



**CATS**  
Centre for Applied  
Turkey Studies

In Cooperation with



# Agenda

## **German-Turkish Roundtable on International Affairs (GTRT) 2026** "War-Making and Peacebuilding in a World of Disorder"

**24 – 25 March 2026**

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Ludwigkirchplatz 3–4, 10719 Berlin

### **24 March 2026**

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<i>13:30 – 14:00</i>	<i>Reception and Welcome Coffee/ Light Lunch</i>
<i>14:00 – 14:15</i>	<b>Welcome Remarks by CATS and Ankara Institute</b> Sinem Adar, CATS/ SWP & Taha Özhan, Ankara Institute
<i>14:15 – 15:00</i>	<b>Keynote: “The Changing Landscape of War and Peace: What is at stake?”</b> Volker Perthes, SWP
<i>15:00 – 15:30</i>	<i>Coffee Break</i>

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15:30 – 17:00

**Panel 1: Changing Warfare: Technologies, Actors and Norms**

*Three trends are reshaping armed conflict: AI-driven surveillance and targeting, privatisation of warfare, and hybrid operations that blend conventional warfare with unconventional methods, such as cyberattacks, disinformation, weaponization of migration as well as economic warfare. These shifts are altering conflict dynamics, complicating accountability, and could further hinder peacebuilding efforts unless supported by corresponding governance frameworks. This panel examines how warfare is changing and what new forms of governance and restraint are necessary in response.*

- In today's conflicts, AI shapes targeting, surveillance or battlefield decisions. Conduct of war is also increasingly privatized. Do these changes attune to a structural shift in war-making in terms of who gets to wage war, who decides what "proportionality" or "necessity" means, and who is ultimately held accountable?
- If conflict now unfolds across digital and informational domains simultaneously, how do states deter aggression when attribution is murky and thresholds for response are unclear?
- Do the existing legal frameworks suffice to respond to these multi-layered changes, or is there a need for new political and legal thinking?

Inputs

Max Mutschler, BICC  
Serhat Güvenç, Kadir Has University  
Tom Waldwyn, IISS

Moderation: Hürcan Aslı Aksoy, CATS/SWP

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17:00 – 17:15

*Coffee Break*

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17:15 – 18:45

**Panel 2: Economies of Armed Conflict**

*Contemporary wars are no longer fought solely by states and their armies. In fractured geopolitical landscapes, a mosaic of local militias, foreign powers, private actors, and illicit networks collide and collaborate in pursuit of profit, power, and survival. According to the UN, close to half of all conflicts in 2021 were internationalised. Interactions between local and external actors generate wartime economies that could become self-sustaining and outlast the conflicts themselves.*

*This panel examines how economic incentives shape conflict dynamics and peace prospects, how networks involving external and local actors create new hierarchies and vested interests, and why existing stabilisation tools often fail to disrupt these dynamics.*

- For actors profiting from conflict – whether warlords, smugglers, or contracting networks – peace can be economically irrational. What could be done to change those incentive structures without empowering the same actors they aim to contain?
- Why have sanctions, stabilisation missions, and aid regimes struggled to disrupt conflict economies? What core assumptions are proven outdated?
- What role does the growing global competition for raw materials play in international relations? Does it exacerbate conflict or promote cooperation? What impact does it have on peace diplomacy?

Inputs

Wolfram Lacher, SWP

Evren Balta, Özyeğin University

Emadeddin Badi, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime

Moderation: Osman Sert, Ankara Institute

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18:45 – 20:15

*Dinner at SWP*

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25 March 2026

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09:00 – 09:15

Registration Coffee

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09:15 – 10:45

**Panel 3: Changing Landscape of Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding I: Actors and Narratives**

*The post-World War II multilateral institutions designed to prevent and resolve conflict are under increasing strain. Major powers pursue unilateral agendas and even contribute to the erosion of multilateralism. Meanwhile, middle powers and ad-hoc formats have gained salience in mediation, conflict resolution, and stabilisation efforts. This panel explores whether and how the landscape of peacebuilding changes by shedding light on the old and new actors, as well as the narratives around peace.*

- With traditional multilateral institutions weakening or being bypassed, what are the risks and opportunities for peacebuilding? Can fragmented interventions still produce a durable peace?
- How does the erosion of global consensus on norms affect the legitimacy and local acceptance of multilateral peace initiatives?
- What role do middle powers play in shaping peace in a world of disorder? How do ad-hoc formats affect conflicts?

Inputs

Judith Vorrath, SWP  
Çerağ Esra Çuhadar, Bilkent University  
Yasir Atalan, CSIS & American University

Moderation: Yaşar Aydın, CATS/SWP

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10:45 – 11:15

Coffee Break

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25 March 2026

11:15 – 12:35

**Panel 4: Changing Landscape of Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding II: Motivations, Goals and Instruments**

*Peacebuilding has traditionally been framed around stabilizing conflict zones, fostering institutions, and supporting democratic governance as a pathway to durable peace. But today, democratic norms are being undermined in many parts of the world, even in states previously considered stable. Rising democratic backsliding and autocratic tendencies, shrinking civic space, and the erosion of rule-of-law frameworks challenge the very foundations on which conventional peacebuilding is based. Security-oriented approaches seem to increasingly supersede efforts for institutional capacity-building and democratic governance, and core causes of conflict are often left untouched. This panel examines whether democratic decline alters the meaning, objectives, and tools of peacebuilding, and if so, what these changes mean for conflict resolution and stabilization.*

- How should peacebuilding be understood when political pluralism, accountability, and civil liberties are shrinking? Can stability alone constitute peace?
- Which traditional peacebuilding tools (institution-building, support for free and fair elections, strengthening civil society, and security sector reform) remain effective, and which need fundamental rethinking?
- What ethical, practical, and normative dilemmas could emerge when external actors' support for conflict-resolution and stabilization reflects domestic political priorities, national security and economic interests?
- What does the global trend of democratic backsliding mean for international peacebuilding norms and multilateral interventions?

Inputs

Galip Dalay, Chatham House  
Markus Mayer, GIZ  
Hozan Ibrahim, IMPACT Research

Moderator: Esra Elmas, Çankaya University

12:35 – 12:45

**Wrap-up and Concluding Remarks**  
CATS/ SWP and Ankara Institute

12:45 – 13:45

*Lunch and Departure*

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