

Rev. Susan Hayward

Biography

Susan Hayward is the Associate Director for the Religious Literacy and the Professions Initiative (RLPI) in the Religion and Public Life program at Harvard Divinity School (HDS). In this role, Hayward developed and runs the Certificate in Religion and Public life program for HDS graduate students seeking careers in public life, including in government, organizing, media, and humanitarianism. She also works with a diverse network of professionals across these and other professional fields to advance religious literacy in service of just peace.

Prior to joining HDS, Hayward spent fourteen years with the Religion and Inclusive Societies program at the U.S. Institute of Peace, leading efforts to understand religious dimensions of conflict and advance efforts engaging religious actors and organizations in peacebuilding. Her field work for USIP focused on Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Colombia and Iraq.

From 2010–2012 she coordinated an initiative exploring the intersection of women, religion, conflict and peacebuilding in partnership with the Berkley Center at Georgetown University and the World Faiths Development Dialogue. She co-edited a book on the topic entitled "Women, Religion and Peacebuilding: Illuminating the Unseen." Her research interests include interfaith engagement in the midst of political violence, political Buddhism, and the role of religion in hampering and propelling women's work for peace and justice. She has served or currently serves on the selection committee for international awards recognizing religious peacebuilders, including with the Niwano Foundation and the Tanenbaum Center, as an academic advisor for the Transatlantic Policy Network for Religion and Diplomacy, and as a member of the U.S. State Department's Religion and Foreign Policy civil society working group.

Prior to USIP, Hayward worked with the Academy of Educational Development's office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, as a fellow of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School and with the Conflict Resolution Program at the Carter Center in Atlanta. Hayward also conducted political asylum and refugee work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Advocates for Human Rights.

Hayward studied Buddhism in Nepal and is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She holds a bachelor's degree in comparative religions from Tufts University and master's degrees from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and Harvard Divinity School. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in theology and religious studies at Georgetown University, focusing on Buddhist and Christian responses to authoritarianism and conflict in Myanmar. She has taught at Georgetown, George Washington, and Harvard Universities and serves as a regular guest lecturer and trainer at the Foreign Service Institute and universities worldwide on

topics related to religion and international affairs. She publishes regularly in academic and policy for and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.