

Call for Abstracts

Workshop

International Legal Resonance

26 February 2026

T.M.C Asser Institute, The Hague, The Netherlands (in person)

Convened by Carl Lewis and Gabrielè Chlevickaitė

The relative ‘silence’ across international legal institutions and scholars – particularly in the Global North – to various ongoing crises, has spurred accusations that some global crises receive more attention by international lawyers than others. Critics thus call for a more equitable and nuanced distribution of attention across all crises, and to the international legal issues they raise.¹ Whilst international lawyers will be accustomed to having their focus and attention subject to critique, the realities of today’s global attention economy² – wherein private and public actors compete to capture, monetize and direct our finite attention in an age of information overload³ – invites novel reflection on what seems to be an enduring normative concern within and without the discipline.

In this workshop, we wish to explore what new insights may be gained for understanding and addressing ‘selective attention’ across the international legal discipline by accounting for *resonance* – individual or collective experiences of alignment between an object/subject and their interpretive horizons.⁴ As Woodyly describes when considering the importance of rhetoric of public discourse, “[p]ublic speech registers as resonant when...*beliefs about the way things are combine with commonplace logics about the way things work or relate* and merge seamlessly with new arguments about what is significant or what is to be done.”⁵ Acknowledging that there is no abstract international lawyer, we wish to consider whether, and if so why, certain events, issues or crises resonate more across the international legal discipline, and amongst whom. By doing so, the workshop aims to foster further exploration of the relationship between attention, international law and real-world consequences in today’s global attention economy.

We aim for a small group (of circa 15 participants), to allow for intensive discussions and exchange of ideas. Scholars from the fields of international law, international relations, history, sociology,

¹ See, for instance, the recent blog posts by J de Hemptinne and A Spadaro – [J de Hemptinne, ‘Why Do Some Wars Matter More Than Others? And Why Must That Change?’](#), *Opinio Juris* ; [A Spadaro, ‘All Wars Matter? On a Different Way for International Lawyers to Engage with Armed Conflicts’](#), *Opinio Juris*.

² See C Schwöbel-Patel, *Marketing Global Justice: The Political Economy of International Criminal Law* (Cambridge University Press 2021) 17.

³ See [C Carpentier \(Ed\), ‘New Economics for Sustainable Development: Attention Economy’](#), *UN Economist Network* ; T Davenport and J Beck, *The Attention Economy* (Harvard Business School Press, Boston 2001).

⁴ See M Haugaard, ‘What Is Resonance? What Is Alienation? How Do the Two Relate? Reflections on Rosa’s Theory of Resonance and Alienation’ (2020) 13 *Journal of Political Power* 324.

⁵ D Woodyly, *The Politics of Common Sense: How Social Movements Use Public Discourse to Change Politics and Win Acceptance* (Oxford University Press 2015) 124.

philosophy, and related subjects are invited to submit an abstract. The workshop will be conducted over one day and structured into four sessions, with 3-4 speakers per session. Each session will be organized around key themes drawn, amongst other things, from the content of the submissions, to encourage dialogue between disciplines.

We invite contributions that address questions such as, but not limited to:

- How has the critique of the unequal distribution of attention to breaches of international law been raised and responded to in the past?
- Is the unequal distribution of attention really an issue of actors being intentionally 'selective'?
- What can be gained by exploring the role that resonance may play in what international actors pay attention to? Can we even speak of issues/events/arguments that resonate throughout the discipline?
- What case studies can we turn to where an increase in attention to specific breaches of international law correlated with legal and political mobilization? What can we learn from them?
- What roles does/can new media play in directing the attention of international legal actors and vice versa?
- What is the relationship between contemporary international legal practice, its professionals and the global attention economy?

Submission guidelines and deadline

Please submit an abstract of between 250-300 words containing the idea for your contribution to the workshop. The abstract should clearly explain the disciplinary background of your work, its core question and proposed methodology. Accepted contributors will not be expected to produce a full draft prior to the workshop.

In addition to an abstract, please include a one-page CV.

Deadline: 8 October 2025

Abstracts and CVs can be submitted by sending an email with both in attachment, and with the header 'Workshop on International Legal Resonance' to both c.lewis@asser.nl (Carl Lewis) and g.chlevickaite@asser.nl (Gabrielė Chlevickaitė). We aim to communicate decisions on accepted abstracts by mid-November 2025.

Logistics

The workshop will take place in person on **26 February 2026**, at the Asser Institute in The Hague, with the potential opportunity for participants to join remotely under exceptional circumstances. A limited budget is available for travel and accommodation and will be discussed with selected participants.