or which middleboxes have modified it



# Problems in SplitTLS - Integrity



***Authentication***

Client does not authenticate Server



***Confidentiality***

Client does not know whether or not the segment is encrypted with a strong ciphersuite



***Integrity***

Client cannot confirm that Server sent the message, or which middleboxes have modified it

# Goal: Middlebox-aware TLS (maTLS)

---

Establish a secure session *with middleboxes*  
as well as overcoming the challenges in SplitTLS

# Goal: Middlebox-aware TLS (maTLS)

Establish a secure session *with middleboxes*  
as well as overcoming the challenges in SplitTLS

	Problems in SplitTLS	Solution in maTLS
Authentication	Client can't authenticate Server	Explicit Authentication

# Goal: Middlebox-aware TLS (maTLS)

Establish a secure session *with middleboxes*  
as well as overcoming the challenges in SplitTLS

	Problems in SplitTLS	Solution in maTLS
Authentication	Client can't authenticate Server	Explicit Authentication
Confidentiality	Client can't know if each of the segments has been encrypted with strong ciphersuites	Security Parameter Verification

# Goal: Middlebox-aware TLS (maTLS)

Establish a secure session *with middleboxes* as well as overcoming the challenges in SplitTLS

	Problems in SplitTLS	Solution in maTLS
Authentication	<b>Client can't</b> authenticate Server	Explicit Authentication
Confidentiality	<b>Client can't</b> know if each of the segments has been encrypted with strong ciphersuites	Security Parameter Verification
Integrity	<b>Client can't</b> confirm (1) who actually sent the message (2) if it has been modified	Valid Modification Checks

# Auditable Middleboxes

Certificate Authority

Middlebox  
Transparency  
Log Server

**Middlebox  
Certificate**  
CN: mb.com  
Issuer: ca.com

Middlebox  
(mb.com)



**Middlebox  
Certificate**  
CN: mb.com  
Issuer: ca.com

## Auditable Middleboxes

Middleboxes that have their own *middlebox certificates* logged in a *middlebox transparency* log server

# Auditable Middleboxes

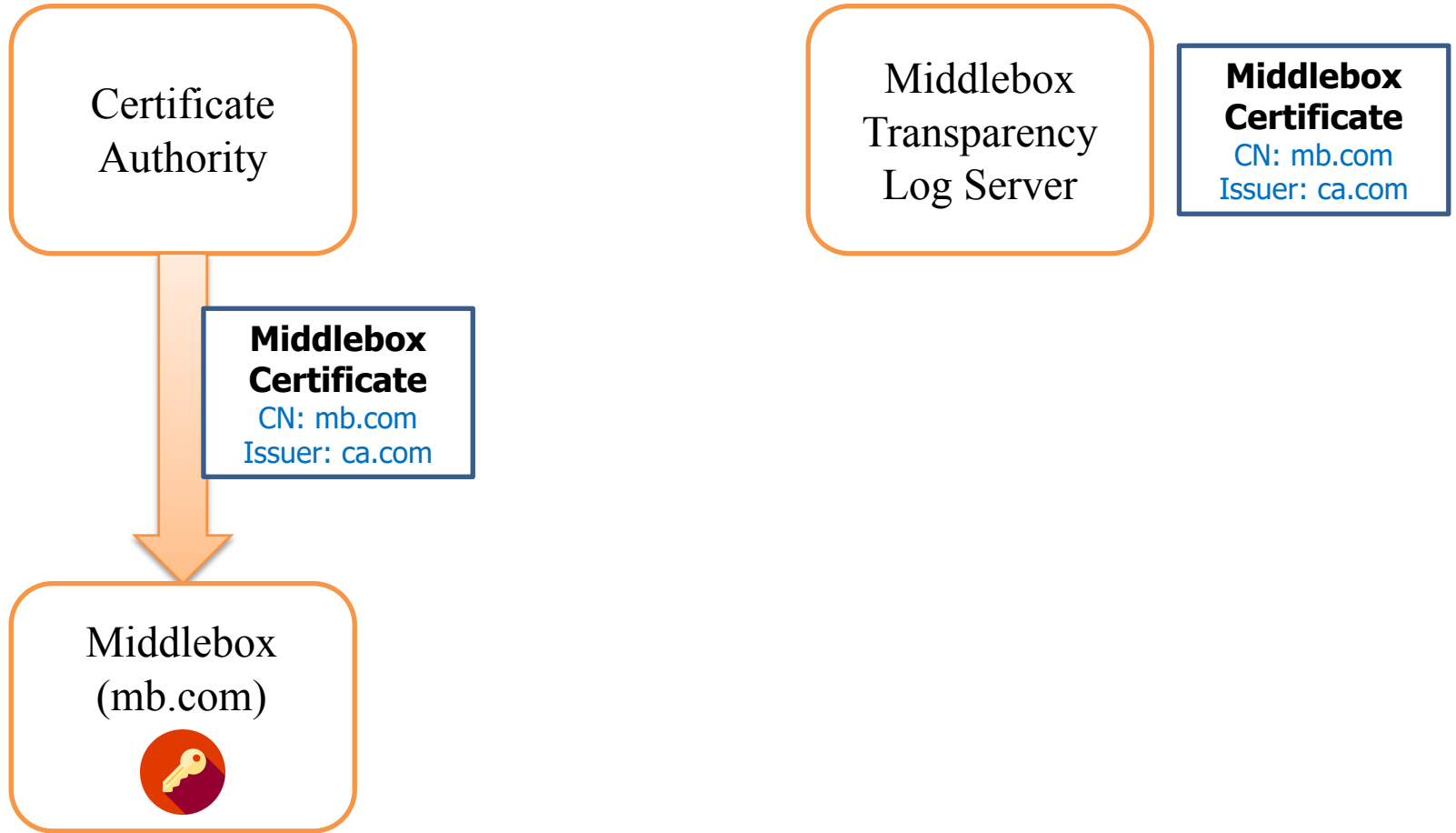


## Information about Middlebox

- Type of Service
- URL
- Permission



# Auditable Middleboxes





# Advantages of Auditable Middleboxes

---

 No impersonation

 Awareness

 Auditability

 Revocability

# Advantages of Auditable Middleboxes

---



No impersonation

Middleboxes now have their *own key pairs* and do not need to impersonate others (in TLS)



Awareness



Auditability



Revocability

# Advantages of Auditable Middleboxes

---



## No impersonation

Middleboxes now have their *own key pairs* and do not need to impersonate others (in TLS)



## Awareness

Anyone can know the name and properties of a middlebox from its *middlebox certificate*



## Auditability



## Revocability

# Advantages of Auditable Middleboxes

---



## No impersonation

Middleboxes now have their *own key pairs* and do not need to impersonate others (in TLS)



## Awareness

Anyone can know the name and properties of a middlebox from its *middlebox certificate*



## Auditability

Any interested parties can check for fraudulent certificates using the *middlebox transparency* system



## Revocability

# Advantages of Auditable Middleboxes

---



## No impersonation

Middleboxes now have their *own key pairs* and do not need to impersonate others (in TLS)



## Awareness

Anyone can know the name and properties of a middlebox from its *middlebox certificate*



## Auditability

Any interested parties can check for fraudulent certificates using the *middlebox transparency* system



## Revocability

Any incorrect middleboxes can be blocked following the *certificate revocation mechanisms* (e.g., CRL or OCSP)

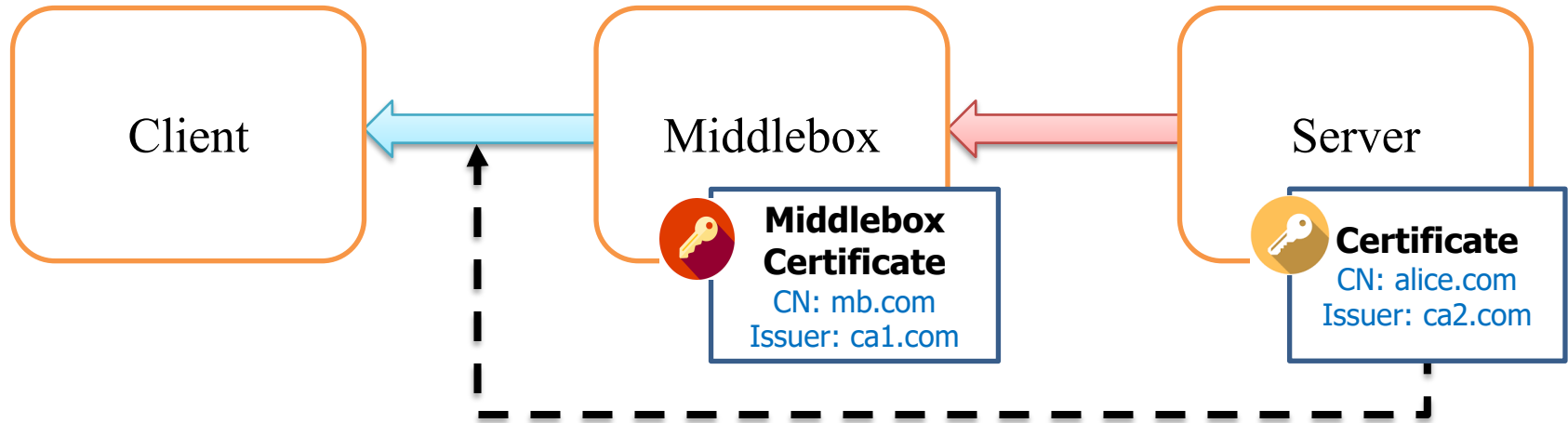
# Security Goals of maTLS



- ✓ Server Authentication
- ✓ Middlebox Authentication
- ✓ Segment Secrecy
- ✓ Individual Secrecy

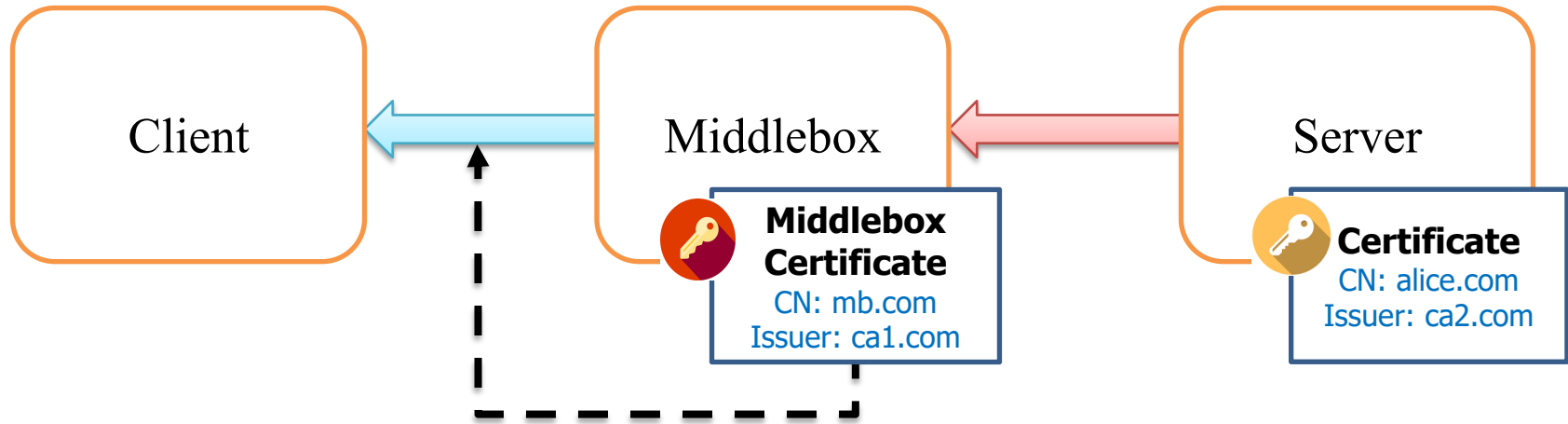
- ✓ Data Source Authentication
- ✓ Modification Accountability
- ✓ Path Integrity

# Security Goals of maTLS - Authentication



✓ Server Authentication

# Security Goals of maTLS - Authentication



- ✓ Server Authentication
- ✓ Middlebox Authentication



# Security Goals of maTLS - Authentication



- ✓ Server Authentication
- ✓ Middlebox Authentication

➔ Explicit Authentication

# Explicit Authentication



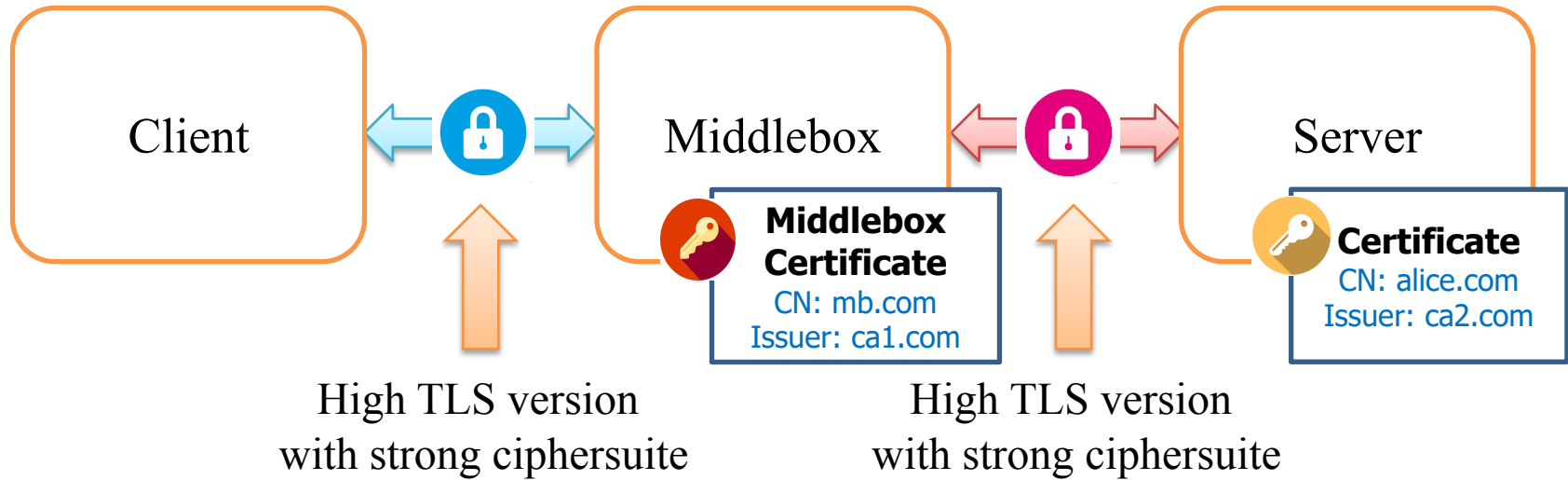
Certificate Blocks

Each entity sends its certificate (with its signed certificate timestamp)



