



MAPIR Keynote

Peacetime for Future Deterrence

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Institutskolloquium / DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

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Or join online via Zoom: 930 8975 0663 (Meeting ID), 142311 (Passcode)

Timing peace during an ongoing war is a crucial, yet understudied deterrence management ritual. The Russo-Ukrainian war has been accompanied by competing global visions for the post-war settlement, discrete articulations of the parameters of the desired peace, and the debates over appropriate ways of establishing accountability for the aggressor. The nature and ambitiousness of the envisioned peace, along with varying understandings of Russia's strategic defeat and the possibility of Ukraine's victory, have been part and parcel of the discussions about future deterrence and containment strategy of Russia, the post-war condition of (eastern) Europe and the international order at large. In this talk, I investigate the recurring exchanges during 2022-2025 about the projected endings, peace plans, and Ukraine's security-political future-related scenarios as distinctly charged political designs for the post-war interaction order between the United States, Europe, Russia, and the so-called Global South. Various peace plans, such as Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula, the Chinese-Brazilian 'Friends of Peace' plan, and US President Trump's ceasefire mediation bid mark the 'end times' to notably different degrees for the engaged actors. Peace settlement as a ritual component of ending the Russo-Ukrainian war has become a political battlefield over envisioning a future world order. Competitive peacetime efforts frame peace and accountability as key components of future deterrence to varying degrees, with most initiatives alluding to deterrence through Ukraine, rather than for it.

Maria Mälksoo is an expert in Critical Security Studies, political anthropology, and deterrence policy on NATO's eastern flank. She leads the ERC-funded project *RITUAL DETERRENCE* (2022–2027) and the Volkswagen Foundation project *MEMOCRACY* (2021–2024). She holds a PhD in International Studies from the University of Cambridge and serves as Associate Editor of the *Review of International Studies*.

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