

Introduction: Religions and the Practice of Peace—*Journal of Interreligious Studies Collaboration*

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Greetings, Friends,

As Dean of Harvard Divinity School and founder of Religions and the Practice of Peace (RPP), I am delighted that RPP's fifth year is coinciding with the publication of this inaugural issue of a long-term series in collaboration with the *Journal of Interreligious Studies (JIRS)*. The series will feature pieces authored by scholars, practitioners, and religious leaders invited to speak at our RPP Colloquium and other RPP events. We are grateful to *JIRS* editors Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean of the Boston University School of Theology, and Or N. Rose of Hebrew College, and to *JIRS* managing editor Axel Marc Oaks Takács for this opportunity to collaborate and allow our inspirational speakers to share their insights on religions and peace practice with the *JIRS* readership.

With help from colleagues, I founded RPP at Harvard Divinity School in 2014 to serve as a hub for cross-disciplinary engagement, scholarship, and practice at Harvard University and beyond focusing on:

- How individuals and communities around the world, past and present, have drawn on religious, spiritual, and cultural resources to cultivate positive relationships, well-being, justice, and peace across differences;
- How such efforts can inform contemporary conflict transformation, peacebuilding, and leadership; and
- How spiritual and human values, positive engagement across religions and cultures, and nonviolent approaches can help humanity solve shared problems and create sustainable peace for all.

As readers may be considering developing programming on this topic in their own contexts, we would like to share with you a bit of our RPP story: how we came to establish RPP at Harvard Divinity School; the RPP Colloquium and other major activities of RPP thus far; some of our experiences and lessons learned to date; and our most recent undertaking, the emerging Sustainable Peace Initiative (SPI).

This past spring, we were honored to feature at the RPP Colloquium Benjamin B. Ferencz, former prosecutor of the Nuremberg trials.¹ “Ben,” as he asked to be called, was appointed Chief Prosecutor in the Schutzstaffel (SS) Einsatzgruppen case against Nazi war criminals and fought to provide victims restitution. Prior to that, he had graduated from Harvard Law School in 1943, served in General Patton’s army in the World War II campaigns in Europe,

¹ See video of RPP Colloquium session, “Sustaining Peace: The Role of Ethics, Law, and Policy in Promoting a New International Security Paradigm,” May 3, 2018, at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-colloquium-2017-18>.

and participated in the liberation of Nazi concentration camps. At age 99, he remains an indefatigable advocate for a world of “law not war”: an international order that will no longer permit and normalize state aggression. He reminds us that the urgent need for strategic cooperation to “sustain peace” has only heightened now that nuclear weapons make ever-present the risk that we may annihilate ourselves and life on the planet.

Though Ben has dedicated much of his life’s work and several books to the technical complexities of preventing interstate violence, he emphasizes that the peace that we must seek entails much more. The “dehumanization” that enables otherwise “good” and “intelligent” people to become “mass murderers” in wartime likewise produces lack of peace in our societies in ordinary times. Taking protean yet recurring forms—hatred, bias, division, discrimination, injustice, oppression, dispossession, exploitation, abuse, neglect, ignorance, and the untold trauma and suffering that result therefrom—this dehumanization of ourselves and others prevents us from realizing our potential to use the gift of our humanity to coexist in compassionate, harmonious, and equitable ways that foster flourishing for all.

Ben points out that sustaining peace is not merely a technical, legal, institutional, and political matter: It is also a profoundly human, relational, ethical, cultural, and spiritual matter—a matter not only of the “mind,” but also, and more fundamentally, of the “heart.” Only by investigating and availing ourselves of humanity’s resources for peace in all these dimensions at once can we bring about a more peaceful and sustainable world for our own and future generations. Ben maintains that it now rests with people of vision and commitment worldwide—especially in our religious communities, which remain primary sites of ethical education for so many—to awaken to this moral agency and awaken it in others.² Hence, he honored us at RPP, as a near-centenarian, with this recent visit.

Working together to find effective ways to promote harmony and shared flourishing has indeed become an imperative for all of us in our human family. Lack of peace in its many forms is taking an unacceptable toll on millions of people around the world in the form of brutal violence. Yet it is also the major obstacle to our attaining the unprecedented level of local and global cooperation that we will require to surmount other urgent problems—from entrenched structural inequalities and endemic poverty to mass forced migration and, most critically, degradation of the very environment that makes life possible. We now find ourselves at a juncture in human history at which, as Buddhist monk and nonviolent activist Thich Nhat Hanh has put it starkly, our alternatives are two: “coexistence” or “co-nonexistence.”³

As panelist J. Bryan Hehir, Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and former Dean of Harvard Divinity School, aptly worded it, Ben’s presentation to us at the RPP Colloquium was a true “oral history” and personal “testimony.” This hit home for me, since my own preoccupation with conflict, peace, and the role of religion therein was kindled by painful personal experience. In my case, it was living through the “Troubles” between Unionists/Loyalists (mostly Protestant) and Nationalists/Republicans (mostly Catholics) in my native Northern Ireland,

² See a special video message by Ben Ferencz, prepared in advance of his visit to RPP at Harvard Divinity School, posted by RPP as “People Power for Peace: Words of Wisdom for Humanity’s Future from Ben Ferencz,” at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-colloquium-2017-18>.

³ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1993), 120.

a thirty-year conflict in which more than 3,500 people were killed in a small province of just over a million and a half people. My daily life as a teenager, then a student at Queen’s University Belfast, and later a professor and chair of the University’s School of History, was indelibly marked by a dark procession of bombings, revenge murders, young masked paramilitary men toting automatic weapons, army patrols, and funerals. These difficult experiences set me on a quest to understand the roots of that conflict, in particular the relation between religion and political culture, and led me eventually to become a social historian of religion.⁴

Those tough years in Northern Ireland and my research as a historian drove home to me that the roots of destructive conflict and violence are deep and complex—involving unequal power dynamics; social, cultural, and political divisions; injustice; economic inequities; inherited demographic structures; and religious bigotry. Yet, they also revealed to me that in conflict situations, religiously motivated women and men can sometimes be at the forefront in reaching out across divides, serving the welfare of “the other,” mediating between sides, seeking reconciliation, and fostering healing. During the “Troubles,” for example, Redemptorist priest Alec Reid used his base in the Clonard Monastery of West Belfast to nurture the Irish peace process.⁵ His role as a mediator and peacemaker was so significant that he was later credited for helping move the country toward peace by the politicians who won the Nobel Peace Prize. There were similar overtures made by some Protestant clergymen and lay leaders, though it should be stressed that such figures experienced opposition from within their own faith communities.

I witnessed firsthand in Northern Ireland what more and more scholars have since documented:⁶ that the knowledge of the conflict, the spirit of commitment and hope, the influential moral voice, and the institutional capacity that religious individuals and communities often bring to peace efforts can make them effective agents of peaceful transformation against the odds. Indeed, religion has informed, empowered, and sustained peace efforts throughout history, inspiring major theoreticians of ethics of peace, architects of practical approaches to peace, and leading implementers of conflict transformation and reconciliation processes. They frequently have on-the-ground insights into the causes and dynamics of a conflict and ways to resolve it that are essential for policymakers, third parties, and international organizations. Many of their methods have been taken up by others across time and place, including governments. While history records the deeds of iconic religious peacebuilders—such as Mahatma Gandhi; the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and even Gandhi’s Afghan Muslim friend, Abdul Ghaffar “Badshah” Khan, who raised

⁴ See David N. Hempton, *The Church in the Long Eighteenth Century: The I.B. Tauris History of the Christian Church* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011); *Evangelical Disenchantment: Nine Portraits of Faith and Doubt* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); *Religion and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland: From the Glorious Revolution to the Decline of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *The Religion of the People: Methodism and Popular Religion C. 1750–1900* (New York: Routledge, 1996); *Methodism and Politics in British Society, 1750–1850* (New York: Routledge, 1984).