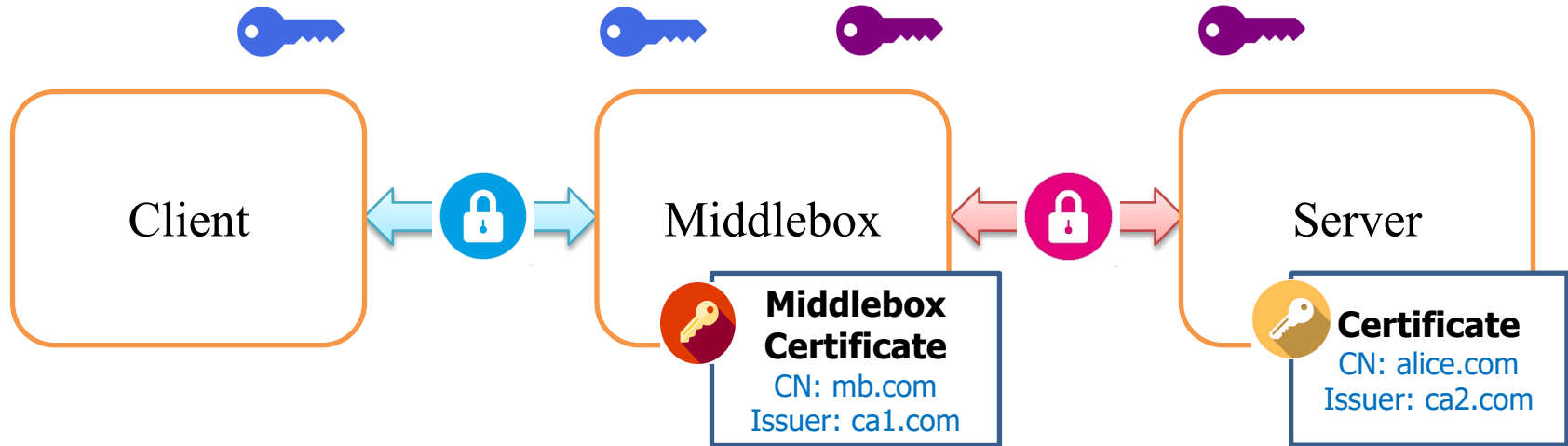
No impersonation

# Security Goals of maTLS - Confidentiality



✓ Segment Secrecy

# Security Goals of maTLS - Confidentiality



- ✓ Segment Secrecy
- ✓ Individual Secrecy

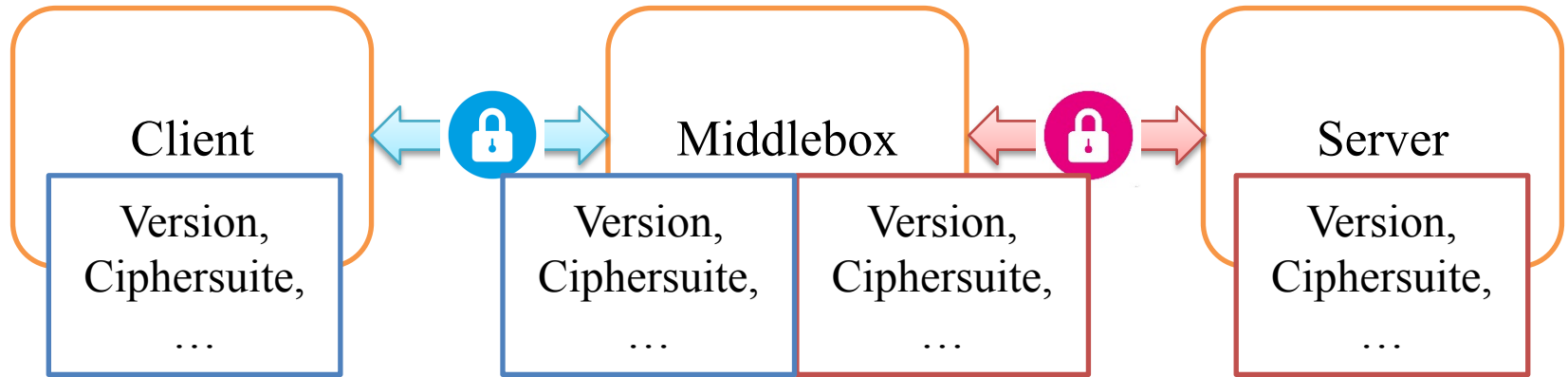
# Security Goals of maTLS - Confidentiality



- ✓ Segment Secrecy
- ✓ Individual Secrecy

➔ Security Parameter Verification

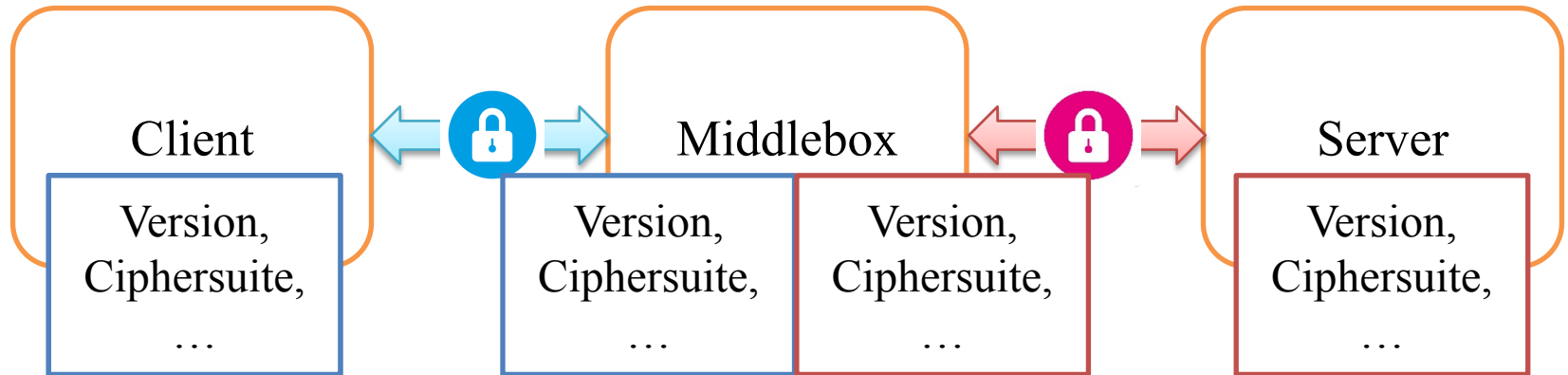
# Security Parameter Verification



Security  
Parameter Blocks

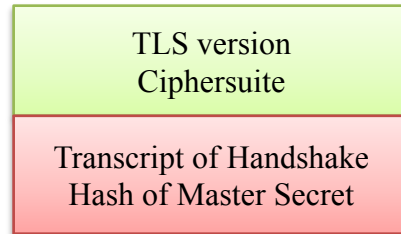
Each entity describes information about its related segment(s)

# Security Parameter Verification



Security  
Parameter Blocks

Each entity describes information about its related segment(s)

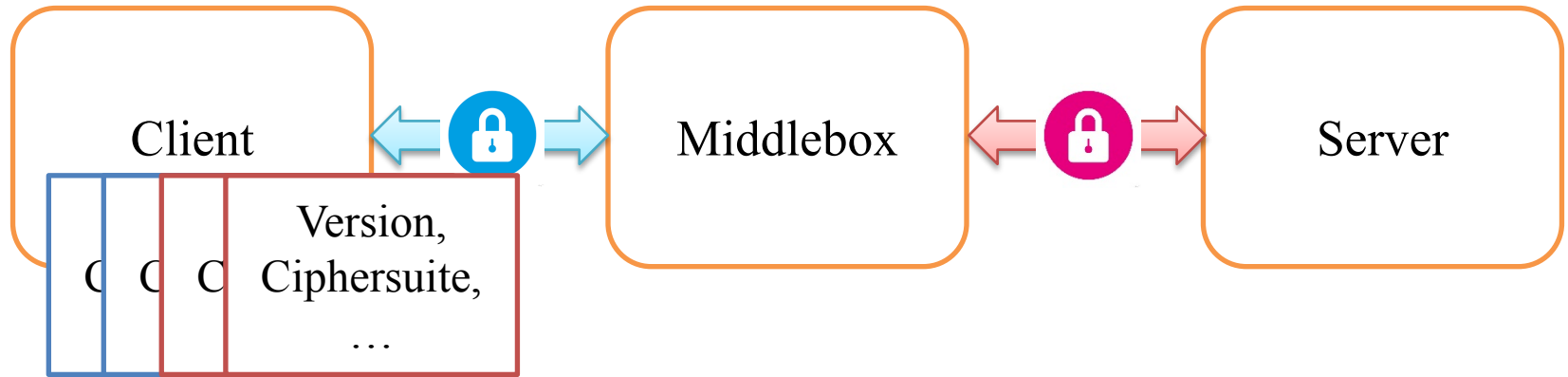


Segment Secrecy



Individual Secrecy

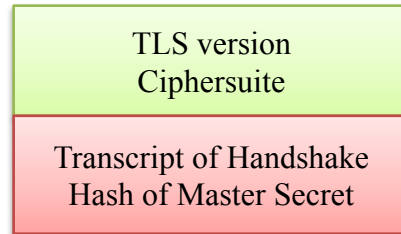
# Security Parameter Verification



Security  
Parameter Blocks

Each entity describes information about its related segment(s)

Report



Segment Secrecy



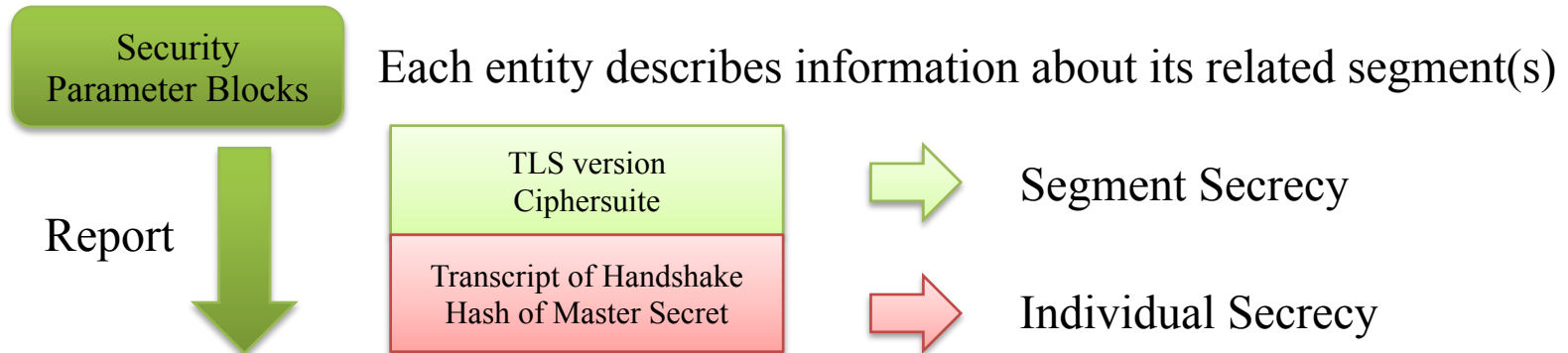
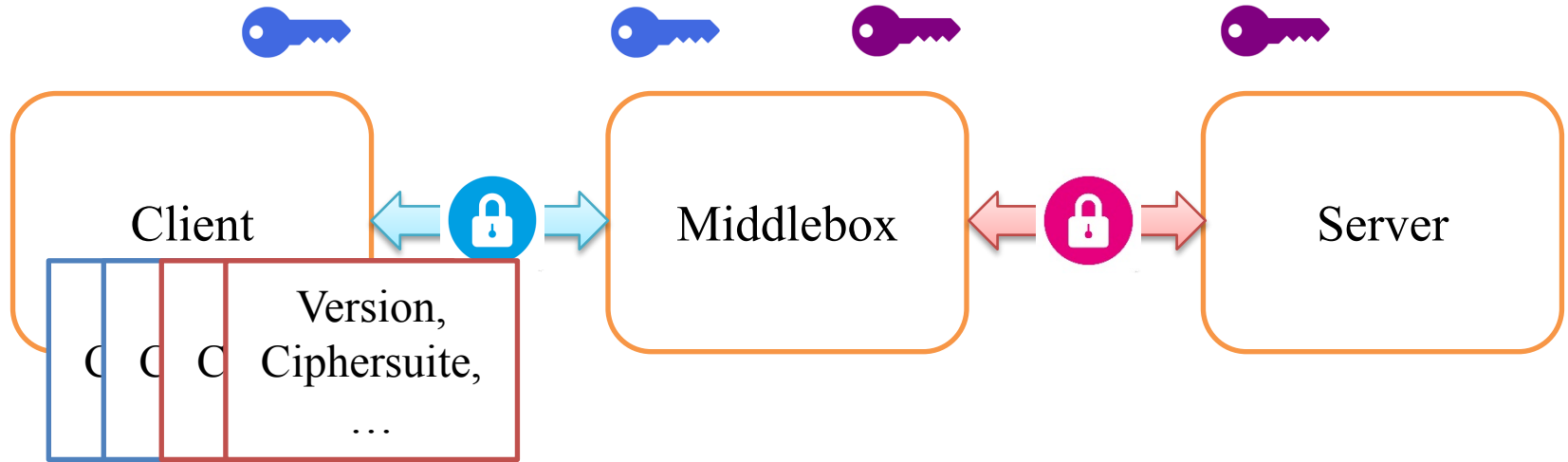
Individual Secrecy



