CONCEPT NOTE

RESEARCH CONFERENCE
THEME: CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN EASTERN AFRICA

Venue: **Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University**
Date: **16 November 2026**
Time: **13:30 -17:30**

Background

Despite significant progress in economic development and regional cooperation, the East and Horn of Africa region continues to face a fragile peace and security environment. Conflicts in parts of the region spill beyond national borders, with implications for regional stability, displacement, humanitarian conditions, economic activity and other aspects of regional peace and security.

These dynamics call for continued research and dialogue to deepen understanding of conflict patterns and their wider regional implications, while also examining possible approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution. The Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology Open Laboratory for Emergence Strategies (ROLES[1]), University of Tokyo, in partnership with the IGAD Leadership Academy (ILA[2])**,** will convene a research conference, bringing together scholars, researchers and practitioners to examine these issues. The event will be held on **16 November 2026** at the **Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)** at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. The meeting targets select scholars, researchers, ILA Alumni, and practitioners from the Horn of Africa region and Japan.

The conference will be understood to be part of a three-year research cycle of the **Theory and Practice of Conflict Resolution Study Group of ROLES in 2026-2028.** The new research cycle builds on the successful collaboration between ROLES and ILA in 2025, which brought together scholars from Japan and the Eastern African region to exchange research and contribute to the ROLES Review: https://roles.rcast.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/publication/2025123147. The new cycle will broaden the perspective by exploring the multiple linkages among armed conflicts in Eastern Africa. Participants and

[1] Read more about ROLES on https://roles.rcast.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en
[2] Read about ILA on https://ila.igad.int/

presenters interested in submitting their presentations for publication through ROLES are encouraged to do so.

Objectives

The conference seeks to:

1. Deepen understanding of evolving conflict dynamics in the East and Horn of Africa.
2. Examine the factors shaping and sustaining conflicts and their regional and cross-border dimensions
3. Identify areas for further research, academic exchange and collaboration, as well as possible approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution.

Modality of the Conference

The discussion may cover a range of issues, including evolving conflict dynamics and emerging patterns of insecurity in the region; drivers and underlying factors contributing to conflict and instability; cross-border and regional dimensions of conflict; regional responses and conflict management; and the role of external actors and wider geopolitical developments in shaping conflict dynamics. The conference will take the format of an interactive discussion, with brief presentations followed by moderated discussion and exchange among participants. It is intended to allow presenters and participants to engage with one another.

The conference will be held tentatively from **13:30 to 17:30 on 16 November 2026**. The conference will be a publicly open event, which may be broadcast online.

Proposed list of participants & Presenters

1. **Prof. Hideaki Shinoda** (Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ROLES, Tokyo University / Professor, Graduate School of Global Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies/ Director, Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center, Japan)
2. **Dr. Simon Nyambura** (Researcher/ Scholar & Director, IGAD Leadership Academy)
3. **Prof. Mika Inoue** (Professor, Toyo Gakuen University, Japan)
4. Experts at IPSS, AAU
5. ILA Alumni based in Addis Ababa
6. **Mr. Ashenafi Mebratu** (Lecturer of Sociology, College of Social Sciences & Humanities, Haramaya University, Ethiopia)
7. **Mohammed Yimer Tegegne** (Academic Affairs Internationalisation and Partnerships Coordinator, Woldia University- Ethiopia)

Tentative Programme

16 November 2026		
13.30 – 14:00	Registration	
14:00 – 14:30	Welcome Remarks & Group photo:	**Prof Mercy Fekadu** *Director, Institute for Peace and Security Studies* **Prof. Shinoda Hideaki,** *Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies* **Dr. Simon Nyambura** *Director, IGAD Leadership Academy & ICEPCVE*
14.30 - 15:30	**Pannel 1: Focus on Ethiopia, Somalia**	Prof Shinoda **Ashenafi Mebratu,** *Haramaya University/ ILA Alumni chairperson*
15:30- 16:30	**Panel 2: Focus on Sudan, South Sudan and larger Eastern Africa** Topic: To be updated Topic: The Strategic Role of IGAD in Managing Sudan–Ethiopia–Eritrea (SEE-R) Relations	**Rania Hadra** *Regional Advisor, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP)* **Mohamed Yimer** *Academic Affairs Internationalization and Partnerships Coordinator, Woldia University (ILA alumni)*
16:30 – 17:30	**Plenary discussion:** Conflict Dynamics in Eastern Africa *(Moderated by Prof Shinoda)*	**Dr Yonas Tariku** *Accociate Professor of Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University.* **ILA Alumni** **Prof Mika Inoue** *Professor, Toyo Gakuen University*
18:00	**Departure**	

Partners