⁵ See David Little, “Men Who Walked the Street: Father Alex Reid and the Rev. Dr. Roy Magee: Northern Ireland,” in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, ed. David Little, with Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 53–96.

⁶ See, for example, Gerard F. Powers, “Religion and Peacebuilding,” in *Strategies of Peace: Transforming Conflict in a Violent World*, ed. Daniel Philpott and Gerard F. Powers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 317–352; David Little, “Religion, Violent Conflict, and Peacemaking,” in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 438; David R. Smock, ed., *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War*, Peaceworks 55 (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006); Atalia Omer, R. Scott Appleby, and David Little, eds., *Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Susan Hayward and Katherine Marshall, eds., *Women, Religion, and Peacebuilding: Illuminating the Unseen* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2015); and works cited in note 16.

a “nonviolent army” of more than 100,000 Pashtun men and women⁷—their accomplishments rest upon the often hidden and anonymous activities of millions of others.

From the example of Father Reid and “extraordinary ordinary” lay women and men, I discovered that pursuing peace is far from a passive, “soft,” or “Pollyanna” affair: It demands considerable savvy with respect to the conflict, its parties, and their motivations; the clarity to find and retain one’s moral vision amidst a situation that is not ethically clear-cut; the commitment to stand up for one’s ideals despite being treated as a traitor by friends and family; the courage to take emotional and physical risks and even place oneself directly in harm’s way; the determination to persist in the face of constant uncertainties and disheartening setbacks; and the resilience to find strength for oneself and others amidst grave personal traumas and losses. The quiet heroes whom I observed helped mend the ruptures of conflict with virtues that were fruits of spiritual formation, virtues that I recognized from the biblical Beatitudes: poverty of spirit, meekness, righteousness, mercy, purity, and peacemaking. Their peacemaking was spiritual practice in action.

Upon my appointment as Dean of Harvard Divinity School in 2012, I was keen to explore with colleagues what more the School might do to make a positive difference in our world in the domain of religions and peace. I dedicated my opening convocation address as Dean to “The Fog of Religious Conflict: Eleven Reflections from a Conflict Zone” based on my experiences in Northern Ireland.⁸ I was surprised at the outpouring of feedback that I received—from faculty, students, and friends of the Divinity School in varied fields. Especially well represented were our alumni, a number of whom had completed their Harvard Divinity School education in the 1990s and since gained relevant career and community experience. There was Shaun Casey, then special advisor to US Secretary of State John Kerry in the newly formed office on faith-based community initiatives, an alumnus of the Divinity School and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.⁹ There was Jeffrey R. Seul, then chairman and now cochair of the Peace Appeal Foundation, partner in an international law firm, and a graduate of both the Divinity School and Harvard Law School.¹⁰ Another was the coauthor of this essay, Elizabeth R. Lee-Hood, alumna of the Divinity School and Harvard-Radcliffe College and PhD candidate in the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, studying traditional Islamic spiritual ethics, pedagogies of spiritual formation, and their place in peace practice.¹¹ In their years at Harvard, each had patched together a cross-disciplinary education at the intersection of religion, conflict, and peace along with training in a chosen professional or scholarly field. They managed to do so, however, by dint of individual creativity and determination, in the absence of a program

⁷ See Eknath Easwaran, *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, A Man to Match His Mountains*, 2nd ed. (Tomales, CA: Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, 1999).

⁸ For a transcript of my August 30, 2012 convocation address, see *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 41 (1&2), Winter/Spring 2013, at <https://bulletin.hds.harvard.edu/articles/winterspring2013/fog-religious-conflict>. For the video, see <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2012/08/30/convocation-2012-fog-religious-conflict#>.

⁹ See Shaun Casey, *The Making of a Catholic President: Kennedy vs. Nixon 1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ See Jeffrey R. Seul, “Treat the Stranger as Your Own: Religious Prosociality and Conflict Transformation,” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 24 (2018): Hyunwoo: Please add page numbers; “Religion and Conflict,” in *The Negotiator’s Fieldbook*, eds. Andrea Kupfer Schneider and Christopher Honeyman (Washington, DC: American Bar Association, 2006), 323–334; “‘Ours is the Way of God’: Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict,” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 5 (1999): 553–569; and works cited in note 33.

¹¹ Elizabeth R. Lee-Hood co-translated selections of Qur’anic commentary as an early-stage contribution to *An Anthology of Qur’anic Commentaries: Volume One: On the Nature of the Divine*, eds. Feras Hamza and Sajjad Rizvi with Farhana Mayer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

at the University to support this constellation of interests or the benefit of an organized cohort of peers, all while navigating obstacles posed by a “siloesd” system.

They and other alumni observed that in their respective fields—from policy and law to health, education, and business—knowledge of diverse populations’ “insider” perspectives and resources is needed to enhance mutual understanding, collaboration across differences, bridge-building across divides, and the effectiveness of organizations’ work. Yet, there is a critical shortage of people equipped for this, especially in the domain of religion. In discussions with faculty, it was apparent that Harvard lacked not only a cross-disciplinary program on religion, conflict, and peace, but also—crucially—a program for serious inquiry into religious, spiritual, and cultural resources for peace practice and how these may be engaged in various professional fields.

It also became evident that the vast majority of Harvard students, who are not on a ministry track, lacked systematic supports for integrating the spiritual, ethical, and cultural aspects of their leadership preparation with its intellectual and professional aspects. In fact, many found this to be actively discouraged by an academic climate that makes classroom conversation about spiritual and cultural aspects of students’ development and implications for their academic learning and professional careers unwelcome. As Marshall Ganz, Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, later stressed at an introductory RPP Colloquium session in October 2014, this “secular fundamentalism” is a problem not only for our many students informed by religion, but also for our societies. Depriving such students of opportunities at Harvard to hone their moral perspectives and public voices prevents them from realizing their “religious capacity for moral agency.” Since these rising leaders remain unprepared to step forward as “merchants of hope” and “transcendent possibility” in our societies, the “turf” is abandoned to “the merchants of fear.”¹²

We recognized, moreover, that for nonreligious and religious students alike, holistic leadership preparation that takes account of its interrelated human, interior, and exterior dimensions is vital for effectiveness on any path of transformative leadership in our world. Numerous alumni with whom we spoke lamented not having had this type of training at Harvard, convinced that it would have enhanced their leadership capacities and trajectories in significant ways.

In December 2013, we convened a public panel, “Religions and Peace: Do Universities Have a Role?” to explore with an array of experts the potential value of establishing a cross-disciplinary initiative on religions and peace.¹³ The panel was moderated by Diana L. Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies, Fredric Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry in Society in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, member of the Faculty of Divinity, and founder and director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard. Featured on the panel were Martha Minow, then Dean of Harvard Law School; Shaun Casey, already mentioned; Matthew Hodes, director of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations; Jonathan Granoff, president of the Global

¹² See Marshall Ganz, RPP Colloquium, October 29, 2014, at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-series/rpp-colloquium-2014-15>.

¹³ For the video of the December, 2, 2013 public panel event, “Religions and Peace: Do Universities Have a Role?” visit <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2013/12/06/religions-peace-do-universities-have-role-video>.

