

Academic Collaborations & Civic Liberties in the Sahel

The Fourth Sahel Symposium at Uppsala University
Tuesday 24 March – Wednesday 25 March 2026
[Friessalen, 15:00-10, Evolutionary Biology Centre \(EBC\)](#)
Norbyvägen 14, Uppsala

The Sahel Symposium is bilingual with presentations in English and French

Global geopolitical transformations are undermining the democratic foundations of our societies as well as fundamental human rights such as freedom of speech and freedom of association. These restrictions on freedom also affect academia. The risk is to marginalize the production of knowledge, to silence it and affect the production of knowledge for decades to come.

In the Sahel region, despite the fact that important research is produced by academics based in universities and research institutes, the transformations are characterized by ruptures that threaten the continuity of empirical research, education of students, the circulation of knowledge and the collaboration between researchers located in the Sahel, and other parts of the world. At a time when the global order is undergoing fundamental shifts, when sovereigntist movements manifest a clear momentum for decolonial reflections, time is ripe to reimagine academic collaborations and spaces between researchers across the Sahel and Europe.

The 2026 Sahel Symposium at Uppsala University will focus on how to rethink and reinvigorate Academic Collaborations and Spaces in the Sahel. This fourth edition aims to provide early-career researcher with a safe space where they can present the findings of their research and discuss them with colleagues from various disciplines and/or fieldwork research area. The Sahel Symposium will also host the hybrid launching the new AEGIS Collaborative Research Group *Le monde du Sahel: Promoting Academic Collaborations and Spaces (Sahel/PAX)*. The [CRG Sahel/PAX](#) aims to cultivate an intellectual space for research and research collaborations in the Sahel, and a pole of exchange for knowledge produced from the Sahel, nourished by the decolonial ambition to centre the gaze in the Sahel, towards the world. The symposium will also explore opportunities for bridging basic research and more applied forms of work by collaborating with actors outside of universities and research institutes.

Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies: <https://www.uu.se/en/centre/africa-studies>
SIPRI's Sahel & West Africa: <https://www.sipri.org/research/conflict-peace-and-security/africa>

Tuesday 24 March

[Friessalen, 15:00010, Evolutionary Biology Centre \(EBC\), Norbyvägen 14, Uppsala](#)

- 9.30 **Opening Session**
Erik Lindberg, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Uppsala University
Karim Haggag, Director, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Sten Hagberg, Director, Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies
- 10.00-10.30 **Coffee Break**
- 10.30-12.00 **Session 1: When the global meets the local – and the other way around**
Chair: Rosa De Jorio, University of North Florida, USA
Ibrahima Poudiougou, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway
Tongnoma Zongo, Institut des Sciences des Sociétés, Burkina Faso
 Bintou Koné, Bayreuth University, Germany ; Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali
- 12.00-13.15 **Lunch at [Hassan & Preecha Restaurang & Café](#)**
- 13.15-14.45 **Session 2: Gendered and Feminist perspectives on Politics and Culture**
Chair: Gabriella Körling, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI)
Rosa De Jorio, University of North Florida, USA
Sten Hagberg, Uppsala University, Sweden
Asma Ben Hadj Hassen, Bayreuth University, Germany
- 14.45-15.15 **Coffee Break**
- 15.15-16.30 **Session 3 : Table-Ronde des jeunes chercheures : Enquête des terrains minés**
Chair: Muriel Côte, Lund University, Sweden
Asma Ben Hadj Hassen, Bayreuth University, Germany
Bintou Koné, Bayreuth University, Germany; Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali
Marie Riquier, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Cyrielle Trebosc, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
- 16.30 **End of the Day**

Wednesday 25 March

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- 9.00-10.30 **Session 4: Round-Table on Disinformation in Africa – How social media shapes political mobilization?**
Chair: Virginie Baudais, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Rosa De Jorio, University of Florida
Ousmane Diallo, University of Toronto
Dan Sanaren, Sciences Po, Paris
Cheickna Yaranangore, Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, Ouagadougou
- 10.30-11.00 **Coffee break**
- 11.00-12.30 **Session 5: Round-Table on collaborations and spaces – How shrinking civic and political space can be turned into enhanced North/South collaboration?**
Chair: Sten Hagberg, Uppsala University
Virginie Baudais, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Éric Hahonou, Roskilde University, Denmark
Alice Judell, Sciences Po, Paris, France
Ibrahima Poudiougou, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway
- 12.30-13.30 **Lunch at [Hassan & Preecha Restaurang & Café](#)**
- 13.30-16.00 **Session 6: Launching the CRG Le monde du Sahel/Promoting Academic Collaborations and Spaces (Sahel/PAX)**
<https://uu-se.zoom.us/j/63729977556>
Meeting-ID: 637 2997 7556
Coordination Team: Sten Hagberg (Uppsala University, Sweden); Muriel Côte (Lund University, Sweden); Éric Hahonou (Roskilde University, Denmark); Bintou Koné (Bayreuth University/Institut des Sciences Humaines, Mali); and Tongnoma Zongo (Institut des Sciences des Sociétés, Burkina Faso)
- 16.00-17.00 **Refreshments**

CRG Sahel/ Pax

The CRG Sahel/PAX aims to cultivate an intellectual space for research in the Sahel, and a pole of exchange for knowledge produced from the Sahel, nourished by the decolonial ambition to centre the gaze in the Sahel, towards the world. <https://aeqis-eu.org/collaborative-research-groups/crq-sahel-pax>

Le CRG Sahel/PAX vise à cultiver un espace intellectuel dédié à la recherche au Sahel, et un pôle d'échange des connaissances produites à partir du Sahel, nourrit de l'ambition décoloniale de centrer le regard du Sahel, vers le monde. <https://aeqis-eu.org/collaborative-research-groups/crq-sahel-pax>



The 2026 Sahel Symposium is co-organized by [Uppsala University's Forum for Africa Studies](#), and the Sahel and West Africa Programme of the [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#), in collaboration with the [CRG Sahel/PAX](#), the [Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Comparative, Engagée et Transnationale \(LACET\)](#), and with generous support by the [Royal Society of the Humanities in Uppsala \(KHVSU\)](#).