No low TLS versions and weak ciphersuites



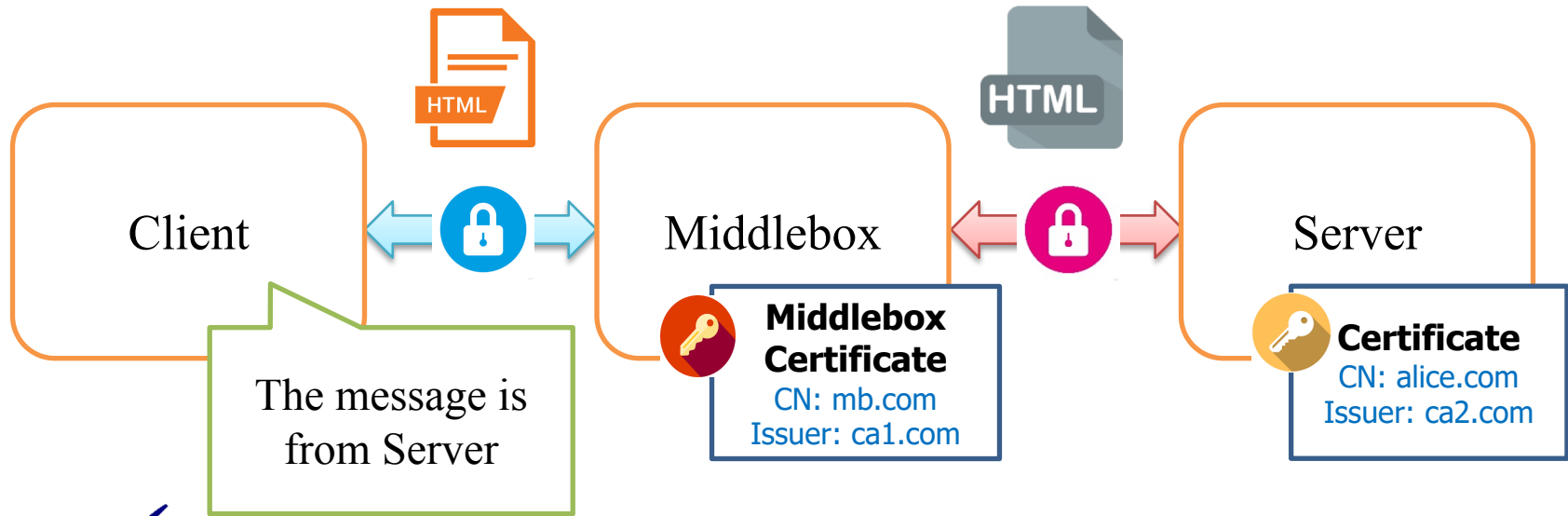
# Security Parameter Verification



✓ No low TLS versions and weak ciphersuites

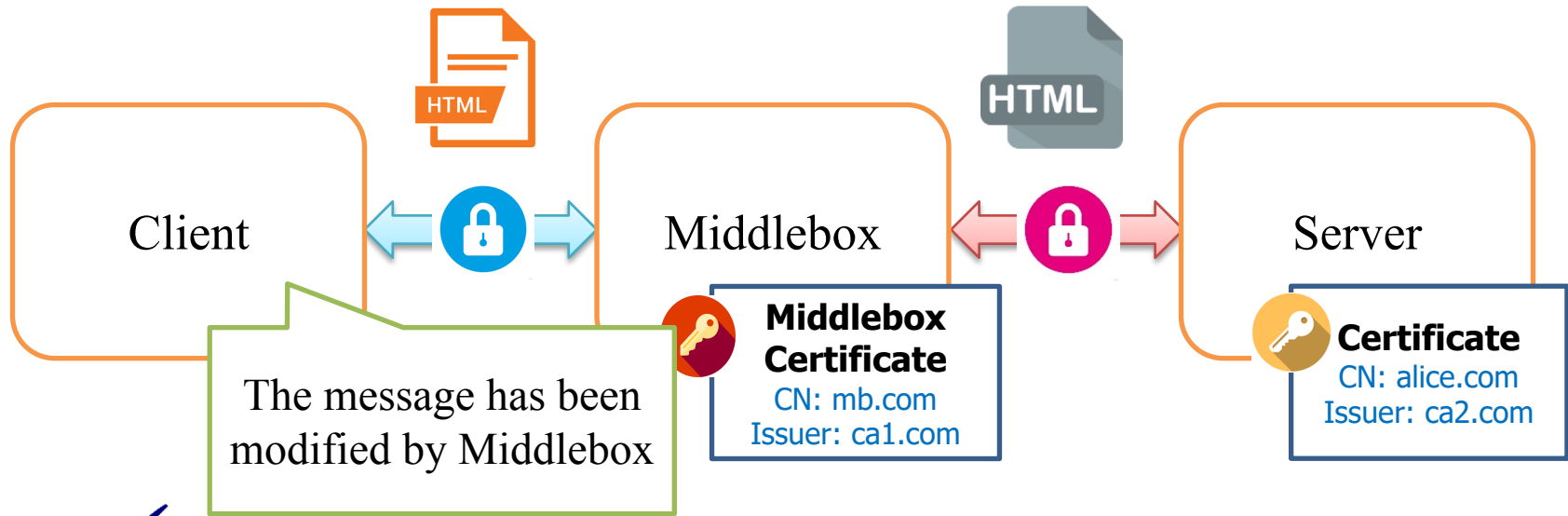
✓ Confirmation of different segment keys

# Security Goals of maTLS - Integrity



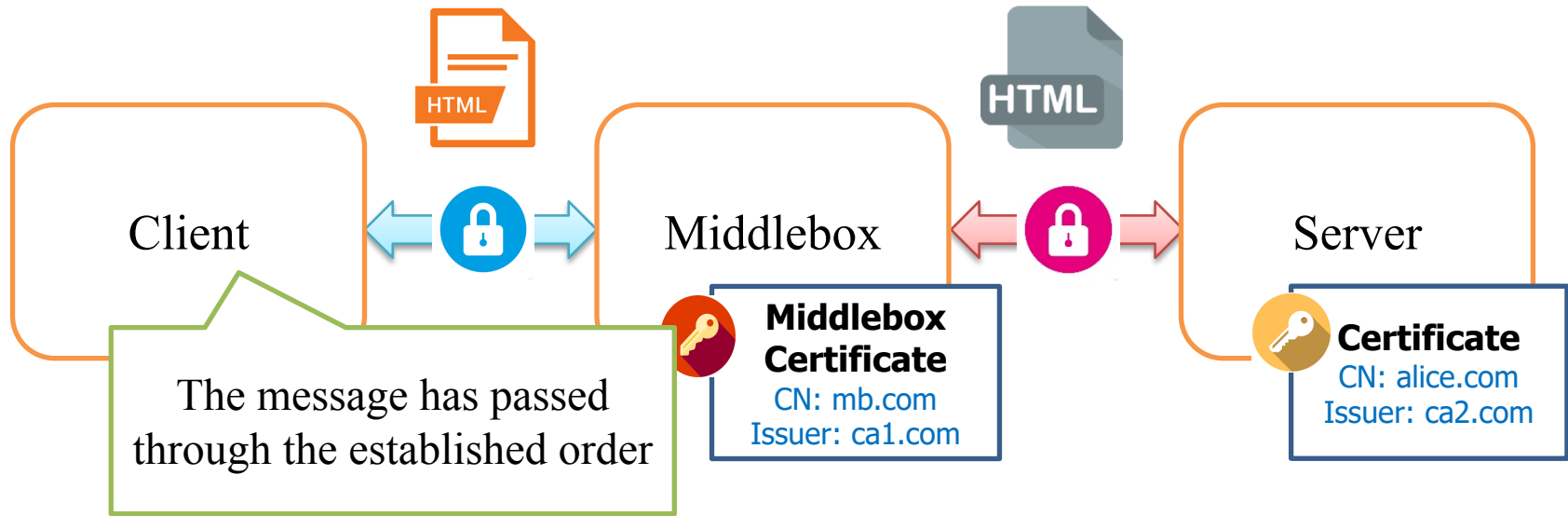
✓ Data Source Authentication

# Security Goals of maTLS - Integrity



- ✓ Data Source Authentication
- ✓ Modification Accountability

# Security Goals of maTLS - Integrity



- ✓ Data Source Authentication
- ✓ Modification Accountability
- ✓ Path Integrity

# Security Goals of maTLS - Integrity



✓ Data Source Authentication

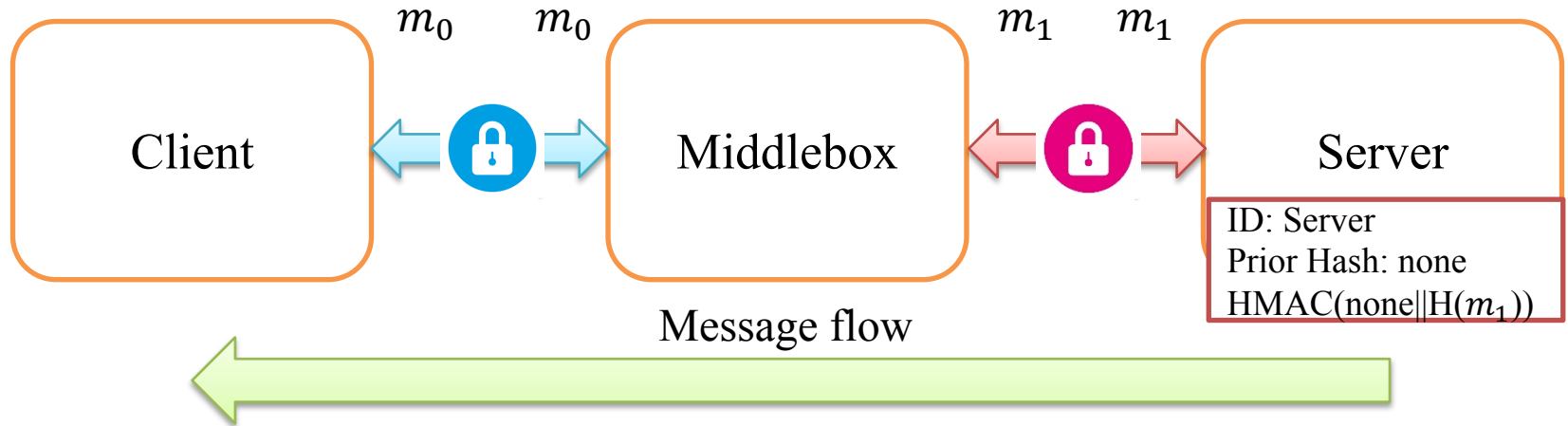
✓ Modification Accountability

✓ Path Integrity



Valid Modification Checks

# Valid Modification Checks



Modification Log  
Blocks

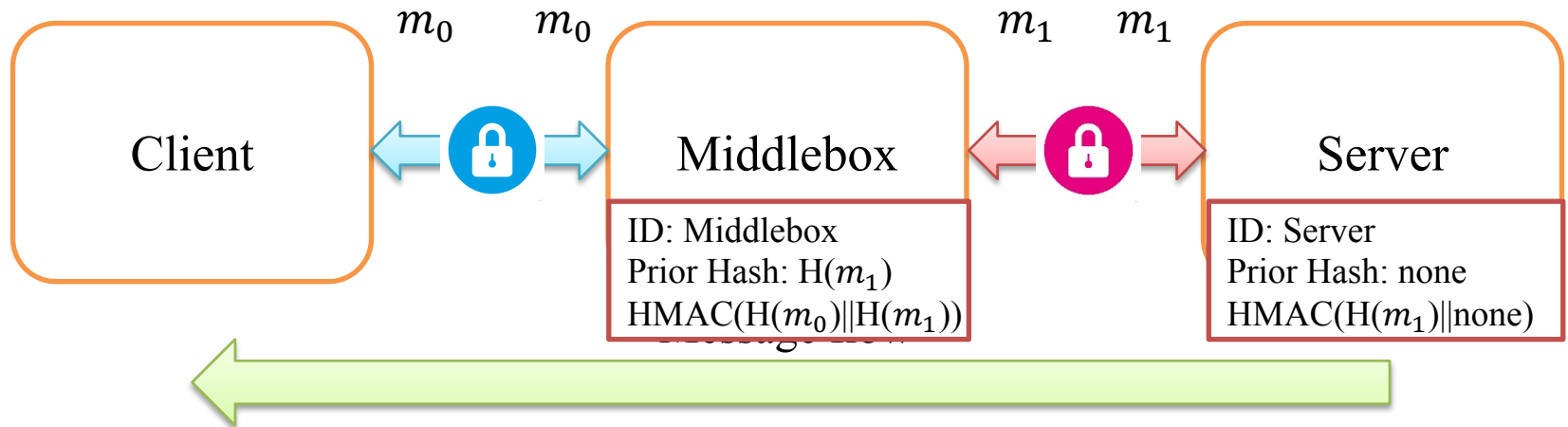
Each entity describes information about its modification by using HMAC (The HMAC key is called an *accountability key*)

$m \rightarrow m'$

ID	$H(m)$	$HMAC(H(m')  H(m))$
----	--------	---------------------

\* Optimization on a Modification Log is described in the paper

# Valid Modification Checks



Modification Log  
Blocks

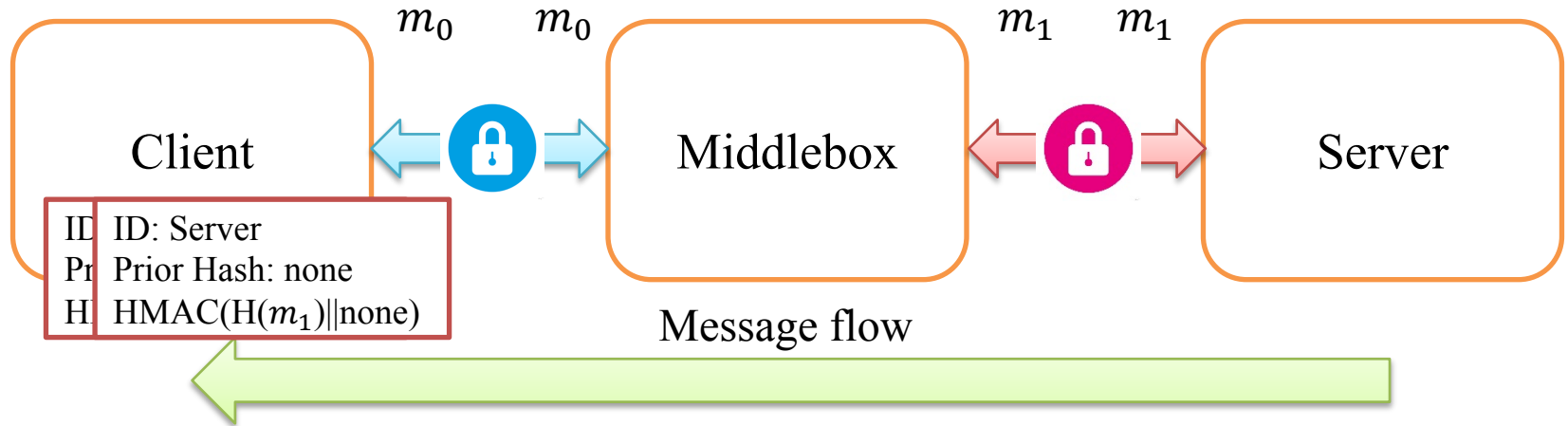
Each entity describes information about its modification by using HMAC (The HMAC key is called an *accountability key*)

$m \rightarrow m'$

ID	$H(m)$	$HMAC(H(m')  H(m))$
----	--------	---------------------

\* Optimization on a Modification Log is described in the paper

# Valid Modification Checks



**Modification Log Blocks** Each entity describes information about its modification by using HMAC (The HMAC key is called an *accountability key*)

Report  $m \rightarrow m'$

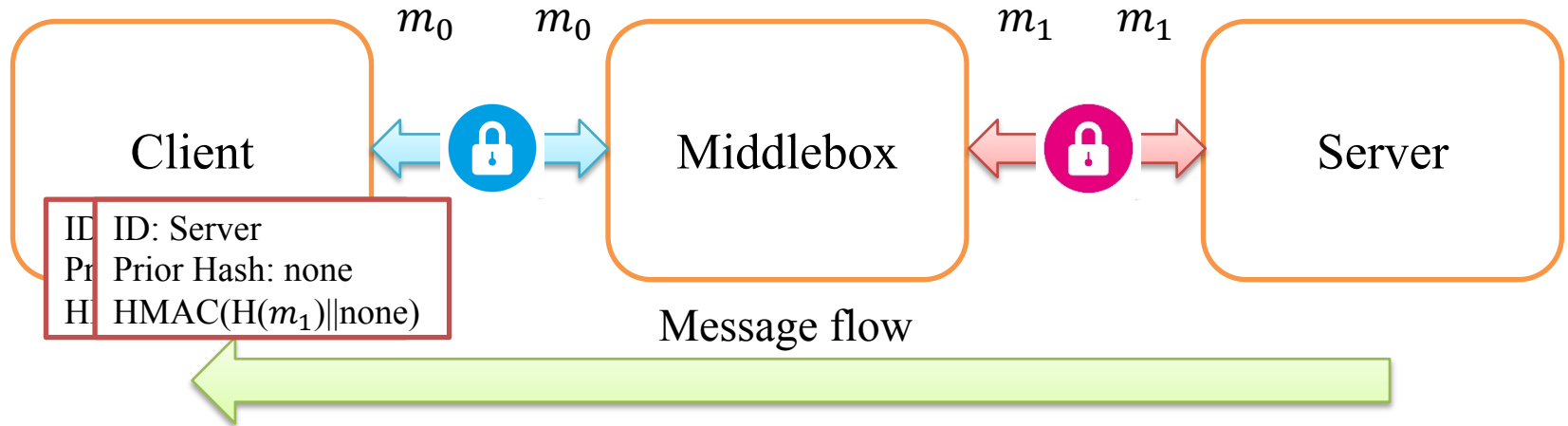
ID	$H(m)$	$HMAC(H(m')  H(m))$
----	--------	---------------------



