

T.M.C Asser Institute Early Career Conference Series

Arms Control and Rearmament: Contradiction or Synergy? Interdisciplinary Workshop

3 February 2026

Background

The Asser Institute Early Career Conference Series provides doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers in international law, political science and security studies with the opportunity to present their research on selected topics related to disarmament, non-proliferation, and export control 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 Workshop

The February 2026 workshop features the topic of 'Arms Control and Rearmament: Contradiction or Synergy?' Geopolitical contexts surrounding Europe have accelerated investment in the defence capacities in the EU and Member States. The EU's Readiness 2030 initiative aims to mobilise €800 billion by the end of the decade to strengthen defence preparedness, with investment focused on technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, quantum computing, and space-based platforms.

In an era of rearmament in Europe and elsewhere, disarmament, non-proliferation, and export control regimes are facing fundamental challenges. Yet these regimes may paradoxically increase their relevance, precisely because of the risks that the development and transfer of defence-related technologies may pose to Europe and the world.

Against this background, the early career workshop will analyse, from multi-disciplinary perspectives, how disarmament, non-proliferation, and export control should and can be adopted in a highly competitive geopolitical climate. The workshop will draw lessons from historical, political, legal, and technological perspectives and serve as a venue for discussing ways forward.

The workshop will be followed by a closed policy roundtable, inviting early career scholars to exchange insights with professionals.

Programme

Location: Asser Institute

Date: 3 February 2026 (followed by a policy roundtable on 4 February)

Organizers: Machiko Kanetake

Several doctoral candidates or postdoctoral researchers will be selected to present their research and receive feedback from an expert discussant. The workshop will be divided into three separate panels with three speakers and one discussant per panel.

Participants wishing to present their research should submit (a) a 250-word abstract on their presentation topic and (b) a short bio by email to Machiko Kanetake (m.kanetake@asser.nl) by 11 January 2026. A limited number of bursaries are available for speakers to assist with travel and accommodation, which will be awarded on a rolling basis according to the order of abstract submission. The workshop is open for attendance to other early career academics and advanced master-level students.

Timeline

11 January 2026	Deadline for abstract submission
13 January 2026	Being informed of the outcome of selection
3 February 2026	Early career workshop
4 February 2026	(Closed) policy roundtable

Programme Schedule

Tuesday 3 February 2026 – Early career workshop

13.30 – 13.45	Introductory Remarks
13.45 – 15.00	Panel 1
15.00 – 15.30	Break
15:30 – 17.00	Panel 2
17:00 –	Networking drinks

Wednesday 4 February 2026 – (Closed) Policy roundtable

10.00 – 10.15	Introductory Remarks
10.15 – 11.30	Roundtable 1
11.30 – 11.45	Break
11.45 – 13.00	Roundtable 2
13.00 –	Lunch