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***SustainEUorPlanet – Jean Monnet Chair Project***

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**SustainEUorPlanet Seminar**

Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> 2025, from 17.00 to 19.00 (CET)

Aula C Belmeloro, Edificio in Bo - via Beniamino Andreatta, 8, Bologna

***Exempting the Arms Industry  
from Human Rights  
Due Diligence?***

**Dr León Castellanos-Jankiewicz**

Senior Researcher at the Asser Institute for International and  
European Law

*Introductory remarks and Discussant*

**Prof. Ludovica Chiussi Curzi**

University of Bologna

Member of the SustainEUorPlanet Research Team

**Abstract:** Weapons are dangerous goods. Like many products, they are susceptible of being trafficked, diverted and misused. But unlike other commodities, they can cause disproportionate downstream damage in the event of misappropriation, including serious human rights violations and international crimes. As Europe prepares to spend €800 billion in rearming itself, the seeming exclusion of the arms sector from the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive underscores the need to implement well-established legal and normative frameworks to ensure human rights compliance of the defence sector. As recognized by the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, ‘arms products and services are still exported to States where they are used to commit a wide variety of human rights violations, including potential war crimes and crimes against humanity’. States, manufacturers, distributors and investors all have responsibilities, whether under international law or the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to conduct due diligence and ensure that weapons are not used to commit violations of international human rights law and international human rights law, are misused or diverted, or supplied to actors that are subject to international sanctions. As the arms industry is increasingly exempted from mandatory due diligence, this session will focus on frameworks which contribute to ensuring adequate HRDD, responsible arms trade and access to remedies for victims.

**Dr León Castellanos-Jankiewicz:** León Castellanos-Jankiewicz is Senior Researcher in International Law at the Asser Institute for International and European Law in The Hague, and supervisor of the International Law Clinic on Access to Justice for Gun Violence at the University of Amsterdam Faculty of Law. His work focuses on the human rights implications of irresponsible arms trade and the history of public and private international law. Previously, he was Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow at the European University Institute and has held visiting positions at the University of Giessen (2023), the University of Cambridge (2017) and Harvard Law School (2015-16). He is the inaugural recipient of the David D. Caron Prize of the American Society of International Law (2019) and holds a PhD in International Law from the Geneva Graduate Institute. He is a listed expert in the Forum on the Arms Trade and sits on the Advisory Committee of Global Action on Gun Violence.

**Prof. Ludovica Chiussi Curzi:** Since 2024, Associate Professor of Public International Law at the University of Bologna, Department of Legal Studies. Since 2020, Legal Advisor to the Office of the State Attorney of the Republic of Italy on cases before the European Court of Human Rights and before international investment tribunals. Since 2020, Lead Trainer of the Course "Protecting Human Rights and the Environment", Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. Author of "Corporations and Human Rights Under General Principles of Law" (Brill Nijhoff 2020). She has worked as legal assistant and counsel in cases before the International Court of Justice, the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, and international investment tribunals.

**SustainEUorPlanet** The Project proposes an interdisciplinary and critical analysis of the EU's international policies and legal frameworks directed to economic and social fairness, respect for the environment, access to clean energy and essential goods, while looking for security to overcome geopolitical tensions and asymmetries. SustainEUorPlanet has a twofold purpose. On one side, it offers a set of activities envisaging the promotion of a ruling and academic class of excellence, involving EU, national and international civil servants, politicians, NGOs, local businesses and public administration. On the other side, SustainEUorPlanet shows the leading role of the EU as a global actor in constantly promoting a sustainable agenda for trade, environment, energy and climate policies, highlighting the importance of economic operators' accountability and the relevance that EU citizens can have in shaping and enforcing EU's external tools through participation and transparency. Likewise, the Project focuses on political security policies in world economy. More information available on the Project's [website](#) and on [LinkedIn](#).