Confirmation of who sends and who modifies the message



# Valid Modification Checks



Modification Log  
Blocks

Each entity describes information about its modification by using HMAC (The HMAC key is called an *accountability key*)

Report

$m \rightarrow m'$

ID	$H(m)$	$HMAC(H(m')  H(m))$
----	--------	---------------------

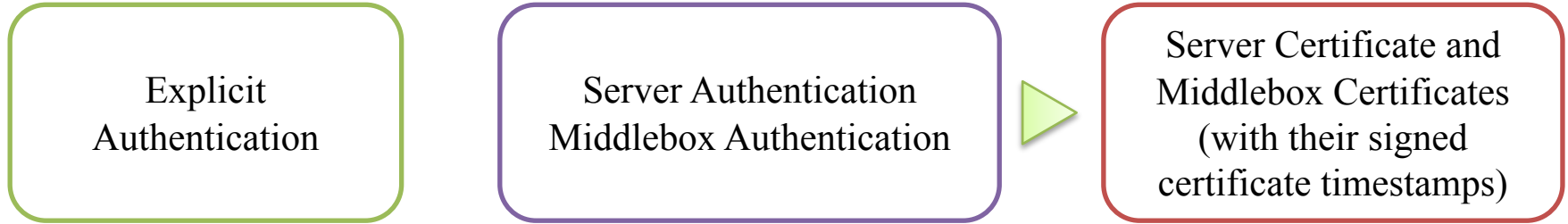


Confirmation of who sends and who modifies the message

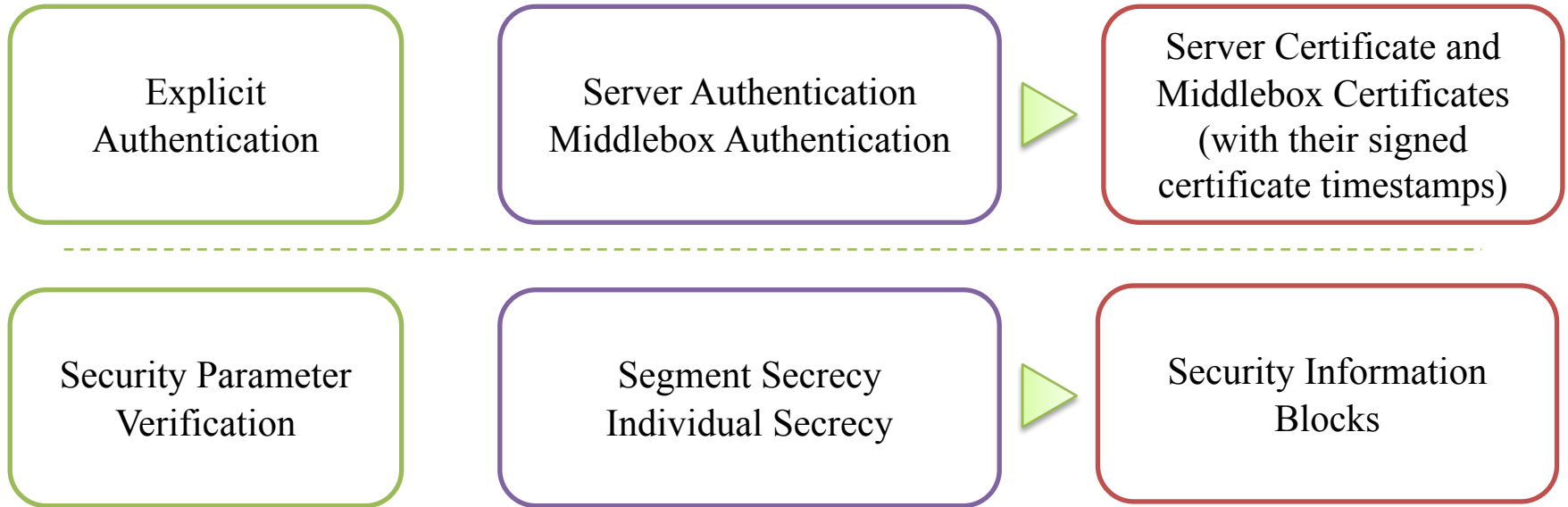


Confirmation of the order of middleboxes

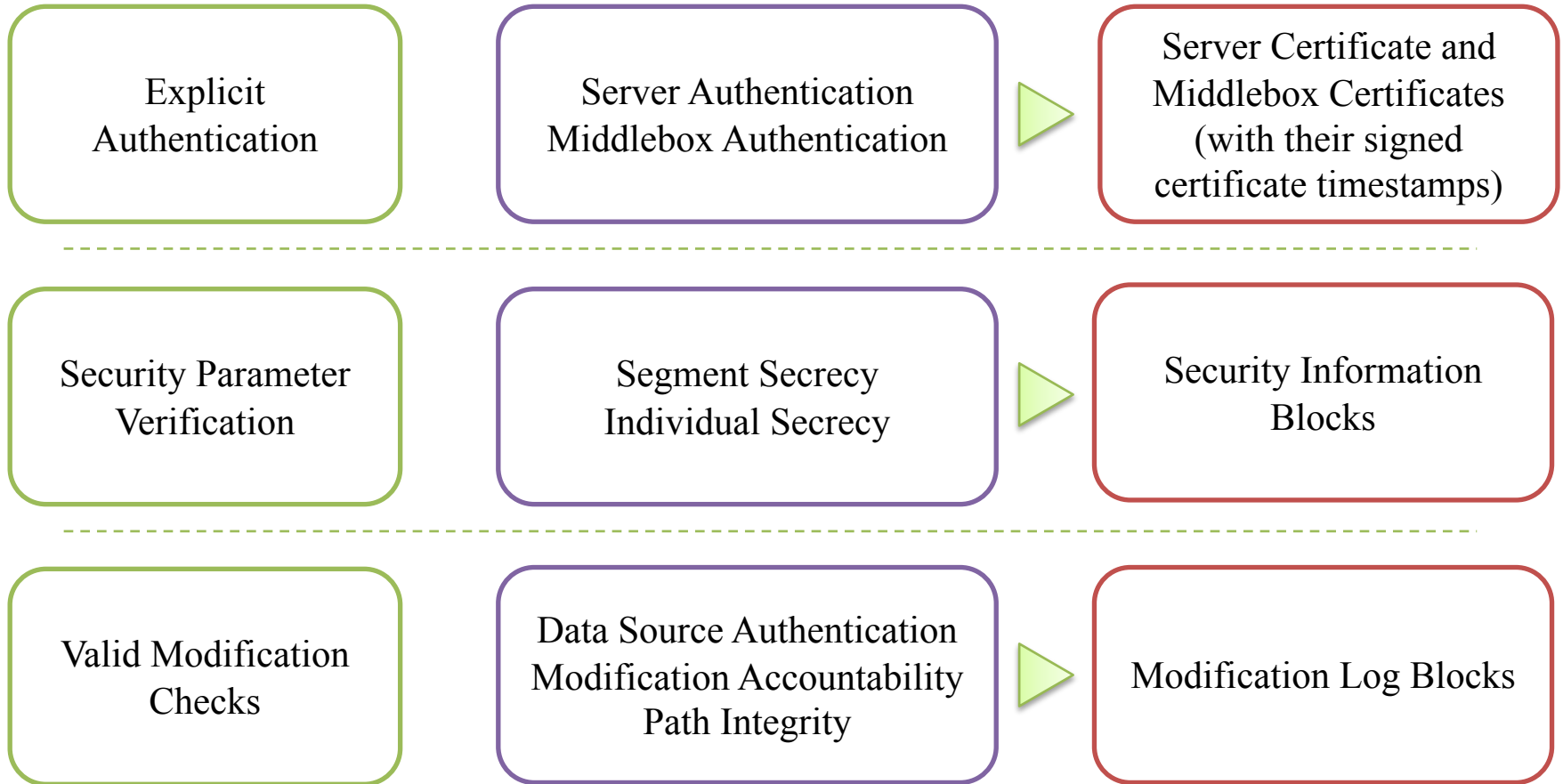
# Summary of Audit Mechanisms



# Summary of Audit Mechanisms



# Summary of Audit Mechanisms



# maTLS Handshake

Client

Middlebox

Server



**Middlebox  
Certificate**  
CN: mb.com  
Issuer: ca1.com



**Certificate**  
CN: alice.com  
Issuer: ca2.com

# maTLS Handshake



✓ ClientHello and ServerHello,

# maTLS Handshake

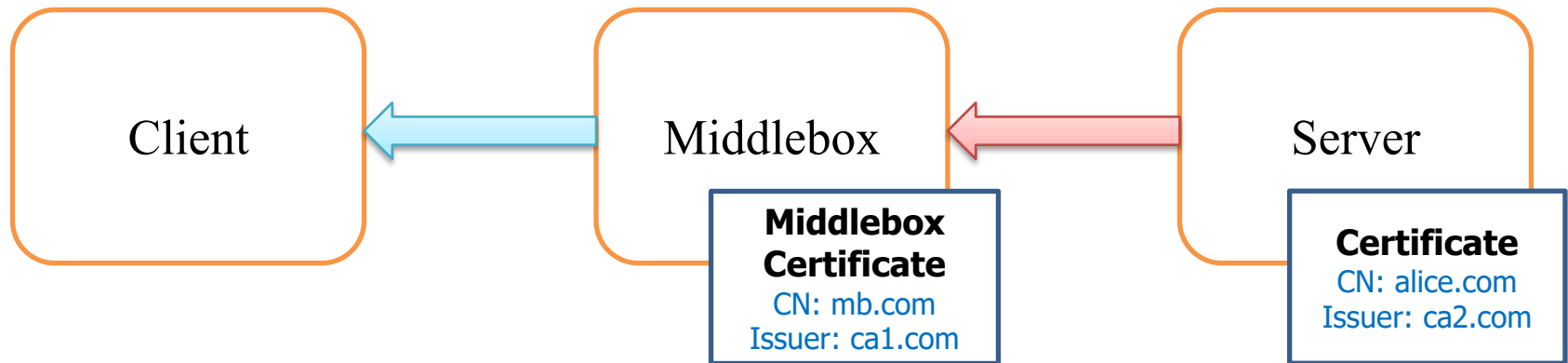



ClientHello and ServerHello,

Each segment negotiates its TLS version and ciphersuite

Each entity establishes HMAC keys (accountability keys)

# maTLS Handshake




- ✓ ClientHello and ServerHello,  
Each segment negotiates its TLS version and ciphersuite  
Each entity establishes HMAC keys (accountability keys)
- ✓ Certificate,  Explicit Authentication

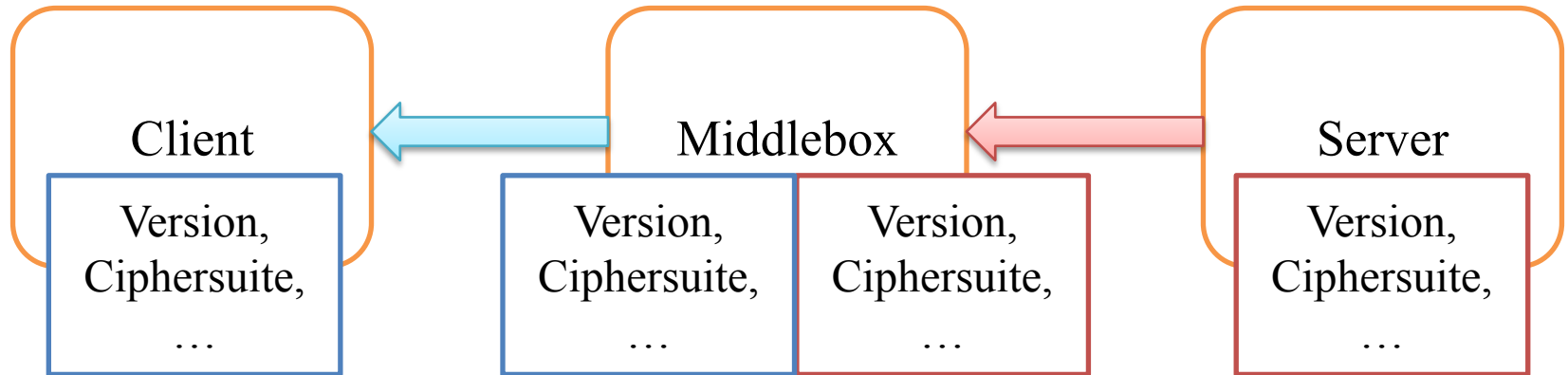


# maTLS Handshake



- ✓ ClientHello and ServerHello,  
Each segment negotiates its TLS version and ciphersuite  
Each entity establishes HMAC keys (accountability keys)
- ✓ Certificate,  Explicit Authentication
- ✓ ServerKeyExchange and ClientKeyExchange,  
Each segment establishes its master secret

