



NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY



22-23 October 2026

ESIL-supported conference – University of Perugia, Italy

CALL FOR PAPERS

As States and their essential services become increasingly dependent on new technologies, including cyber technologies and artificial intelligence (AI), the potential impact of malicious cyber or AI-enabled operations grows significantly. Such operations, whether conducted during peacetime, hybrid or armed conflict, can cause severe damage and even impair the functioning of the targeted State.

This development raises fundamental questions concerning the international legal accountability of States and individuals for malicious cyber or AI-enabled operations.

The conference will assess the availability and effectiveness of international law means and methods – including diplomatic, adjudicative, and operational – to ensure legal accountability for malicious cyber and AI-enabled malicious operations, as well as the challenges they face. The aim of the conference is to promote critical reflection, and to inform States, individuals, and international organisations about available avenues for securing accountability.

We invite innovative submissions addressing one or more of the following four themes:

1. **Regulation:** How international law can regulate cyber or AI-enabled operations in order to maintain peace and stability;
2. **Dispute Settlement:** How existing or new means and methods of dispute settlement can peacefully resolve inter-State disputes arising from malicious cyber or AI-enabled operations;

3. **Individual Criminal Responsibility:** How individuals can be held criminally accountable for cyber or AI-enabled international crimes;
4. **EU Law:** What is, or may be, the role of European Union law in regulating, preventing, or addressing accountability for malicious cyber or AI-enabled operations

Application Process

Please submit an abstract of no more than **500 words** by **April 15, 2026** to **newtechila@gmail.com**.

The following information should also be included with your abstract:

- (i) your name, affiliation and email address;
- (ii) whether you are an ESIL member (being an ESIL member is not a requirement to submit the abstract);
- (iii) a short CV;
- (iv) a commitment to submit a position paper;
- (v) an indication of whether you intend to submit a full paper for future publication.

We encourage submissions from scholars of all backgrounds, particularly those from underrepresented groups in international law and early career researchers.

Evaluation Criteria

Abstracts will be selected on the basis of the following criteria: their alignment with the conference description, the overall coherence of the conference and its panels, and the originality and significance of the issues to be examined in the paper.

Successful applicants will be notified by email by **May 15, 2026**.

Participation is conditional on submitting a position paper of no more than **3,000 words** by **September 15, 2026**.

Publication Opportunities

The conference organisers will consider the publication of a collected volume. One possible outlet is the Edward Elgar book series *International Law and Technology*.

Further information will be provided during the conference.

Dates, Venue, and Programme

The conference will take place on Thursday 22 October and Friday 23 October 2026 at the Department of Political Science of the University of Perugia, Italy.

The programme will consist of four thematic panels. No more than four papers per panel will be selected. In composing the panels, gender, age/experience and geographic balance will be ensured. Special attention will be paid to early career scholars.

An opening keynote speaker and a closing keynote speaker will also be invited.

Travel and Accommodation

The conference will provide hotel accommodation for two nights. It may also subsidise travel expenses in exceptional cases if no alternative funding has been secured.

We will be pleased to offer a dinner for conference participants on Thursday 22 October and a light lunch on Friday 23 October 2026.

Participation and Registration

The conference will be held in hybrid form, allowing both in-presence and online participation of the audience. However, speakers will be expected to attend in person, though online participation may be possible in exceptional cases.

Attendance will be free of charge, but registration will be required.

Conference participants and presenters will be encouraged to become ESIL members before the conference and register to benefit from the ESIL membership.

Conference Organizers

Emanuele Cimiotta, Professor of International Law, University of Perugia.

Nicholas Tsagourias, Professor of International Law, University of Sheffield.

Benedetto Ponti, Professor of Administrative Law, University of Perugia.