Security Institute and special representative of the United Religions Initiative; and Jocelyne Cesari, Visiting Professor of Religion and Politics at the Divinity School and director of the Islam in the West Program at Harvard. The event was followed by a faculty roundtable at Jewett House, the Dean's residence, where these panelists were joined by eight additional Harvard faculty members and affiliates for further discussion hosted by me and chaired by Shaun Casey. Together, they represented the fields of policy, government, diplomacy, law, sociology, negotiation, conflict resolution, history, religion, interfaith relations, and area studies from the Americas and Europe to Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.¹⁴

The most salient theme emerging from the event was that, whereas the use of religion to promote division and violence appropriately receives a great deal of attention from scholars, policymakers, and the media (and must continue to do so), the use of religion to transform conflict and foster cooperation and shared flourishing across divides remains vastly understudied and underappreciated relative to its historical, current, and potential significance. To quote Diana L. Eck, "It is commonplace to note that the news media is drawn to stories of violence rather than cooperation and to extremist rather than moderate voices. But what about those of us in the academic world? The Indian political psychologist Ashis Nandy has written of what he calls the 'conspicuous asymmetry' between the number of studies focusing on violence and those focusing on non-violence. . . . We are far more aware of the forces of violence that tear communities apart than we are of those practices and movements that knit them together."¹⁵

To be sure, scholarship and practice in "religions and peacebuilding" has burgeoned into an expanding academic field since the publication of *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, edited by Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson in 1994, nearly a quarter-century ago.¹⁶ Yet, it

¹⁴ Joining the six panelists and me at the faculty roundtable were Ali S. Asani, Professor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic Religion and Cultures and then director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard; Charles Hallisey, Yehan Numata Senior Lecturer on Buddhist Literatures at Harvard Divinity School and former president of the American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies; J. Bryan Hehir, Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, secretary of health care and social services at the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, and former Dean of Harvard Divinity School; Ousmane Kane, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Professor of Contemporary Islamic Religion and Society at Harvard Divinity School and Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations in the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Jamil Mahuad, former President of Ecuador, former codirector of the Project on the Prevention of Global Violence at Harvard Institute on Global Health, senior advisor of the Harvard International Negotiation Program at Harvard Law School, board member of the Abraham Path Initiative, and Global Advisory Council Member of Mediators Beyond Borders; Anne Monius, Professor of South Asian Religions at Harvard Divinity School; Diane L. Moore, Senior Lecturer on Religious Studies and Education and director of the Religious Literacy Project at Harvard Divinity School; and Elizabeth R. Lee-Hood, PhD candidate and Harvard College and Divinity School alumna already mentioned, who organized the events.

¹⁵ See Diana L. Eck, "Prospects for Pluralism: Voice and Vision in the Study of Religion," 2006 AAR Presidential Address, *JAAAR* 75, no. 4 (2007): 744–745 and note 1, citing Ashis Nandy, *Timewarps: Silent and Evasive Pasts in Indian Politics and Religion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 218.

¹⁶ Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). See, for example, Roger S. Gottlieb, ed., *Liberating Faith: Religious Voices for Justice, Peace, and Ecological Wisdom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003); Katrien Hertog, *The Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding: Conceptual Contributions and Critical Analysis* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010); Douglas Johnston, ed., *Faith-based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997); John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); John Paul Lederach and R. Scott Appleby, "Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview," in *Strategies of Peace: Transforming Conflict in a Violent World*, eds. Daniel Philpott and Gerard F. Powers (New York: Oxford University Press,

was clear that an enormous amount of work remains, both in the area of academic inquiry as well as to bring the knowledge generated into other fields and into professional settings. Even in what is perhaps the most proximal field, “peace and conflict studies,” Thomas Matyók and Maureen Flaherty observed in a book published just months after our event that religion may still “very well be the most understudied phenomenon” within that field.¹⁷

Through our explorations at the Harvard panel and roundtable and in consultations with other experts, we identified that:

- The immense challenges that imperil our survival in the twenty-first century have profound human, relational, spiritual, ethical, and cultural dimensions. If humanity is to address these challenges effectively, attention to these dimensions—together with the technical, institutional, structural, and political—must become part of intellectual and leadership preparation both at our universities and in training for the practice of our professions.
- Research indicates that, contrary to the “secularization thesis,” religion is expected to remain central to life—and foundational to ethics—for the majority of people on our planet.¹⁸ As I noted upon accepting the appointment as Dean, “In the rest of

2010), 19–44; Little, ed., with Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*; Thomas Matyók, Maureen Flaherty, Hamdesa Tusó, Jessica Senehi, and Sean Byrne, *Peace on Earth: The Role of Religion in Peace and Conflict Studies* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2014); Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah Cherman Mampilly, and Andrea Bartoli, eds., *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012); Mark Rogers, Tom Bamat, and Julie Ideh, eds., *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview of Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders* (Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services, 2008); Cynthia Sampson, “Religion and Peace Building,” in *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*, eds. William Zartman and L. Rasmussen (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 273–326; Cynthia Sampson, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Claudia Liebler, and Diana Whitney, eds., *Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding: A Resource for Innovators* (Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publications, 2003); Timothy D. Sisk, ed., *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011); David R. Smock, ed., *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2002); David Steele, “An Introductory Overview to Faith-Based Peacebuilding,” in *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview of Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders*, eds. Mark Rogers, Tom Bamat, and Julie Ideh (Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services, 2008), 5–41; Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, ed., *Interfaith Just Peacemaking: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on the New Paradigm of Peace and War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); United Religions Initiative, *Interfaith Peacebuilding Guide* (San Francisco: United Religions Initiative, 2004); USAID, *Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding: An Introductory Programming Guide* (Washington, DC: USAID, 2009); and works cited in note 6 and other notes in the present article.

¹⁷ Thomas Matyók and Maureen Flaherty, “Can People of Faith, and People in Peace and Conflict Studies, Work Together?” in Thomas Matyók et al., *Peace on Earth: The Role of Religion in Peace and Conflict Studies*, 1.

¹⁸ As Liora Danan writes, “Until recently, many leading scholars of religion and society theorized that modernization would bring a decline in religion. Instead, they have been surprised by ‘an age of explosive, pervasive religiosity.’” Liora Danan, “Mixed Blessings: U.S. Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings,” Report of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007), 1, citing Peter Berger, “Religion in a Globalizing World,” *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life*, December 4, 2006, at <http://www.pewforum.org/2006/12/04/religion-in-a-globalizing-world2/>. According to a Gallup Global Report, “Gallup surveys in 114 countries in 2009 show that religion continues to play an important role in many people’s lives worldwide. The global median proportion of adults who say religion is an important part of their daily lives is 84%, unchanged from what Gallup has found in other years. In 10 countries and areas, at least 98% say religion is important in their daily lives.” See Steve Crabtree, “Religiosity Highest in World’s Poorest Nations,” Gallup Global Reports, August 31, 2010, at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142727/religiosity-highest-world-poorest-nations.aspx#1>. See also the Pew Research Center’s finding that “In most countries surveyed, majorities consider religion an essential part of

the world vibrant religious cultures are the default position, not the exception.”¹⁹ In our highly religious world, the relative neglect of inquiry into religious “insider” perspectives on and resources for sustainable peace is a critical, consequential, and dangerous problem. Lack of knowledge in this area has been hampering the development of sounder approaches in policy, diplomacy, international security, and other arenas.