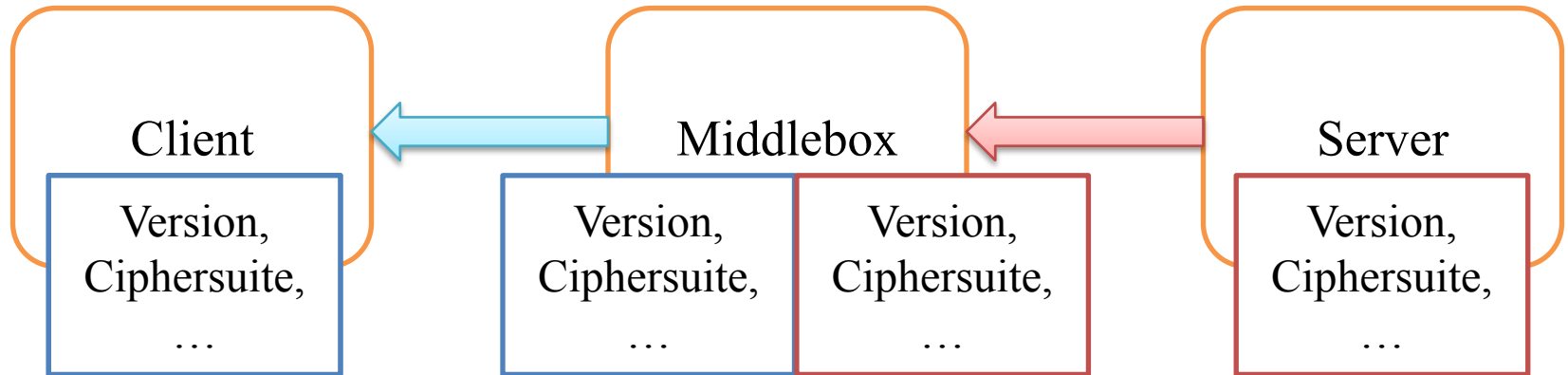
# maTLS Handshake



✓ Finished

Each segment confirms the transcript of their handshake

# maTLS Handshake

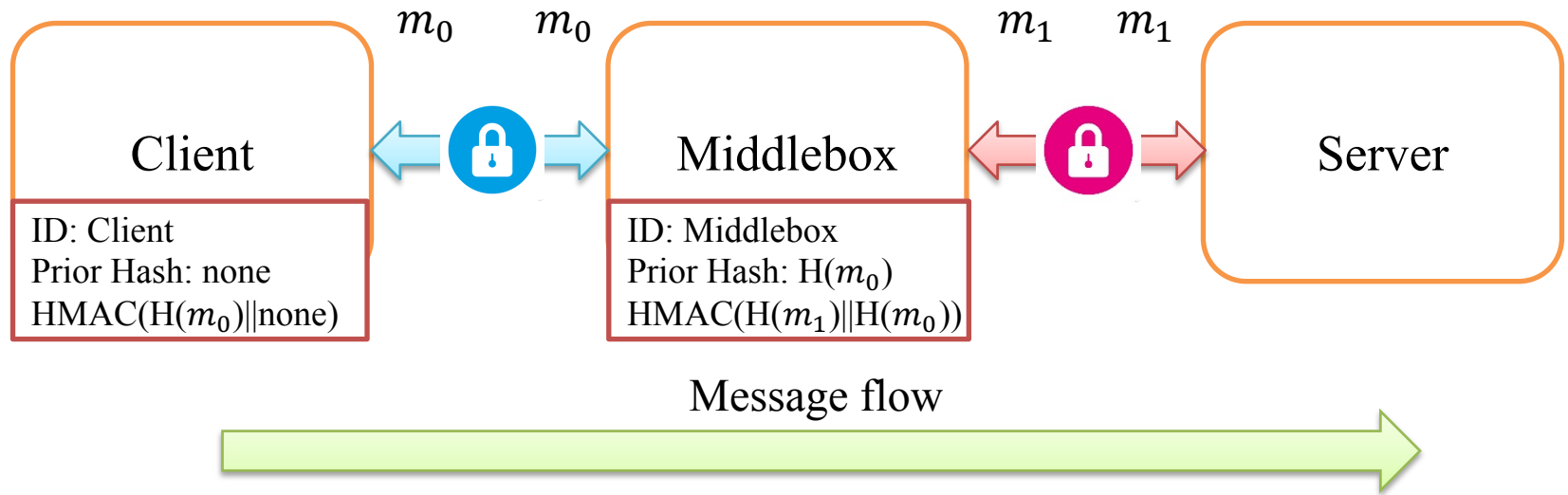


✓ Finished

Each segment confirms the transcript of their handshake

✓ ExtendedFinished  Security Parameter Verification

# maTLS Record



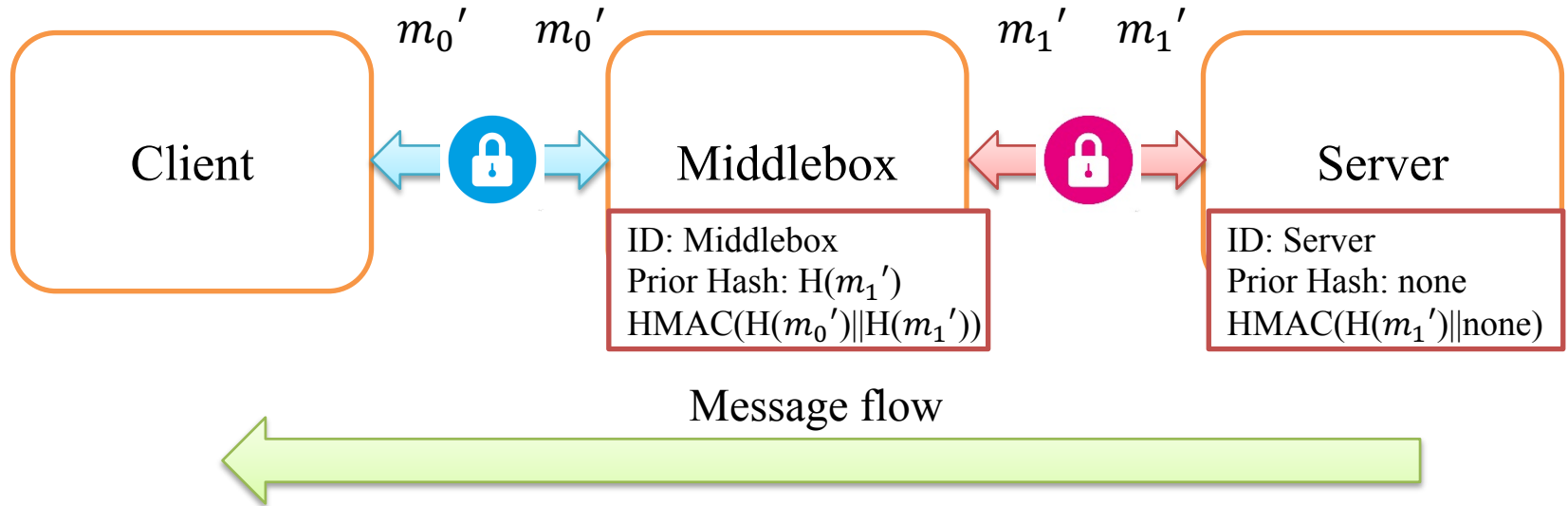
✓ Data Exchange



Valid Modification Checks

\* Optimization on a Modification Log is described in the paper

# maTLS Record



✓ Data Exchange



Valid Modification Checks

# Security Verification

✓ Security verification of maTLS through Tamarin

✓ Dolev-Yao adversary

Can capture all the messages delivered on the air

Can insert/drop/alter/reorder messages

Can corrupt long-term keys

✓ Seven lemmas (security goals in first-order logic)

Example of  
Server Authentication

```
All C S nonces #tc.  
  C_HandshakeComplete(C, S, nonces)@tc  
==>  
Ex #ts.  
  S_HandshakeComplete(C, S, nonces)@ts &  
  (#ts < #tc)
```

✓ The result shows that the maTLS protocol is secure

\* The implementation can be found at <https://github.com/middlebox-aware-tls/matls-tamarin.git>

# Evaluation Setting

All the applications are implemented in C with OpenSSL (for maTLS)

Client

Client-side  
Middlebox

Located in  
Seoul National University

Client: Intel Broadwell CPU at 3.30GHz with 1GB Memory

Client-side Middlebox: Intel Core i7 at 2.30GHz with 1GB Memory

-----  
Located in

- 1) AWS Seoul (Intra-Country)
- 2) AWS Tokyo (Intra-Region)
- 3) AWS Virginia (Inter-Region)

Server-side  
Middlebox

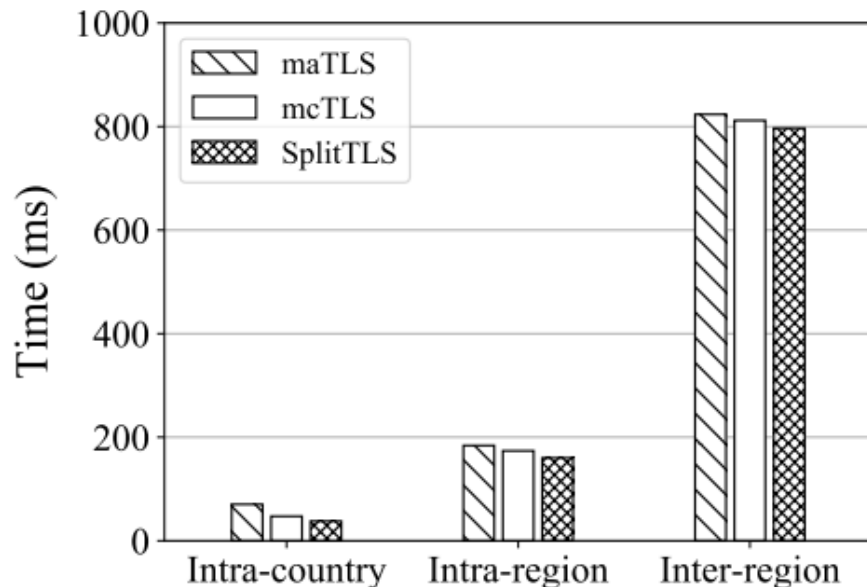
Server

Server and Server-side Middlebox: Intel Xeon CPU E5-3676 at 2.40GHz with 1GB Memory

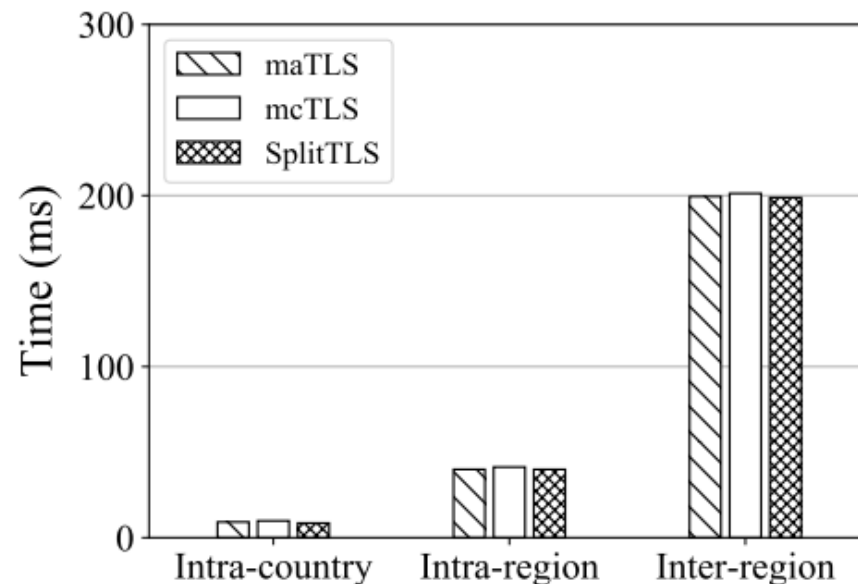
\* The implementation can be found at <https://github.com/middlebox-aware-tls/matls-implementation.git>

# Evaluation – HTTP Load Time

## HTTP Load Time



## Data Transfer Time

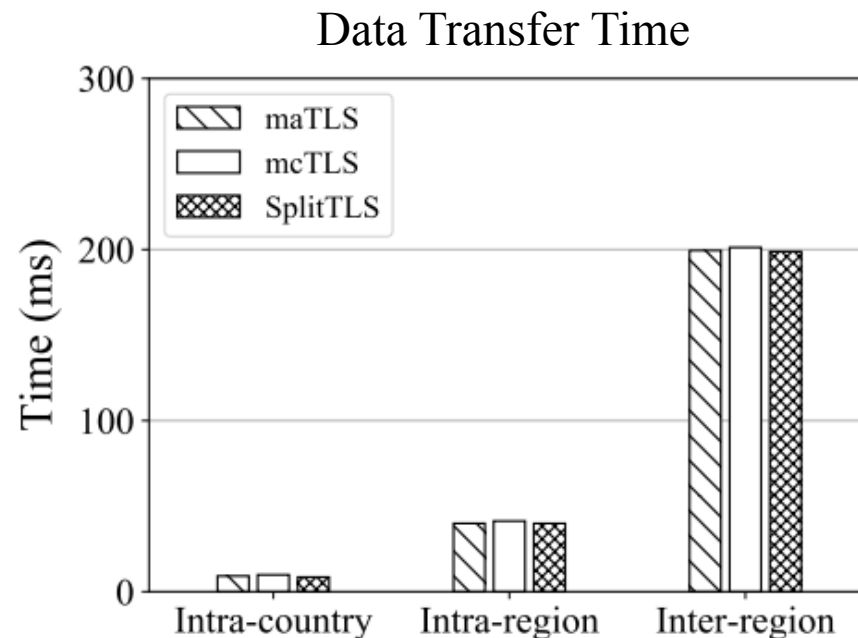
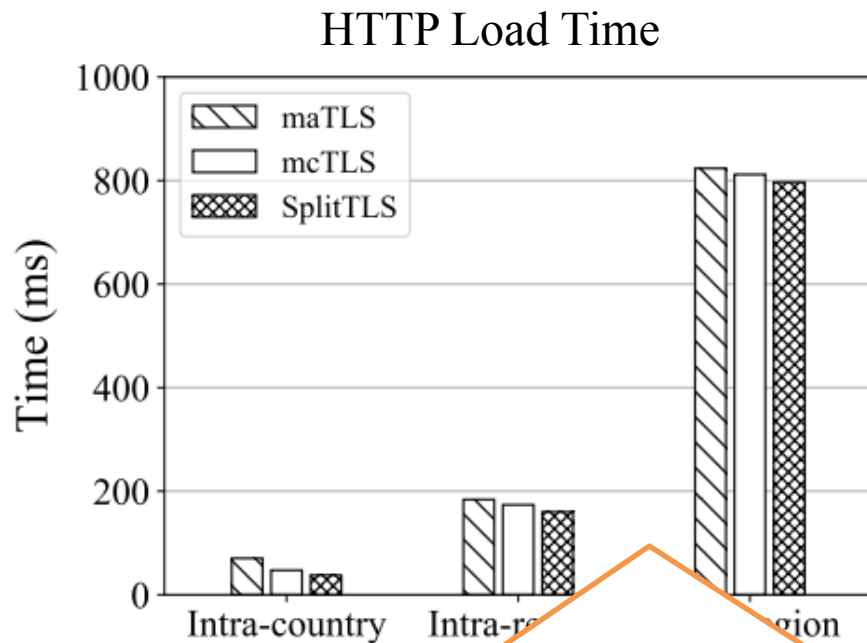


Testbed	$C-MB_C$	$MB_C-MB_S$	$MB_S - S$
Intra-country	1.136ms	4.944ms	0.551ms
Intra-region	1.136ms	35.896ms	0.537ms
Inter-region	1.136ms	192.818ms	0.610ms

- HTTP Load Time: The TLS handshake and the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)
- Data Transfer Time: Only the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)



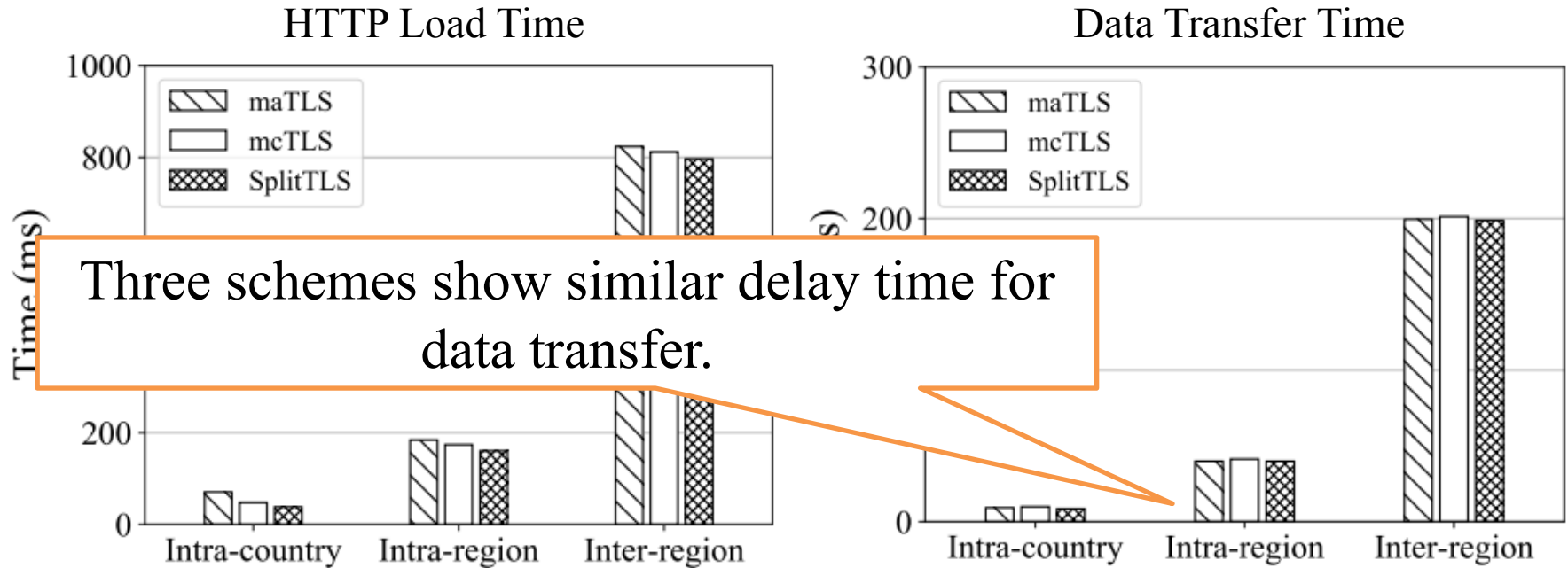
# Evaluation – HTTP Load Time



The maTLS protocol introduces a slight delay (10.22ms – 32.52ms) compared to SplitTLS and mcTLS

