Why do governments join the International Criminal Court? Some argue that governments ratify the Rome Treaty to appear as members in good standing of the international community. Citing the risks associated with the ratification of the treaty, others have suggested that governments join the ICC to make their commitment to reduce civil disobedience credible by tying their own hands not only to prosecute fairly but also to be prosecuted. Medlir Mema will argue that while joining the ICC can be potentially costly, given the principle of complementarity and the Court’s need for the protections guaranteed under the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities, states still have many safeguards against the Court. Moreover, participating in the negotiations and deliberations of the Court’s jurisdiction provides two important benefits for these states. At the domestic level, they can use the ICC to legitimize the prosecution of their political opponents as well as use the possibility of a self-referral to the ICC for leverage in negotiations; while at the international level, the establishment and strengthening of the Court is seen as a means to weakening the UN Security Council’s hold on the trigger for situations involving the crime of aggression.

Medlir Mema is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at The George Washington University. He is currently a Guest Scholar at the Swedish National Defense College after being awarded a year-long Guest Scholarship from the Swedish Institute. From 2007-2010, Medlir worked as a Graduate Research Fellow at IERES. In 2006, Medlir earned an MA in European Studies and International Economics from Johns Hopkins University—School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

Tuesday, March 22, 2011
3:30-5:00 p.m.
1957 E Street, NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP with your name and affiliation to ieresgwu@gwu.edu.

This event is on the record.