- Experts acknowledge that they are far from having solutions to the problems of destructive conflict and violence plaguing our world. None of us can afford to neglect learning whatever possible from the millennia of wisdom for peace practice in the world’s spiritual and cultural traditions—wisdom honed in the crucible of some of history’s most difficult and dire situations.
- Insufficient awareness among the domestic and global publics of historical and contemporary activities for peace by religious communities around the world leaves intact and thereby dangerously perpetuates the false narrative that religious “others” are inherently hostile, furnishing fertile soil for dehumanization, demonization, polarization, and violence.
- Peace efforts have been hampered by top-down approaches narrowly informed by culturally limited perspectives. As I have commented previously, I see the gulf between the concerns, outlooks, and modes of discourse of “secularized cultural elites” and “global religious traditions” as “potentially one of the most dangerous things in our world.”²⁰ Universities must find ways to bridge the two, while decentering and broadening notions of “expertise”; giving special attention to eliciting from grassroots communities and populations such as women and children knowledge, perspectives, and priorities that can inform scholars and professionals; and attending to barriers such as legacies of ethnocentrism, racism, classism, and gender bias that prevent us from realizing and benefiting from an inclusive and cross-cultural approach.
- Advancing sustainable peace will demand that we take on complex and daunting problems that involve all sectors and professions; it is not a task that can be left to a cadre of “peacebuilding” specialists. Our universities must make clear that sustainable peace is an urgent matter in which everyone has a stake and to which everyone has much to contribute. In this, acquaintance with diverse religious and cultural resources for cooperative coexistence is essential to religious literacy, and skills in engaging diverse populations around such resources is an essential global competency. Both are crucial for effective ethical leadership in virtually any sphere in our world today.

their lives,” in The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Unfavorable Views of Jews and Muslims on the Increase in Europe,” 18–24, September 17, 2008, at <http://www.pewglobal.org/2008/09/17/chapter-2-religiosity/>.

¹⁹ For remarks of March 30, 2012, see “David Hempton’s Remarks on Being Appointed HDS Dean,” April 2, 2012, <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2012/04/02/david-hemptons-remarks-being-appointed-hds-dean>. For the video, visit <https://youtu.be/h1TMO-0PkEk>.

²⁰ Ibid.

- Our universities are key institutions of civil society that offer rare opportunities for individuals from widely differing backgrounds to practice “arts and sciences” of substantive, constructive engagement across values and worldviews. At Harvard, students represent over 135 countries and, at the Divinity School alone, over 35 religious affiliations, and many go on to serve in influential leadership roles around the world. Failure to incorporate into classroom curricula ways for students to share and explore their diverse perspectives and resources for sustainable peace in relation to issues raised in their academic courses and professional training is a massive missed opportunity.

At the December 2013 event, there was resounding agreement that a cross-disciplinary initiative on religions and peace at Harvard University that would address these areas was greatly needed, and that Harvard Divinity School would be ideal as its hub. It would bring to bear the Divinity School’s deep expertise in the study of the world’s religions and theologies as well as in ministry, in cross-disciplinary exchange with the unparalleled expertise across the University in fields such as diplomacy, law, ethics, psychology, business, education, health, media, the arts, and technology; and allow for collaboration with centers such as the Program on Negotiation (PON) at Harvard Law School. A cross-disciplinary initiative would explore innovative, holistic approaches to sustainable peace and leadership preparation, promote knowledge sharing between scholars and communities, and raise public awareness of religious activities for peace around the world. By leveraging Harvard’s remarkably diverse community and global reach, it would grow a worldwide network of scholars, professionals, and community members with unique potential to foster harmony, equity, and cooperation in our world for generations to come. At the same time, the initiative could serve as a model for other programs in the US and across the globe. As the event drew to a close, I welcomed these talented colleagues to join me and interested others in developing the envisioned initiative, and invited Elizabeth Lee-Hood to assist me. All agreed, many soon joined an advisory board,²¹ and our RPP journey officially began.²²

Our first step in 2014–15 was to convene an RPP Working Group of interested faculty members, associates, and alumni from across Harvard and the local area. We met in two-hour monthly sessions in a series that we called the “RPP Colloquium.” Although colloquia at the

²¹ In addition to Ali Asani, Jocelyne Cesari, Diana L. Eck, Charles Hallisey, Ousmane Kane, Anne Monius, and Diane Moore, already mentioned, others who joined the RPP Advisory Board include Leila Ahmed, Victor S. Thomas Professor of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School; Ann D. Braude, Senior Lecturer on American Religious History and director of the Women's Studies in Religion Program at Harvard Divinity School; Catherine Brekus, Charles Warren Professor of the History of Religion in America at Harvard Divinity School; Marshall Ganz, Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; Janet Gyatso, Hershey Professor of Buddhist Studies and associate dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs at Harvard Divinity School; Donna Hicks, Associate, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University; Hugh O’Doherty, Lecturer in Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; Matthew L. Potts, Assistant Professor of Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School; Jeff Seul, Lecturer on the Practice of Peace at Harvard Divinity School, cochair of the Peace Appeal Foundation, and partner at the international law firm of Holland & Knight; and Daniel L. Shapiro, founder and director of the Harvard International Negotiation Program, Associate Professor in Psychology at Harvard Medical School/McLean Hospital, and affiliate faculty in the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/people/advisory-board-members>.

²² For an address that I delivered to over 200 Harvard alumni leaders on May 1, 2014 on the importance in today’s world of establishing programs on religions and peace at universities, “Religion and the Promotion of Peace in the 21st Century,” visit <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2014/06/03/audio-feature-dean-hampton-religion-and-peace>.

School are typically limited to doctoral students, we opened it to master's students as well since many plan to pursue relevant work. The Divinity School's Center for the Study of World Religions, then directed by Francis X. Clooney, SJ, graciously hosted us. In fascinating and thought-provoking conversations co-facilitated by me and Diana Eck, the scholars and scholar-practitioners in the group shared and pondered their work, insights, challenges, and questions across disciplines. We occasionally invited peace practitioners from outside the University to speak, and a session featured presentations by graduate students. Inspired by our spiritual communities' customs of treating food hospitality and shared meals as a practice of peace, we made a tradition of hosting the sessions over dinner. We soon established an RPP website, and we posted videos of the sessions there to serve as educational resources for the Harvard community and global public.²³ With some 70 members and up to 50 attending each session, we were quickly outgrowing the space.

Since broad engagement and raising awareness of the field are major goals of RPP, in 2015–16 we opened the RPP Colloquium to the entire Harvard community and the general public, hosting it in the Divinity School's more capacious Braun Room. After two sessions, we had outgrown that space, too, so we moved to our Sperry auditorium, to accommodate the upwards of 100 people attending each event. We then established the modus operandi that the RPP Colloquium has today: We invite both Harvard experts and outside speakers from around the US and the globe, in consultation with the RPP Working Group and others in our growing network. Faculty in the RPP Working Group serve as moderators, respondents, and panelists. The sessions are two and one-half hours to allow ample time for discussion and Q&A. We keep our tradition of offering dinner and follow each session with a reception and refreshments to encourage attendees to build connections.

The RPP Colloquium, now entering its fifth year, has been described as RPP's "flagship" activity.²⁴ It draws many "regulars" from across Harvard and the local area, as well as a continuous stream of newcomers who learn about it by word of mouth or our extensive poster and email outreach. Since its inception, the series has hosted over 1,000 unique individuals and over 2,000 including returning attendees. In the years since we opened it to the entire Harvard community and public, the sessions have averaged over 90 attendees, with a third to a half from beyond Harvard and about 50 new attendees each time. RPP graduate assistants provide hospitality, and students and fellows with experience in RPP's programs often help attendees from different communities and institutions get to know one another. The receptions are lively, abuzz with spirited conversation, and people commonly linger past our official 9 pm end time.

In keeping with RPP's mission to bridge academy and community, our RPP Colloquium speakers include distinguished scholars, scholar-practitioners, religious leaders, and community leaders and activists. The sessions place such experts in cross-disciplinary conversation with one another; with faculty, students, and alumni in the RPP Working Group; and with members of the public. The speakers present on specific historical and contemporary cases, provide valuable insights into causes and dynamics of conflicts, and generously distill many years of academic and/or peace practice work into advice intended to be useful to a broad audience and potentially

²³ For videos of RPP Colloquium sessions from 2014 to the present, see the online RPP video archive at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-series-archive>.