- HTTP Load Time: The TLS handshake and the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)
- Data Transfer Time: Only the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)

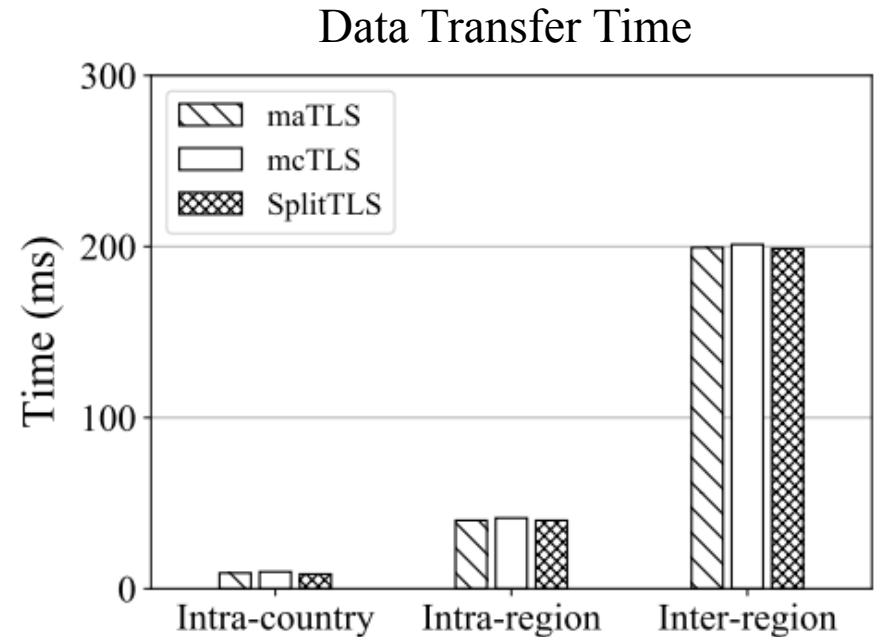
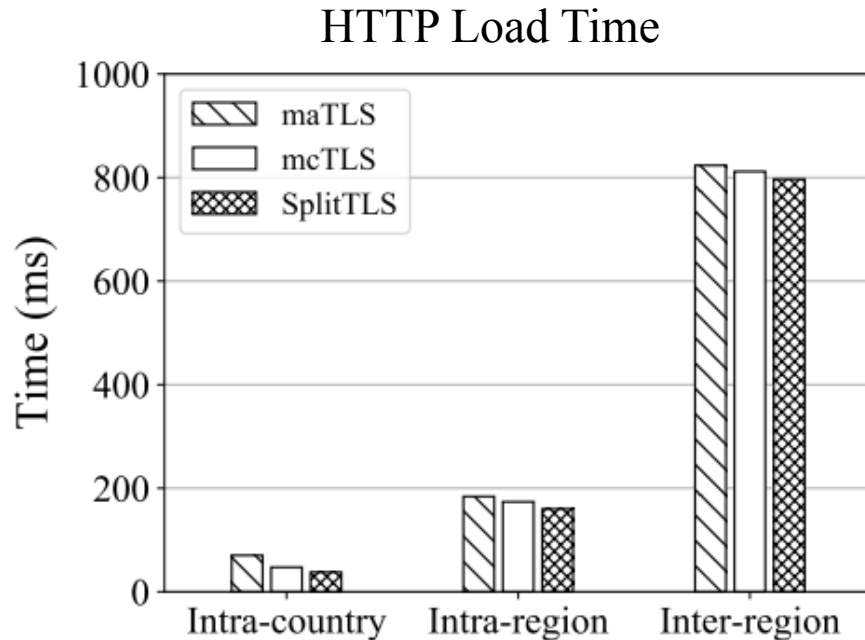
# Evaluation – HTTP Load Time



Testbed	$C-MB_C$	$MB_C-MB_S$	$MB_S - S$
Intra-country	1.136ms	4.944ms	0.551ms
Intra-region	1.136ms	35.896ms	0.537ms
Inter-region	1.136ms	192.818ms	0.610ms

- HTTP Load Time: The TLS handshake and the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)
- Data Transfer Time: Only the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)

# Evaluation – HTTP Load Time

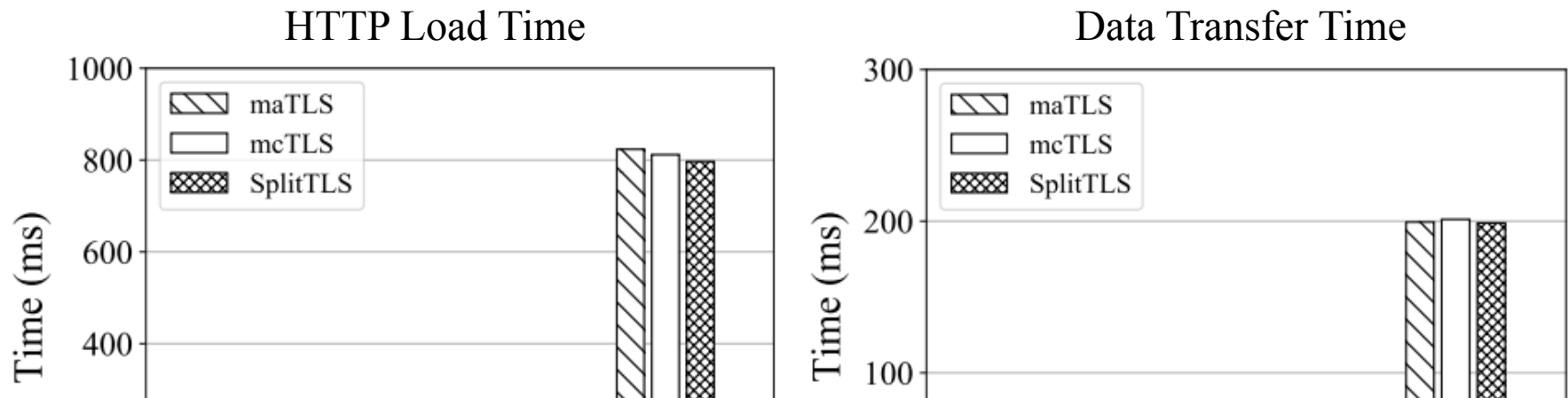


We conclude that the maTLS overhead is mainly due to the setup of an maTLS session

Inter-region	1.136ms	192.818ms	0.610ms
--------------	---------	-----------	---------

- HTTP Load Time: The TLS handshake and the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)
- Data Transfer Time: Only the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)

# Evaluation – HTTP Load Time



Once the session is established, maTLS provides similar performance to the others while preserving all security merits that we have discussed

Intra-country	1.136ms	4.944ms	0.551ms
Intra-region	1.136ms	35.896ms	0.537ms
Inter-region	1.136ms	192.818ms	0.610ms

- HTTP Load Time: The TLS handshake and the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)
- Data Transfer Time: Only the HTTP message exchange (GET and RESPONSE)

# Conclusion

---



SplitTLS is risky



Client is not aware of the middleboxes involved



Client is forced to fully trust behavior of middleboxes



Auditable Middlebox



Middlebox Certificate



Middlebox Transparency System



Middlebox-aware TLS (maTLS)



Explicit Authentication



Security Parameter Verification



Valid Modification Checks

*fin.*

*email: hwlee2014@mmlab.snu.ac.kr*

*project webpage: <https://middlebox-aware-tls.github.io>*

*source codes: <https://github.com/middlebox-aware-tls>*

# Backup Slides

# Why Middleboxes?

---

- ✓ Acceptable Use Policy
- ✓ Marware and Threat Protection
- ✓ IoT Endpoint Protection
- ✓ Unpatched Endpoint Protection
- ✓ Crypto Security Audit

⋮

\* I get the use cases from a draft of the RFC document titled “TLS 1.3 Impact on Network-Based Security”

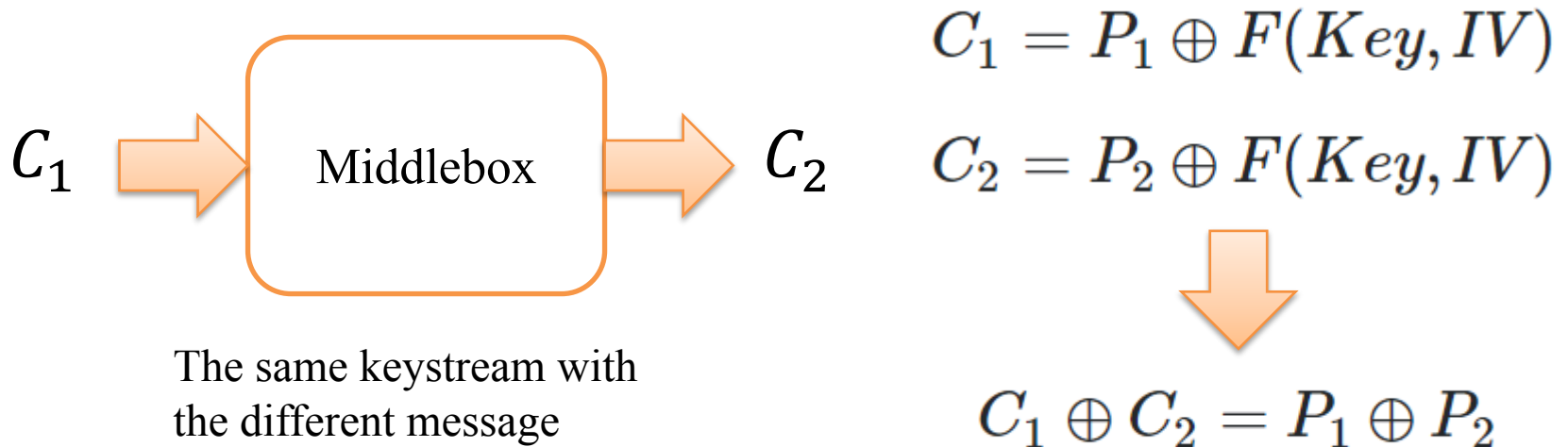


# Why Individual Secrecy?

✘ It is known that initialization vector should not be reused

✘ Without Individual Secrecy, confidentiality is undermined

This happened when the same keystream is used across the session and the middlebox modified the message

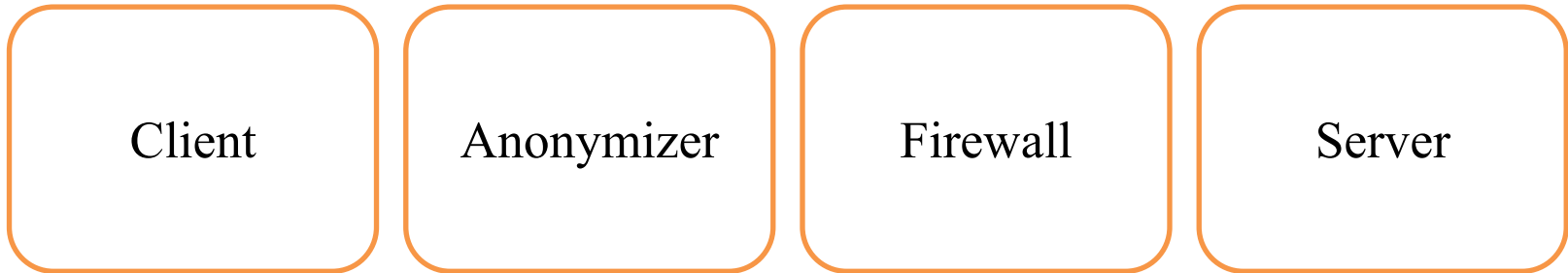


The same keystream with the different message

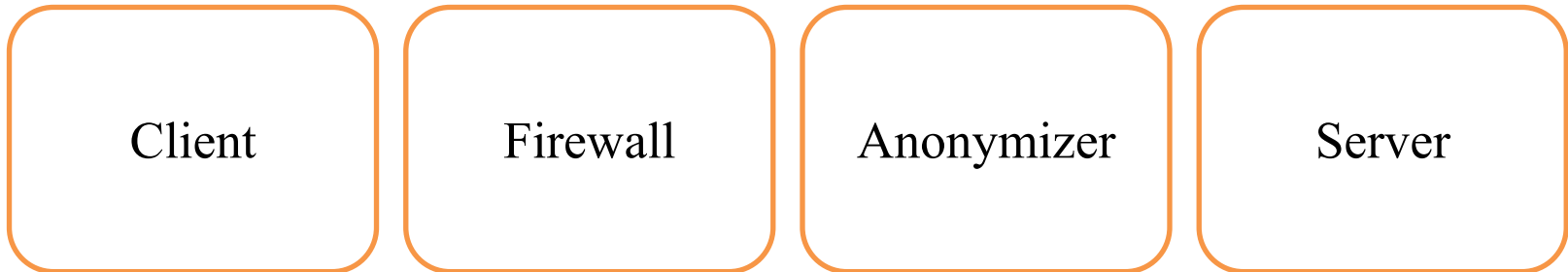
✔ It is desirable to use different segment keys across the session

