

CCEW SYMPOSIUM 2026

Conflict Early Warning in Times of Power Competition – Limits and Challenges

Program Day 1 | Tue, October 13

Please schedule sufficient time to report your valid identity card/passport to the guard upon arrival.

Registration | from 8.45 am

Host's Welcome | 9.45 am

Markus Woelke

Vice President, Federal Academy for Security Policy

Welcome | 9.50 am

MGen Wolfgang Ohl

Deputy Director-General for the Armed Forces,
German Federal Ministry of Defence

Opening Speech | 10.00 am

Carlo Masala

Head of Project, Center for Crisis Early Warning

Keynote Speech | 10.10 am

MGen Dag Baehr

Vice President and Senior Officer of the German
Federal Intelligence Service

Policy Panel: Change, Complexity, Uncertainty – Quo Vadis Conflict Early Warning?

10.40 am – 11.30 am | Room: Historischer Saal

Moderator **Carlo Masala**
Center for Crisis Early Warning
(CCEW)

Part. **Col. (GS) Ulrich Schmidt-Narischkin**
German Federal Ministry of Defence

Part. **Adrian Pollmann**
German Federal Foreign Office

Part. **Astrid Irrgang**
Center for International Peace
Operations (ZIF)

Part. **Philipp Rotmann**
Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi)

Research Panel I: Inter-State Conflicts and Geopolitics in Crisis Early Warning

11.30 am – 1.00 pm | Room: Historischer Saal

Anna-Lena Hönig, Center for Crisis Early Warning
(CCEW)

Measuring Inter-State Relations Using Event Data
and Item Response Theory Models
David Randahl, Swedish Defence
University

Interstate Conflict by Other Means: Tracking
External Support at Scale
Guy Schvitz, Joint Research Centre (JRC) of
the European Commission

Shifting Geopolitical Tectonics and the Risk of Major
Power War
Gerald Schneider, University of Konstanz

Lunch Break | 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm

Research Panel II: Language Models in Crisis Early Warning

2.00 am – 3.30 pm | Room: Historischer Saal

Paul W. Thurner, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (LMU)

Using LLMs to Answer Questions About Political Conflict Data: Question & Answers with the UCDP-AEC
Patrick T. Brandt, University of Texas

Yoking the Beast: "Harnessing" the Potential of Large Language Models to Inform Theoretical Debates in Conflict Studies
David Muchlinski, Georgia Institute of Technology

What Drives the Alarm? Using AI to Interpret Conflict Early Warning Systems
Mikhail Galashin, Institute for Economic Analysis/ Barcelona School of Economics (IAE-CSIC)

Coffee Break | 3.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Seminars

4.00 pm – 5.00 pm

Seminar I

From Early Warning to Early Action

Alejandro Vivancos, European External Action Service (EEAS)
Nikolas Scherer, Anticipation Hub

Seminar II

Whose Warning is it? Examining Conflict Early Warning Across AI Ecosystems

Dominik Allen, Center for Crisis Early Warning (CCEW)

Seminar III

Beyond Forecasts: Foresight in Conflict Research

Antonia Witt, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF)

Research Panel III: Informative Signals for Crisis Early Warning

5.00 pm – 6.30 pm | Room: Historischer Saal

Maxine Leis, Center for Crisis Early Warning (CCEW)

Friend or Foe: Ethnic Polarization, Alliances, and the Targeting of Civilians in Multi-Party Civil War
Sofija Riegger, Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona

Profit through Peace: Anticipating Third-Party Intervention in an Age of Power Competition
Elisa D'Amico, University College Dublin

Multilingual Topic Modelling for Conflict Analysis: Mapping Sovereignty Narratives in Chinese and Japanese Media
Johanna Schröder, Charles University Prague

Reception | 6.30 pm – 7.30 pm

Program Day 2 | Wed, October 14

Please schedule sufficient time to report your valid identity card/passport to the guard upon arrival.

Welcome | 09.00 am

Research Panel IV: Hybrid Threats in Crisis Early Warning

09.05 am – 10.35 am | Room: Historischer Saal

Julian Wucherpfennig, Hertie School

Anticipating Foreign Malign Influence in EU Candidate Countries

Paul Flachenecker, Global Public Policy Institute (GPPI)

A Relational Hyper-Event Approach to (Multi-Target) Cyber Attacks

Stephanie Riedl, Center for Crisis Early Warning (CCEW)

One Domain, Different Logics: Cyber Escalation Across Conflict Dyads

Sebastian Harnisch, Heidelberg University

Coffee Break | 10.35 am – 11.00 am

Research Panel V: New Approaches and Methodologies in Crisis Early Warning

11.00 am – 12.30 am | Room: Historischer Saal

Thomas Schincariol, University of Konstanz

Improving Subnational Conflict Forecasts with a Custom-Built Text-Centric Deep-Learning Approach

Mihai Croicu, Barcelona School of Economics (BSE)

Conflict Impact Forecasting

Håvard Hegre, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)

The Straw that Broke the Camel's Back: Separating Close Calls from True Onsets in Conflict Prediction

Micaela Wannefors, Uppsala University

Lunch Break | 12.30 am – 1.30 pm

Research Panel VI: New Data and Data Limitations in Crisis Early Warning

1.30 pm – 3.00 pm | Room: Historischer Saal

Sonja Häffner, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)

Coping with the Missing Numbers - A Case Study on Nowcasting Conflict Events in Africa

Faniry Razakason, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (LMU)

According to Whom? A Comparison of Conflict Data Across Time and Space

Clara Neupert-Wentz, Aarhus University

Rhythms to Riot: Forecasting Political Instability with Music Trace Data

Karina Mross, German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

Closing Remarks | 3.00 pm – 3.15 pm

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