²⁴ For information on upcoming RPP Colloquium sessions, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/colloquium>.

adaptable in a broad range of contexts. The following is only a small sampling of the scores of speakers whom we have hosted:²⁵

- Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Laureate, leader of the Liberian women’s interfaith mass action for peace that played a pivotal role in ending Liberia’s civil war, presenting on women as catalysts for local and global spiritually engaged movements for sustainable peace;²⁶
- Imam Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa and Pastor James Movel Wuye of Nigeria, former militant adversaries turned interfaith mediation partners, on interfaith strategy for peacebuilding;²⁷
- R. Scott Appleby of the University of Notre Dame²⁸ and Marc Gopin of George Mason University,²⁹ pioneering scholars and professors in the field of religion, conflict, and peacebuilding;
- Susan Hayward, then director of Religion and Inclusive Societies at the US Institute of Peace, on women, religion, and peacebuilding;³⁰
- Daniel Shapiro, professor in psychology at Harvard and founder and director of the Harvard International Negotiation Project, on psychology, emotions, and

²⁵ For the dates and details of the RPP Colloquium sessions mentioned here and videos of these and other RPP Colloquium sessions and RPP talks from 2014 to the present, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-series-archive>.

²⁶ For a documentary film on the Liberian women’s interfaith mass action for peace, see *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (Warren, NJ: Passion River Films, 2008). See also Leymah Gbowee, *Mighty Be Our Powers: How Sisterhood, Prayer, and Sex Changed a Nation at War: A Memoir* (New York: Beast Books, 2011).

²⁷ For a documentary film on the Imam and the Pastor’s story and work, see *The Imam and the Pastor: A Documentary from the Heart of Nigeria* (London: FLT Films, 2006), at <https://youtu.be/kFh85K4NFv0>, as well as a sequel, *An African Answer* (London: FLT Films, 2010). See also David Little, “Warriors and Brothers: Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye: Nigeria,” in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 247–277.

²⁸ R. Scott Appleby is dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs and Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame. For a seminal work in the field, see R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000). For a recent article, see R. Scott Appleby, “The New Name for Peace? Religion and Development as Partners in Strategic Peacebuilding,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding*, eds. Atalia Omer, R. Scott Appleby, and David Little (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 183–211.

²⁹ Marc Gopin is director of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution (CRDC) and James H. Laue Professor at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. For a seminal work in the field, see Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). See also Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); *To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); and *Bridges Across an Impossible Divide: The Inner Lives of Arab and Jewish Peacemakers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³⁰ See Susan Hayward and Katherine Marshall, eds., *Women, Religion, and Peacebuilding: Illuminating the Unseen* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2015); and Susan Hayward, “Women, Religion, and Peacebuilding,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding*, 307–332.

conflict transformation;³¹ and Donna Hicks, associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard, on dignity and leadership;³²

- Jeff Seul, already mentioned, now our inaugural Lecturer on the Practice of Peace at Harvard Divinity School;³³ Joseph Henrich, professor in human evolutionary biology at Harvard; and Dr. Omar Sultan Haque, expert in psychiatry, social medicine, anthropology, and religion at Harvard, on social science research on religious “prosociality;”³⁴
- Fania Davis³⁵ and sujatha baliga,³⁶ leaders in restorative justice and reform of the US criminal justice system and “school-to-prison” pipeline, on restorative justice and its spiritual dimensions;
- Madhawa Palihapitiya, expert on micro-level, community-based early warning and response systems, on his design of such systems in Sri Lanka and Nigeria and the involvement of religious leaders and communities;³⁷
- Jacqueline Bhabha, professor in health and human rights at Harvard; Mohamad Al Bardan, Syrian peace activist; Nousha Kabawat, Syrian refugee youth program director;³⁸ and Alexandra Chen, expert in child protection and mental health, on the rights and protection of children in humanitarian crises;³⁹

³¹ See Daniel L. Shapiro, *Negotiating the Nonnegotiable: How to Resolve Your Most Emotionally Charged Conflicts* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016); and Roger Fisher and Daniel Shapiro, *Beyond Reason: Using Emotions as You Negotiate* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006).

³² See Donna Hicks, *Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011); and *Leading with Dignity: How to Create a Culture that Brings Out the Best in People* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, forthcoming 2018).

³³ See Jeffrey R. Seul, “Religion in Cooperation and Conflict,” in *The Negotiator’s Desk Reference*, Vol. 2, eds. Christopher Honeyman and Andrea Kupfer Schneider (St. Paul, MN: DRI Press, 2017), 545–564; “Religious Prosociality for Conflict Transformation,” *ibid.*, 565–580; and works cited in note 10.

³⁴ For examples of research on religious prosociality, see S. Atran, “The Devoted Actor: Unconditional Commitment and Intractable Conflict Across Cultures,” *Current Anthropology* 57 (S13), 2016: S192–S203; J. Ginges, H. Sheikh, S. Atran, and N. Argo, “Thinking from God’s Perspective Decreases Biased Valuation of the Life of a Nonbeliever,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113, no. 2 (2016): 316–319; A. Norenzayan, A. F. Shariff, W. M. Gervais, A. Willard, R. McNamara, E. Slingerland, and J. Henrich, “The Cultural Evolution of Prosocial Religions,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 39 (2016); D. Clingingsmith, I. K. Asim, and K. Michael, “Estimating the Impact of the Hajj: Religion and Tolerance in Islam’s Global Gathering,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, no. 3 (2009): 1133–1170; I. Hansen and A. Norenzayan, “Yang and Yin and Heaven and Hell: Untangling the Complex Relationship Between Religion and Intolerance,” in *Where God and Science Meet: How Brain and Evolutionary Studies Alter Our Understanding of Religion*, vol. 3, ed. Patrick McNamara (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 187–212; Z. Rothschild, A. Abdolhossein, and T. Pyszczynski, “Does Peace Have a Prayer? The Effect of Mortality Salience, Compassionate Values, and Religious Fundamentalism on Hostility Toward Out-groups,” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45, no. 4 (2009): 816–827.

³⁵ See Fania Davis, *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice: Black Lives, Healing, and US Social Transformation*, The Little Books of Justice and Peacebuilding (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, forthcoming 2019).

³⁶ See sujatha baliga, “The Day the Jail Walls Cracked: A Restorative Plea Deal,” *Tikkun* 27, no. 1 (2012): 22–64.

³⁷ See Madhawa P. Palihapitiya, “Faith-Based Conflict Early Warning: Experiences from Two Conflict Zones,” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 24 (2018): Hyunwoo: Please add page numbers; “Early Warning, Early Response: Lessons from Sri Lanka,” *Building Peace: A Forum for Peace and Security in the 21st Century* (September 2013): 26–29; and “Ethnic Violence: A Case Study on Ethnic Riots in Sri Lanka,” *Asian Journal of Public Affairs* 6, no. 1 (2013): 91–107.

³⁸ See Nousha Kabawat, “Life in Syria for Christians: Teaching Tolerance and Harmony among the Faithful,” in *Desert News Faith*, May 10, 2015.

³⁹ On children’s trauma, armed conflict, and mental health, see J. P. Shonkoff and A. Gardner, “The Lifelong Effects of Early Childhood Adversity and Toxic Stress,” *Pediatrics* 129, no. 1 (2012): e232–246; and K. E. Miller and A.

- Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, Buddhist leader,⁴⁰ and Julie A. Nelson, professor at UMass Boston and Dharma teacher,⁴¹ on Buddhist responses to climate change;
- Yousef Bashir, Palestinian from Gaza and then master's candidate in coexistence and conflict at Brandeis University, and Yakir Englander, then vice president of Kids4Peace International and visiting lecturer and research associate with the Women's Studies in Religion Program at Harvard Divinity School, on religion and approaches to nonviolent conflict resolution in Palestine and Israel;
- Sarbpreet Singh, playwright and poet, and J. Mehr Kaur, theatre director, father-and-daughter Sikh social justice and interfaith activists;⁴²
- Rashied Omar, South African imam and research scholar at the University of Notre Dame,⁴³ and Afra Jalabi, Syrian peace activist and scholar, on nonviolent approaches in the Islamic tradition;
- Chaplain Clementina Chéry of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute;⁴⁴ Monalisa Smith of Mothers for Justice and Equality;⁴⁵ and Stanley Pollack of the Center for Teen Empowerment,⁴⁶ all founders and leaders of local urban peace organizations

Rasmussen, "Mental Health and Armed Conflict: The Importance of Distinguishing between War Exposure and Other Sources of Adversity: A Response to Neuner," *Social Science & Medicine* 71, no. 8 (2010): 1385–1389.

⁴⁰ See David Tetsuon Loy, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, and John Stanley, "The Time to Act is Now: A Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change," <https://oneearthsangha.org/statements/the-time-to-act-is-now/>, accessed August 10, 2018; John Stanley, David R. Loy, and Gyurme Dorje, eds., *A Buddhist Response to the Climate Emergency* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2009); Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Climate Change as a Moral Call to Social Transformation," Op-Ed, *Truthout*, October 5, 2014; Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Feeling the Touch of the Goad: A Sense of Urgency as a Spur to Climate Action," Op-Ed, *Truthout*, October 5, 2014]

⁴¹ See *Transformation* (blog); "Really Radical Economics," by Julie A. Nelson, posted November 11, 2013, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/transformation/julie-nelson/really-radical-economics>; and Julie A. Nelson, "The Relational Firm: A Buddhist and Feminist Analysis," in *Ethical Principles and Economic Transformation: A Buddhist Approach*, ed. Laszlo Zsolnai (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 21–33.

⁴² See Sarbpreet Singh and J. Mehr Kaur, *Kultar's Mime: Stories of Sikh Children who Survived the 1984 Delhi Massacre* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016).

⁴³ A. Rashied Omar, "Islam and Peacebuilding," in *Dialogue and Terror: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam after 9/11*, ed. Alan L. Berger (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 201–210; "Ta'aruf: Islam beyond 'Tolerance'," in *Hermeneutical Explorations in Dialogue: Essays in Honor of Hans Ucko*, ed. Anantanand Rambachan, A. Rashied Omar, and M. Thomas Thangaraj (New Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2007); "Opportunities and Challenges for Islamic Peacebuilding after September 11," *Interreligious Insight* 1, no. 4 (2003).

⁴⁴ See Clementina Chéry, "A Reflection from a Mother's Heart," video at <https://vimeo.com/179222390>, accessed August 10, 2018; Clementina Chéry and Dr. Debra Prothrow-Stith, "Homicide Survivors: Research and Practice Implications," *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* 29, no. 5 (2005): 288–295; Astead W. Herndon, "For Families of Murderers, an Effort to Alleviate the Shame," *The Boston Globe*, August 15, 2016.

⁴⁵ See Monalisa Smith, "Reflections to My Sisters" (Boston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2014); Mothers for Justice and Equality, testimonies from surviving parents, <http://mothersforjusticeandequality.org/2016/10/20/>, accessed September 11, 2018; and "Waiting for Solutions," video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K2T8Lp07WI>, accessed August 10, 2018.

⁴⁶ See Joseph A. Curtatone, "Teen Empowerment as a Model for Community and Police Unity," *The Somerville Times*, May 14, 2015; Keyon Wilson, "Wilson: Cops, Youths Need to Listen, Show Mutual Respect," *The Boston Herald*, May 4, 2015; and "Police Confront Youth at Teen Empowerment Peace Conference," Center for Teen Empowerment in

in the greater Boston area; along with Tay Johnson, teen youth organizer, and John M. Brown, sergeant detective from the Boston Police Department.

We invite our RPP Colloquium speakers to tell us about the spiritual resources upon which they draw and how their spiritual journeys have intersected with their evolution as peace practitioners and leaders. What was it that Imam Ashafa heard from the preacher in his mosque that turned the heart of the angry and vengeful young militant toward peace and inspired him to reach out to reconcile with his archenemy? How did Leymah Gbowee and colleagues bring Christian and Muslim women together to launch a nonviolent grassroots peace movement amidst a horrific civil war, when there was reluctance to engage with the religious “other” and some of the women’s family members had murdered family members of others? What gave a chief Buddhist priest the courage to visit a Tamil Tiger jungle hideout and the confidence to promise the political wing leader there that he would restrain Sinhalese youth from violence if the Tamil leader did the same with Tamil youth, paving the way for cooperation between the two that helped quell incidents of violence before they ignited into wider conflagrations?⁴⁷ What values did the young Muslim Palestinian learn from his father that made him resolve to dedicate his life to working for nonviolent coexistence, despite his home’s being occupied by Israeli soldiers for five years and his being shot in the back by one of them while standing peacefully with UN visitors in his family’s yard at age 15?⁴⁸ What set an American soldier in the Vietnam War on the path to become a scholar of peace history, nonviolence, nuclear disarmament, and international peacemaking and a public advocate for demilitarized national security policies?⁴⁹

We had realized that the “spiritual-ethical backstories” of peace leaders often remain untold—but are crucial for academics’ and policymakers’ understanding of how successful peace efforts are born and nurtured. Yet, it has only been from our RPP Colloquium speakers’ comments to us that we have discovered just how rare it is for this vital knowledge to be elicited in academic and other public forums. We were astonished, for example, when Leymah Gbowee—despite her Nobel recognition as an interfaith peace leader—remarked in a pre-event interview, “It’s really strange that for all of the times I’ve talked about this work, this is the first time someone has brought me back in an interview to remember some of the spiritual things that we did.”⁵⁰ Speakers tell us that the RPP Colloquium provides a valuable opportunity to reflect upon and develop a new level of facility in articulating these critical aspects of their work, which will better enable them to share this with researchers, professionals, and the public in the future.

collaboration with Boston Police Department, scene from 24th Annual Boston Youth Peace Conference, video at https://youtu.be/J9K9m_vZ5Zs, accessed August 10, 2018.

⁴⁷ See works cited in note 37, especially Palihapitiya, “Faith-Based Conflict Early Warning.”

⁴⁸ Reference to Yousef Bashir, mentioned above, RPP Colloquium speaker on February 25, 2015. For an audio interview by National Public Radio, “Following His Father, A Palestinian Hopes for Peace,” March 16, 2014, visit <https://www.npr.org/2014/03/16/290493916/following-his-father-a-palestinian-hopes-for-peace>.

⁴⁹ Reference to David Cortright, Director of Policy Studies and the Peace Accords Matrix, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame; Special Adviser for Policy Studies, Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame, RPP Colloquium speaker on April 6, 2017.

⁵⁰ For the pre-event interview with Leymah Gbowee in advance of her keynote bicentennial RPP Colloquium address on October 6, 2016, see Michael Naughton, “Women as Catalysts for Peace,” September 30, 2016, <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/news/women-catalysts-peace>.