# Why Path Integrity?

Message Flow



The data is anonymized and then the firewall read it

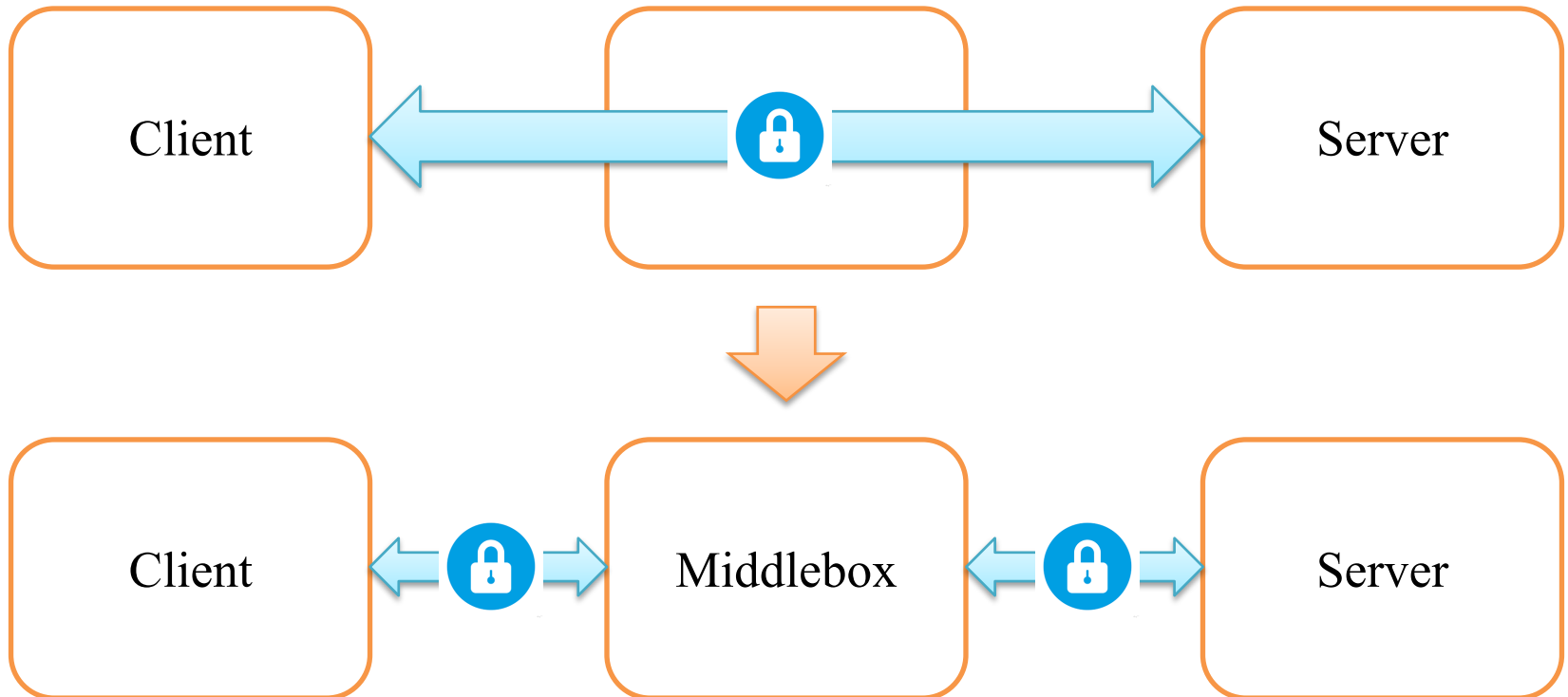


The firewall read the data and then it is anonymized

# Session Establishment Approach (1)

## ❌ Top-down approach

Server determines a TLS version, a ciphersuite, and extensions

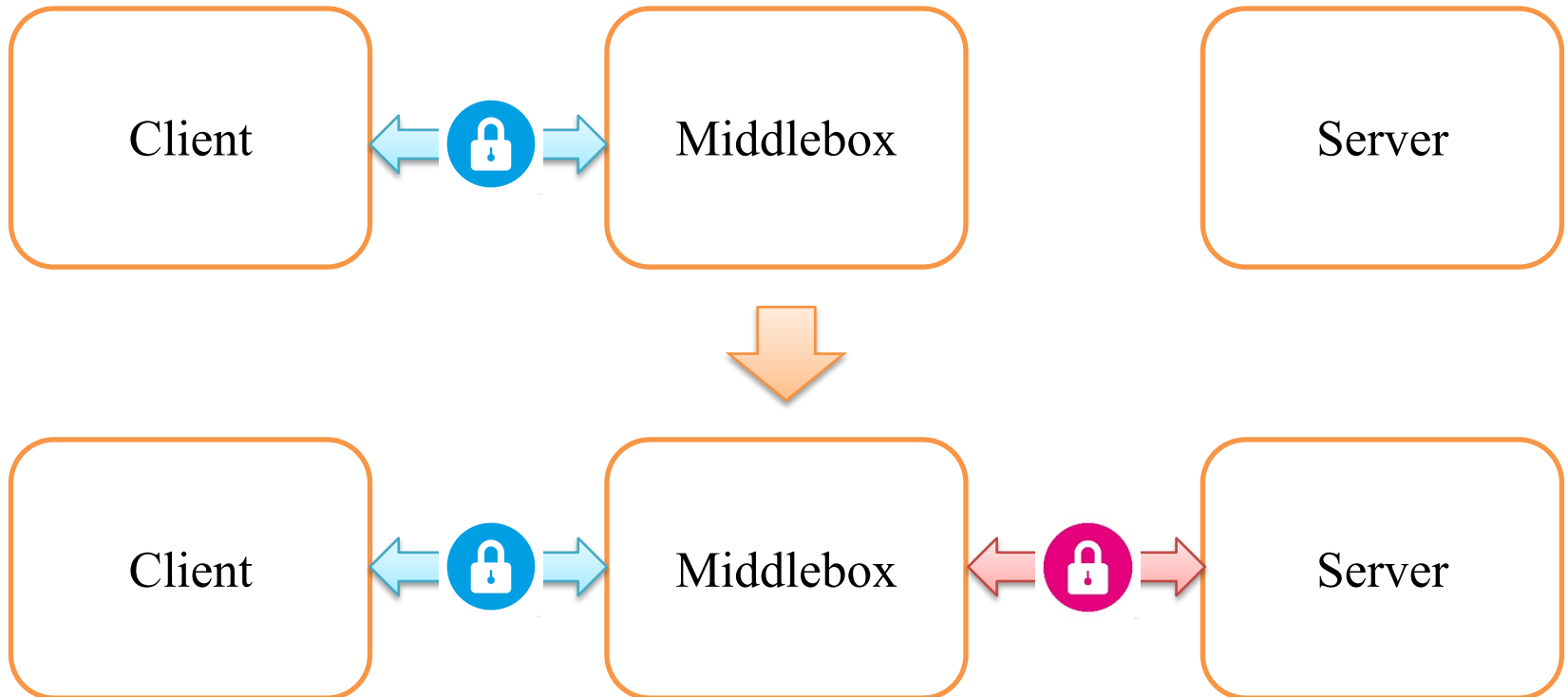


# Session Establishment Approach (2)



## Bottom-up approach

A TLS version, a ciphersuite, and extensions are selected on a segment basis



# Difference from mcTLS

---



mcTLS does not achieves Individual Secrecy

The same keystream is used across the session, which might undermine the confidentiality of the session



maTLS establishes different segment keys in different segments



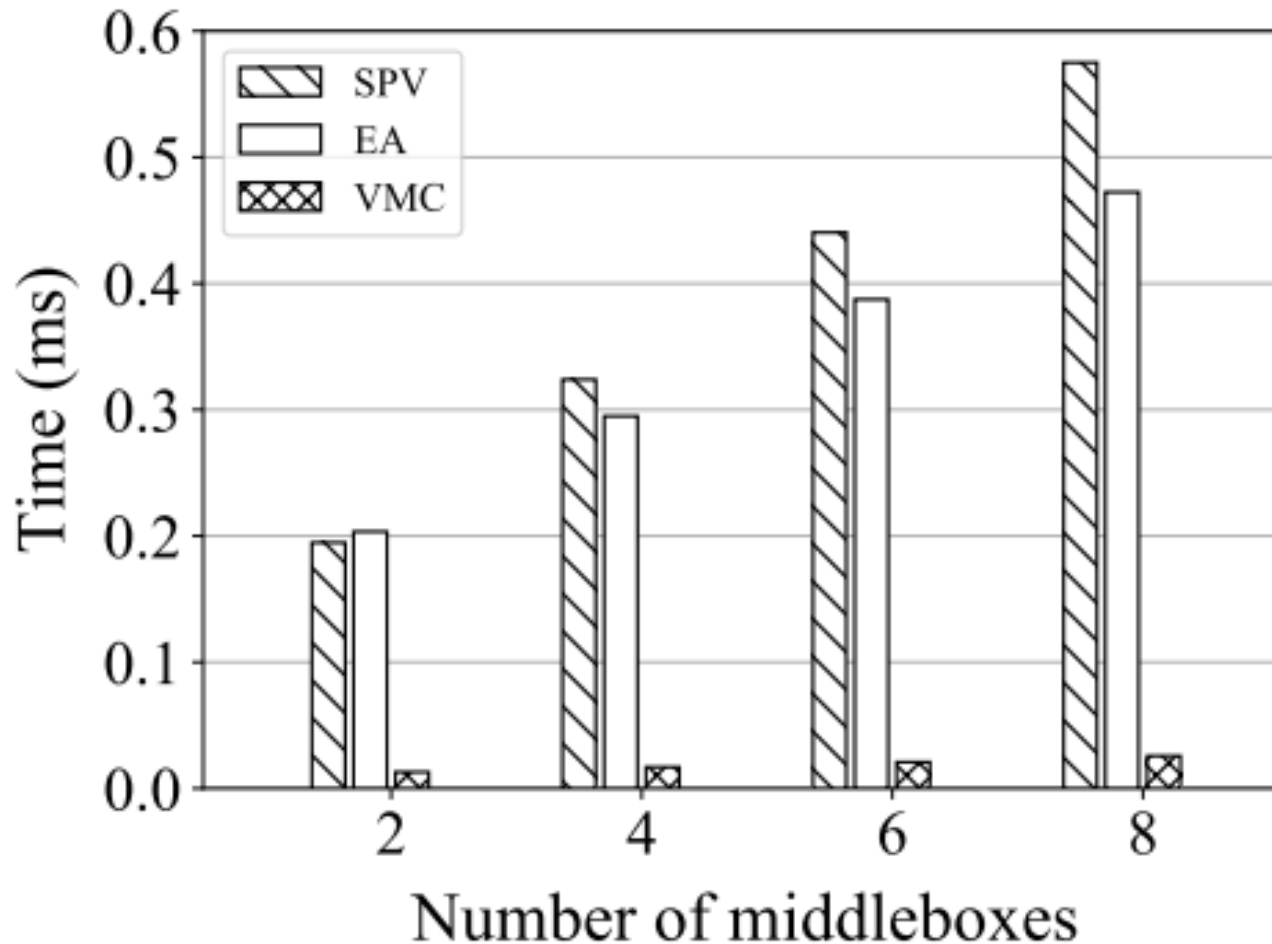
mcTLS requires all the entities support the protocol

Since the server determines the extensions among the “intersection” of the supported extensions by all the entities



