

T.M.C Asser Institute Early Career Conference
on
Humanitarian Disarmament
10-11 July 2025

Background

The Asser Institute Early Career Conference Series provides doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers with the opportunity to present their research on selected topics of international arms control law and receive feedback from experts and peers. The Conference Series additionally provides early career researchers with the opportunity to build networks within their field thereby strengthening the academic arms control community within the Netherlands and Europe.

Topic of the Conference

The first 2025 conference features the topic 'Humanitarian Disarmament'. Since the 1990s, humanitarian disarmament has reshaped the field of international arms control. Unlike traditional disarmament, humanitarian disarmament seeks to establish and implement legal norms that prevent and remediate harm to people and the environment rather than states. Specifically, humanitarian disarmament instruments prohibit a specific type of weapon, oblige states parties to eliminate stockpiles and require the provision of assistance to victims and the clearance of contaminated land. In March 2025, Poland, the Baltic States and Finland announced their intention to leave the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention due to the deterioration of the security situation along NATO's eastern front. The same month, Lithuania withdrew from the Convention on Cluster Munitions. By leaving these treaties, these states intend to send strategic message to Russia that they are prepared to use all means to defend their countries. Experts warn that member state withdrawal would encourage other countries to reconsider their commitment to humanitarian disarmament treaties leading to a domino effect of non-compliance and abandonment of civilian protections during war.

Conference Programme

Location: T.M.C Asser Institute
Date: Thursday 10 July to Friday 11 July 2025
Organizers: Professor Thilo Marauhn; Thea Coventry

At each conference, nine doctoral candidates or postdoctoral researchers will be selected to present their submitted papers and receive feedback from an expert discussant. The conference will be divided into three separate panels with three speakers and one discussant per panel.

Participants wishing to present their research should submit a 250-word abstract on their presentation topic by email to Thea Coventry (t.coventry@asser.nl) by 30 May 2025. The full short conference paper (approx. 1500 words) is due by 16 June 2025. The papers will be shared with the expert discussants in advance. The conference is open for attendance to other early career academics and advanced master-level students. Presenting participants will receive a modest bursary to assist with travel/accommodation.

Timeline

30 May 2025	Deadline for registration
16 June 2025	Submission of papers
10-11 July 2025	Humanitarian Disarmament Conference

Programme Schedule

Thursday 10 July 2025

Afternoon Session 13:30 to 16:30	
13.30-14.00	Words of Welcome <i>Opening and round of introductions</i>
14.00-16:30	Panel One

Friday 11 July 2025

Morning Session 10.00 to 13.30	
10.00-12.30	Panel Two
12.30-13.30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
Afternoon Session 13:30 to 16.00	
13.30-16:00	Panel Three
16.00-18.30	<i>Closing Reception</i>

[Call for papers] Early career conference on humanitarian disarmament

The Asser Institute has announced its '*Early career conference on humanitarian disarmament*' to be held July 10-11, 2025 in The Hague. Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers are invited to submit 250-word abstracts on the topic of 'humanitarian disarmament', which seeks to establish and implement legal norms that prevent and remediate harm to people and the environment rather than states. The deadline for abstracts is May 5, 2025, with full papers (1,500 words) due by June 16.

Background

The early career conference comes at a critical moment, following the March 2025 announcements that Poland, the Baltic States and Finland intend to withdraw from the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, while Lithuania has already withdrawn from the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

These withdrawals, prompted by security concerns along NATO's eastern front, send a strategic message to Russia but raise alarms about potential cascading effects on humanitarian disarmament treaties worldwide.

The conference will explore how humanitarian disarmament has transformed international arms control since the 1990s by focusing on preventing harm to people and the environment rather than states.

Nine early career researchers will be selected to present papers across three panels, with expert discussants providing feedback. Selected presenters will receive a bursary for travel expenses.

Read the full call

About the Early career conference

The Asser Institute Early Career Conference Series provides doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers with the opportunity to present their research on selected topics of international arms control law and receive feedback from experts and peers. The Conference Series additionally provides early career researchers with the opportunity to build networks within their field. The format aims to strengthen academic networks within the Netherlands and Europe's arms control community.

For submission details, please contact researcher Thea Coventry at t.coventry@asser.nl.