As a complement to the RPP Colloquium, we launched a parallel “RPP Colloquium course,”⁵¹ a year-long Harvard Divinity School course facilitated by Jeff Seul and Elizabeth Lee-Hood, to provide students and fellows from all parts of the University with a cohort of peers with whom to explore this common interest and their shared leadership development concerns. The students read articles and books assigned by the guest speakers and take the lead at the public RPP Colloquium sessions in launching the Q&A with questions that they have prepared together. In separate class sessions over dinner, they discuss topics raised at the RPP Colloquium, pursue individual or group projects, and culminate the year with final presentations. Throughout, we invite them to reflect upon what they are learning in relation to their spiritual, ethical, cultural, intellectual, and professional formation as leaders.

If the public RPP Colloquium is RPP’s “flagship” activity, a second special RPP course, “Transformative Leadership and Spiritual Development (TLSD): Cultivating Our Capacities as Practitioners of Sustainable Peace in the 21st Century,”⁵² is frequently described by participants as RPP’s “heart.” A semester-long experiential learning program facilitated by Elizabeth and Jeff, TLSD centers on the question: “If we wish to be peace practitioners and transformative leaders who serve and lead by (as Gandhi and many other spiritual leaders have taught) ‘being the change that we wish to see in the world,’ what wisdom, qualities, capacities, and supports do we need?” Participants share insights and practices from their diverse spiritual and cultural traditions and life experiences and learn from a cross-disciplinary array of visiting “mentors”: distinguished Harvard faculty and alumni and religious leaders, who share their experiences and expertise and offer skill-building workshops.

TLSD provides Harvard students and fellows from different backgrounds and fields opportunities to practice the “arts and sciences” of mutual learning and companionship across values and worldviews. In a manner equally welcoming to the highly religious and the nonreligious, it gives them space to reflect upon ethical and spiritual matters of major import to their lives and future professional and community work. We encourage them, in particular, to share with one another in the unique terms, concepts, and modalities that they use among “insiders” within their respective communities. Many report this to be unprecedented for them in the academic setting, and even elsewhere, and uniquely empowering. Each semester, we invite a few students who have completed TLSD to take part in facilitating it for the next cohort.

Especially memorable for RPP’s students have been interactive workshops offered by the RPP Colloquium’s annual keynote guests and other speakers. Examples include: experiential learning with Imam Ashafa and Pastor James, by roleplaying in a simulation of their faith-based mediation techniques between rival religious and ethnic groups; hearing a detailed account from Leymah Gbowee of the creative activities by which she and colleagues helped women heal from traumas and overcome obstacles to uniting for peace; and scriptural reasoning and conflict case scenarios with Canon Sarah Snyder, Director of Reconciliation for the Archbishop of Canterbury,

⁵¹ For more on the RPP Colloquium course, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/colloquium-course>. For a video of students and fellows speaking on their experiences in the course and its impact on their growth as peace leaders, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/colloquium-course/video-student-experiences>.

⁵² For more information on the TLSD program, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/spiritual-formation-transformative-leadership-series>. For a video of students and fellows speaking on their experiences in the course and its impact on their growth as peace leaders, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/TLSD-course/videos-student-experiences>.

and The Right Reverend Anthony Poggo, the Archbishop's Advisor for Anglican Communion Affairs and former Diocesan Bishop of Kajo-Keji, South Sudan.

Since skills training is often requested of RPP, in Harvard's January term in 2018, we began offering intensive, multiday skill-building workshops.⁵³ RPP has thus far hosted a workshop on "Healing and Reconciling Relationships in Conflict: A Dignity Approach" led by Donna Hicks of Harvard, already mentioned, and a workshop on "Engaging Conflict: Reflective Structured Dialogue and the Inner Resources of the Facilitator" led by Robert R. Stains Jr., a local dialogue expert affiliated with Essential Partners (formerly the Public Conversations Project). We invite the presenters to take the RPP workshops as an opportunity to expand their attention to spiritual dimensions and to the application of the skills in religious communities. In keeping with our goal of bridging academy and community, the workshops welcome not only current Harvard students and fellows, but also alumni and members of the general public, some of whom have traveled from other US states or abroad to take part.

RPP also hosts special events and activities, some at other Harvard Schools or "out in the field." A highlight at Harvard Divinity School was a public event for World Interfaith Harmony Week in February 2015, "Promoting the Practice of Peace in the 21st Century: Mobilizing Our Resources as Universities, Religious Communities, and Global Citizens," featuring a film screening; talks by me and Melissa W. Bartholomew, cofounder of Women United for Peace through Prayer and the Divinity School's Racial Justice and Healing Initiative; and a public dialogue facilitated by graduate students in the RPP Working Group. Another highlight was an RPP delegation of Harvard Divinity School students to the United Nations High Level Forum on "the Culture of Peace" in New York City in September 2016. The trip was arranged by Federica D'Alessandra, an RPP Working Group member and adviser since 2016 and a Divinity School visiting fellow in 2017–18. A specialist in atrocity prevention and international law, previously at Harvard Law School and the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, Federica has worked closely with Ben Ferencz and moderated our recent RPP Colloquium with him.⁵⁴

Since 2014, RPP's website has facilitated connections with the global public and made a variety of educational resources widely accessible.⁵⁵ Among these are a brief bibliography; links to relevant upcoming events around Harvard and the local area; feature articles; and an archive of videos of our RPP Colloquium sessions and other RPP talks from 2014 to the present.⁵⁶ Also on the website are videos of Harvard students and fellows discussing their experience in RPP and its impact on their growth as peace leaders.⁵⁷ We hope that these participant perspectives will help inform universities, organizations, and communities that might contemplate developing programming in this domain.

To support alumni of RPP's programs after they leave Harvard—and as one way to leverage Harvard's global reach for sustainable peace—RPP is in the process of establishing

⁵³ For the latest information on RPP's skills workshops, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/rpp-workshops>.

⁵⁴ For a pre-event interview with Federica D'Alessandra in advance of the May 3, 2018 RPP Colloquium with Ben Ferencz, see Fatema Elbakoury, "Sustaining Peace: The Role of Ethics, Law, and Public Policy, April 24, 2018, <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/resources/featurearticles>.

⁵⁵ Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/>.

⁵⁶ Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-series-archive>.

⁵⁷ Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/colloquium-course/video-student-experiences> and <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/TLSD-course/videos-student-experiences>.

an “RPP Alumni Leadership Network.” The network will offer former Harvard students and fellows who have completed RPP’s courses a platform and activities to facilitate their maintaining fruitful connections. Building upon the companionship, mutual mentoring, and exploration of peace resources that they shared in RPP, it will provide channels for them to continue to serve as valuable sources of advice, support, and inspiration for one another as they face the challenges of transformative leadership in varied fields and settings around the world.

As of summer 2018, RPP has over 100 former students and fellows who will be invited to join the RPP Alumni Leadership Network. They represent Harvard’s Divinity School, Kennedy School, Law School, Graduate School of Education, Graduate School of Design, School of Public Health, Medical School, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and College, as well as the Loeb Fellowship program, the Nieman Fellowship program, the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, and the Advanced Leadership Initiative at Harvard. Mid-career professionals, young graduates, and seasoned leaders, they bring experience in government and politics, law, international finance, humanitarian relief, education and education policy, global and social medicine and public health, social work, arts for social change, design, journalism, heritage preservation, interfaith relations, ministry and chaplaincy, and environmental sustainability. Their spiritual backgrounds include Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Protestant, Evangelical, Catholic, Shia and Sunni Muslim, Mormon, Native and indigenous, shaman, pagan, multireligious, humanist, agnostic, and nonaffiliated. They hail from all regions of the US and countries such as China, Nepal, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia, Haiti, the UK, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Morocco, Nigeria, Egypt, Palestine, and Israel.