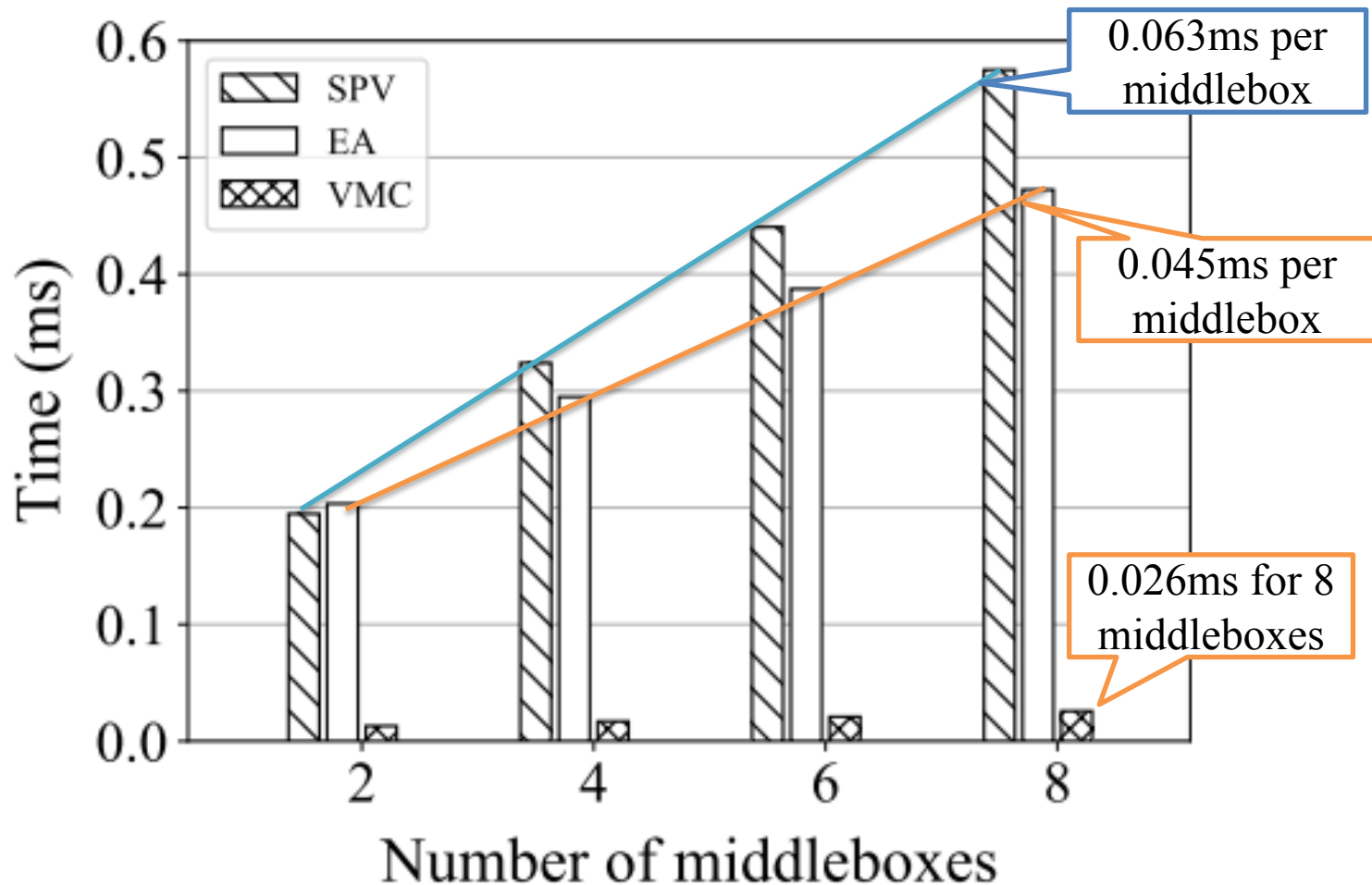
maTLS allows a partial maTLS session

# Evaluation – Scalability of Three Audit Mechanisms



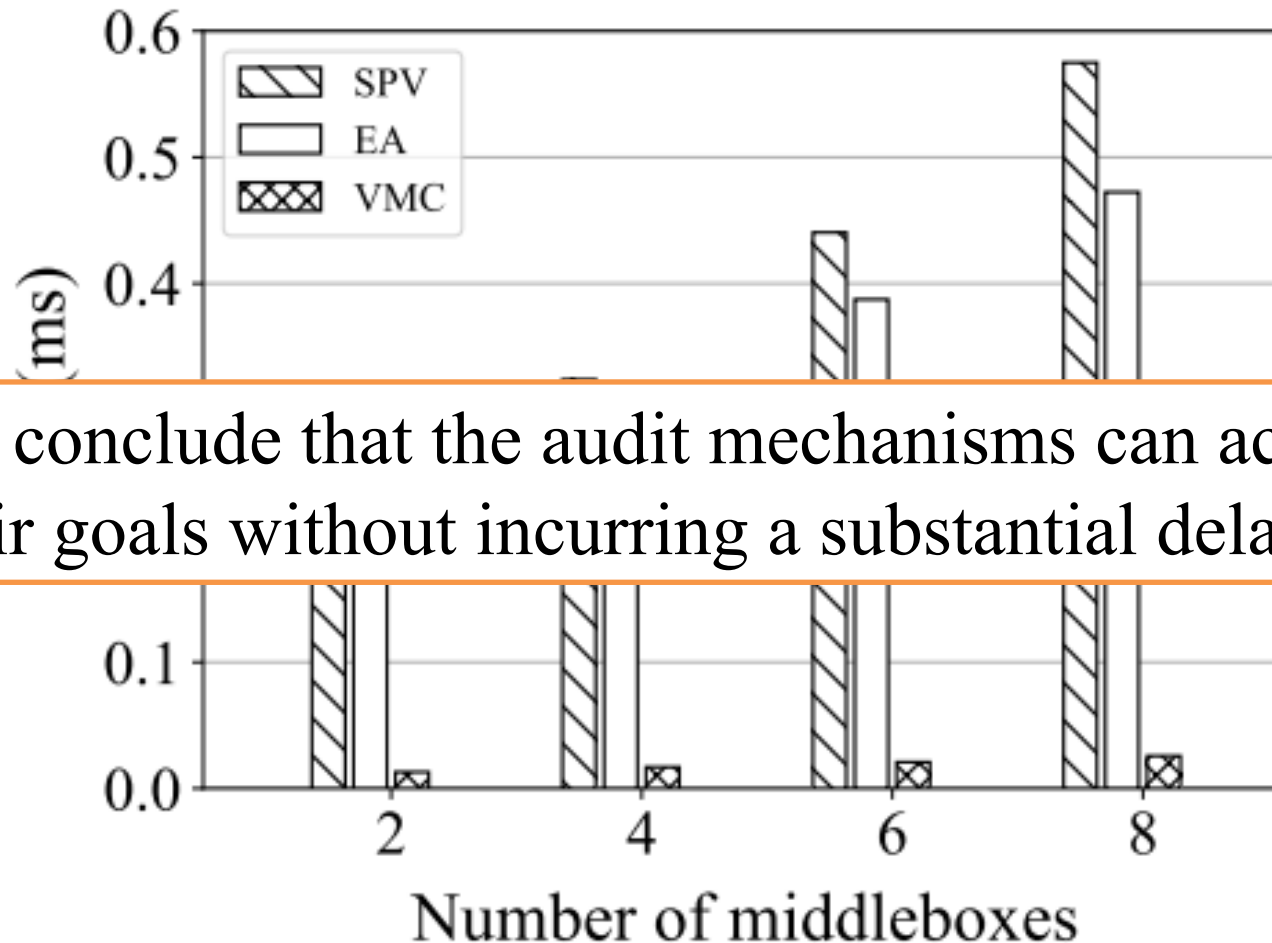
SPV: Security Parameter Verification / EA: Explicit Authentication / VMC: Valid Modification Checks

# Evaluation – Scalability of Three Audit Mechanisms



SPV: Security Parameter Verification / EA: Explicit Authentication / VMC: Valid Modification Checks

# Evaluation – Scalability of Three Audit Mechanisms



We conclude that the audit mechanisms can achieve their goals without incurring a substantial delay

SPV: Security Parameter Verification / EA: Explicit Authentication / VMC: Valid Modification Checks



# Modification Log

$ak_{s,c}$ : Server's accountability key

$ak_{m,c}$ : MB's accountability key (with client)

$H(k, m)$ : The keyed hash function with  $k$ , applying to  $m$

$H(m)$ : The hash function, applying to  $m$

- A series of HMACs
- End point: Server, Client, or a valid end-point middlebox such as a cache proxy

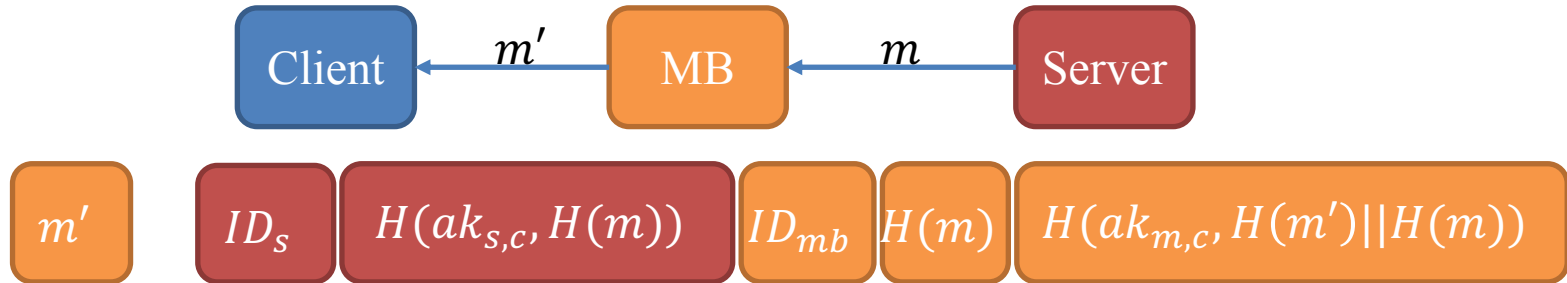


- Writer: HTTP Header Enrichment, Optimizer (adding JavaScript) ( $m \rightarrow m'$ )



$ID_{mb}$  modifies  $m$  into  $m'$

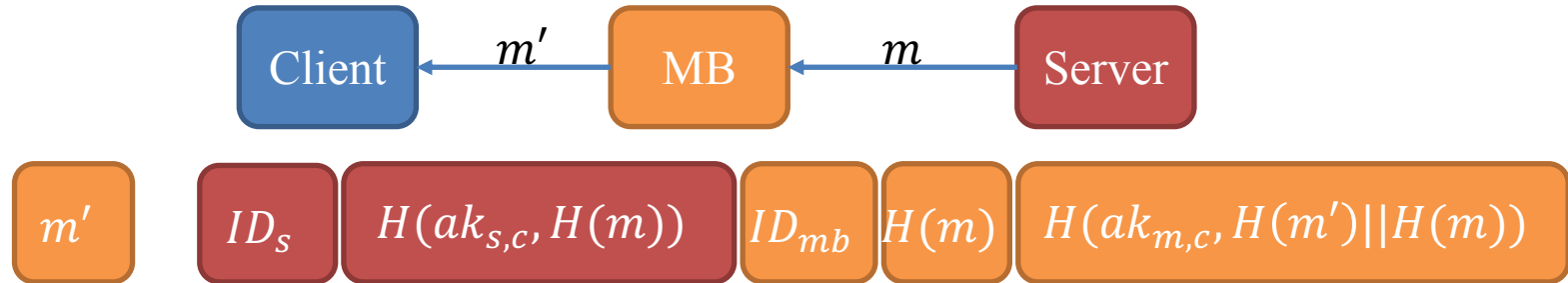
# Modification Log Verification



Client knows

- $ak_{S,C}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,C}$ : The accountability key with the MB

# Modification Log Verification

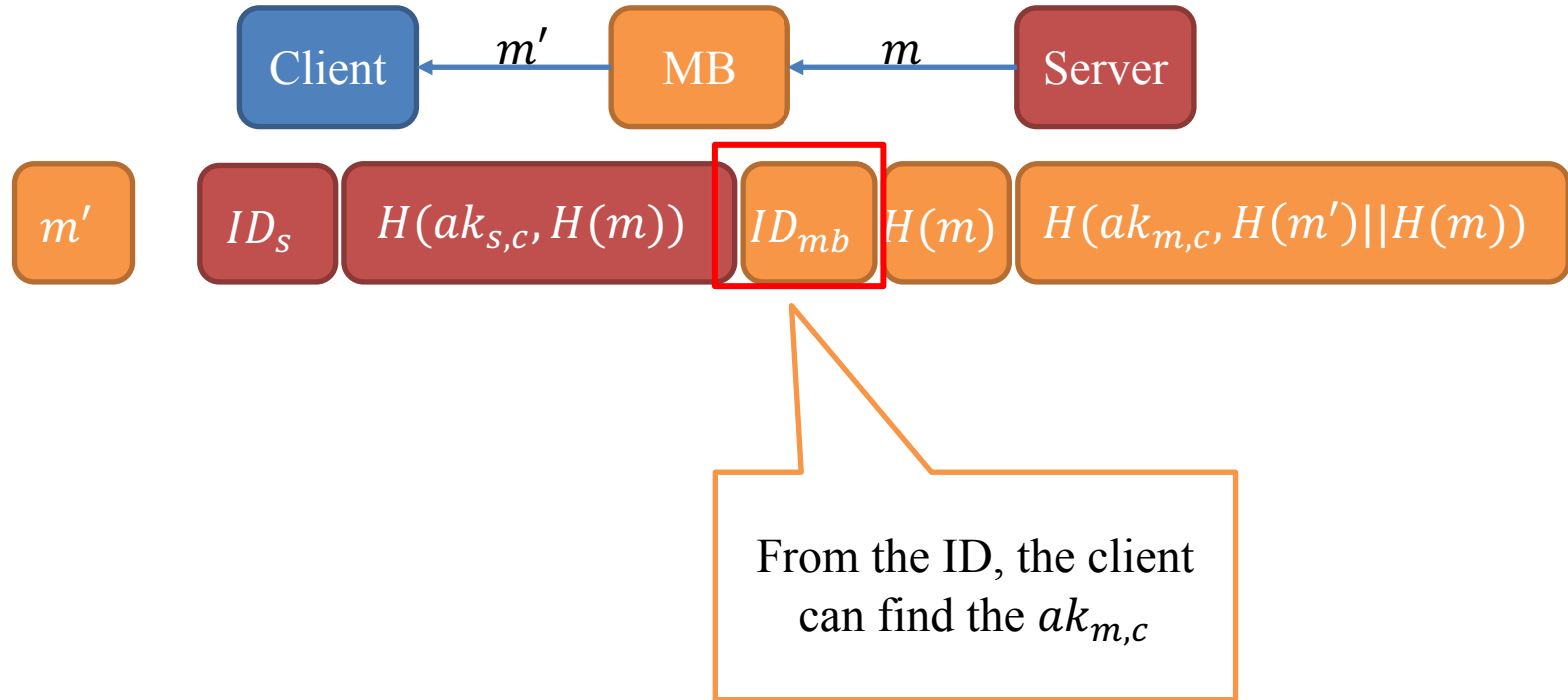


By hashing the received message, the client can know  $H(m')$

Client knows

- $ak_{S,C}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,C}$ : The accountability key with the MB
- $H(m')$ : The hash value of the received message

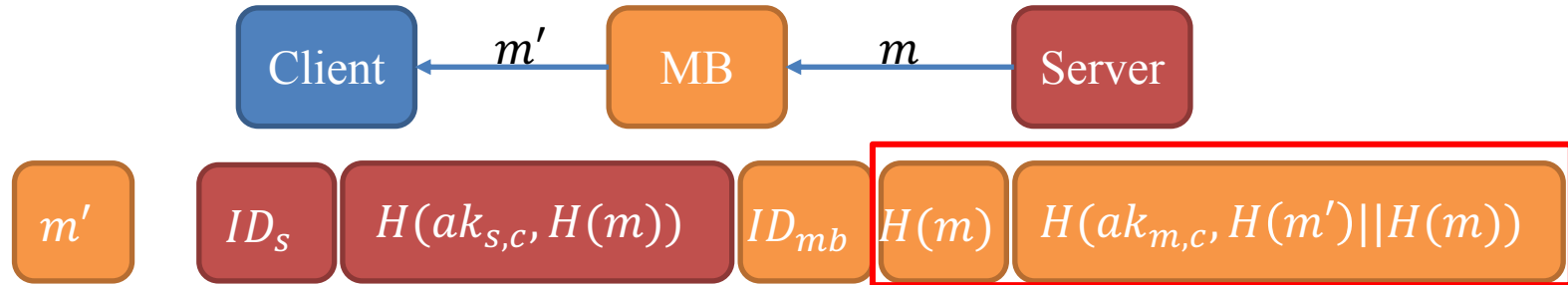
# Modification Log Verification



Client knows

- $ak_{S,C}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,C}$ : The accountability key with the MB
- $H(m')$ : The hash value of the received message

# Modification Log Verification

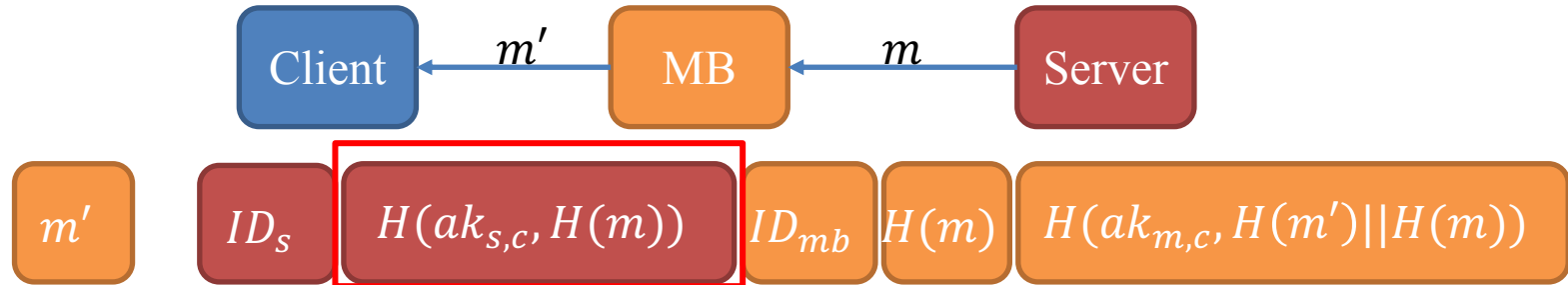


From these hashes, the client can confirm MB modifies  $m$  into  $m'$

Client knows

- $ak_{S,C}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,C}$ : The accountability key with the MB
- $H(m')$ : The hash value of the received message

# Modification Log Verification

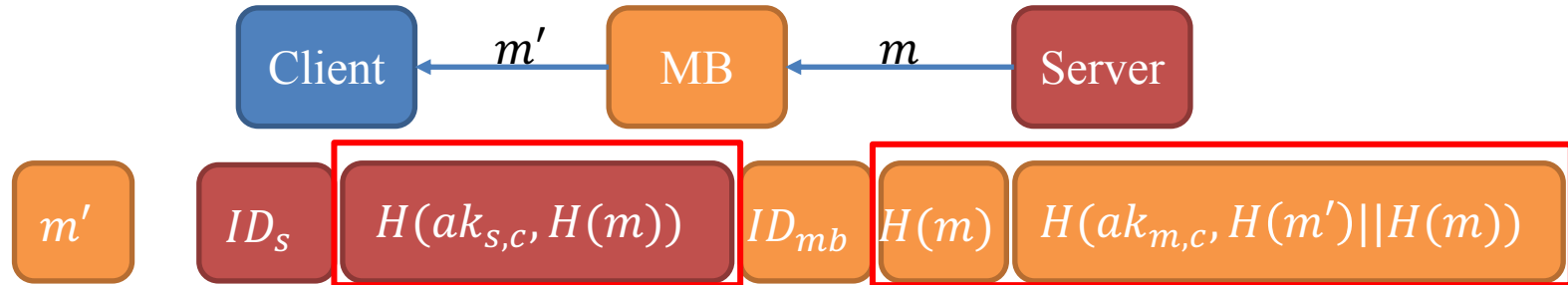


From this hash, the client can confirm the server generates  $m$ , even though the client cannot confirm  $m$  itself

Client knows

- $ak_{S,c}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,c}$ : The accountability key with the MB
- $H(m')$ : The hash value of the received message

# Modification Log Verification



From two verifications, the client can confirm the server generates  $m$  and mb changes it into  $m'$ , without any invalid modification

Client knows

- $ak_{S,C}$ : The accountability key with the server
- $ak_{m,C}$ : The accountability key with the MB
- $H(m')$ : The hash value of the received message