Our RPP Colloquium speaker in March 2018 was Rev. Dr. Ray Hammond,⁵⁸ MD, alumnus of Harvard’s College, Medical School, and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, founder and pastor of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, and executive committee member of the Black Ministerial Alliance. Dr. Hammond shared with us lessons from his decades of work with the Ten Point Coalition, of which he is chairman and cofounder, an ecumenical group of Christian clergy and lay leaders that mobilizes our greater Boston community around issues affecting proven-risk youth. Credited with bettering the lives of many young people and major reductions in violence in Boston, the coalition has been taken as a model by other US cities.

Dr. Hammond’s primary point of wisdom for us was “the power of partnerships.” Collaboration, he stressed, is essential for impact. He also stressed that it is time-consuming, labor-intensive, resource-intensive, and “*extremely* difficult to make work.” In defining it, he memorably advised (in an oft-quoted adage), “Always think of collaboration as unnatural acts between unconsenting adults.”⁵⁹ Dr. Hammond’s remarks are highly relevant to our work in RPP. To grow ties across disciplines in line with RPP’s mission and the “One Harvard” vision championed by former Harvard President Drew Gilpin Faust, we regularly cosponsor our RPP Colloquium sessions and other activities with programs and centers around the University.⁶⁰ We strive to enable

⁵⁸ See video of RPP Colloquium session, “Ministry to the Marginal: The Power of Partnerships,” March 1, 2018, at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/rpp-colloquium-2017-18>.

⁵⁹ Variations of this adage apparently have circulated for decades. See, for example, Joy G. Dryfoos, “One of my favorite definitions of collaboration is ‘an unnatural act between nonconsenting adults,’” in *Full-Service Schools: A Revolution in Health and Social Services for Children, Youth, and Families* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 149.

⁶⁰ Some of the many programs with which RPP has collaborated thus far include the Women’s Studies in Religion Program, the Religious Literacy Project, the Racial Justice and Healing Initiative, the Buddhist Ministry Initiative, the

people of many different backgrounds and orientations to connect, contribute based on their particular interests and specializations, and from there explore new ideas, practices—and people—that can expand and deepen their understandings and approaches in cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural, and holistic directions to enhance their impact. The benefits reported by RPP’s participants are direct results of our designing our programs to involve a broad spectrum of Harvard faculty, students, fellows, and alumni as well as scholars and leaders from outside Harvard.

As Dr. Hammond’s comments underscore, bringing people together across differences is by no means straightforward or easy: In RPP, the individuals whom we engage differ vastly: in life experiences, points of view, cultural assumptions, stages in their peace practice and leadership journeys, and senses of agency and vulnerability. The years since RPP’s founding have been exceedingly hard ones in the US politically and socially, leaving many feeling—and too often, being—under attack. We have found that in facilitating interactions, what often works best is consistent with approaches recommended by dialogue experts.⁶¹ Examples include: explicit discussion of our purposes in and perspectives on our shared endeavor, as well as those that participants bring; more (carefully designed and explicated) structure rather than less; discussion of how we will communicate (via inquiry into participants’ needs and group agreements); inviting individuals to share by turns so that others can focus on deep listening; asking people to elucidate how their views are grounded in their personal life experiences rather than merely stating opinions or speaking on behalf of groups; heightening awareness of the discrepancy between intention and impact (and the valuable learning opportunities that it raises); and stepping back for “meta”-conversations about how the interactions are affecting people when the going gets tough. Also important are getting to know participants and their hopes and concerns one-on-one in advance and checking in with them periodically, as well as dedicating time for mutually appreciative inquiry among participants and activities to foster positive personal connection prior to proceeding to difficult topics.

We invite people to shift away from reacting reflexively to individuals whose views differ from their own with the “critique and dismiss” response that is so ubiquitous in polarized media discourse and often assumed by students to be normative in academic environments. We encourage everyone to experiment with constructive and collaborative modes of thinking and discourse that welcome critique, while at the same time seeking to identify learnings of value in the ideas and work of persons with whom we may in some respects deeply differ and points of intersection and shared aspiration that may be opportunities to build bridges. This intellectual and

Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and the Office of Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School; the Program on Negotiation (PON) and the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School; the Harvard International Negotiation Program; the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the John. F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; the Transformative Justice Series at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; the Prison Studies Project; the Pluralism Project, the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, the François-Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights (Harvard FXB), the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program, and the Islam in the West program at Harvard University; as well as the Department of Conflict Resolution, Human Security, and Global Governance at the University of Massachusetts Boston. For more, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/collaborations>.

⁶¹ See, for example, the free online dialogue resources offered by Essential Partners (formerly Public Conversations Project), an organization whose Reflective Structured Dialogue methods help inform our approaches and for which Elizabeth has served as a trainer and facilitator, at <https://www.whatisessential.org/resources>, accessed August 10, 2018.

relational skill will need to become much more prevalent in our world if we are to make strides toward sustainable peace.

In our experience, intentional use of such structures and approaches makes a major difference in our ability to co-create with participants spaces conducive to deep sharing, deep listening, deep learning, and constructive conversation around challenging issues—whether in classrooms, at public events, in workshops, or in regular meetings. Breakdowns in communication, in some people’s sense of sufficient safety⁶² to share, and in mutual understanding that have at times arisen in instances in which we have not made sufficient use of such approaches indicate to us that they are (in some form tailored to each situation) imperative. Our positive and challenging experiences alike have convinced us that efforts for sustainable peace at our universities and in other contexts must go hand in hand with concerted efforts to build dialogue environments and engaged, appreciative, and resilient relationships in our communities and institutions and to foster the practical skills necessary to support these.

From RPP’s first year, students and fellows have told us of the unique impact that their exchanges with RPP Colloquium speakers, faculty, alumni, and diverse peers have had on their lives and growth:⁶³ A dual degree student at Harvard and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University tells us of the “transformational impact” of the RPP Colloquium on the Harvard community and her friends and colleagues in the greater Boston area. A mid-career student from Morocco who works in humanitarianism and government accountability comes to appreciate the practical value of spiritual resources for effective social action and leadership. The manner in which a student from a homogenous locality in the Midwest now interacts with persons of different cultural identities and faith traditions has “dramatically changed.” A new connection leads to a student’s being invited to present at a conference on bridging racial divides between African and European Americans in the southern US. A Buddhist student from China gives up her preconceived notions about Muslims after a meaningful encounter with a Muslim spiritual leader and peace practitioner. A student from Colombia taps into spiritual resources that enable her to reconcile at long last with a close family member. A doctoral student in American history plans to draw upon what he has learned to “build bridges” in the US and move his Evangelical community “toward a place of building peace.”

Participants’ experiences in RPP not infrequently inspire them to pursue their work in fresh ways or take their careers in new directions: A student has been inspired to include religious leaders among the interviewees in a research project on a minority population in Europe. A doctoral student from Germany specializing in the ethics of artificial intelligence will incorporate peace practice approaches and consideration of spiritual dimensions in his research and teaching going forward. A student from a conservative community in the US has now pursued mediation training and will make facilitating dialogues on difficult topics central to her endeavors at Harvard and beyond. The religious high school at which a student will teach has enthusiastically agreed to her

⁶² We feel that it is important to acknowledge that spaces cannot be made completely “safe” and that the realities of human relations and power dynamics are such that sharing and engaging across differences carries inherent risk and risks that vary depending upon an individual’s positionality.

⁶³ The information in this and the following paragraph is from students and fellows in RPP’s courses, many of whom are featured in video interviews on the RPP website at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/colloquium-course/video-student-experiences> and <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/TLSD-course/videos-student-experiences>, supplemented by our conversations with RPP’s participants.

incorporating study of wisdom from diverse religions and cultures into the curriculum. A mid-career student coming from the World Bank who is now residing in Indonesia will dedicate his future work to international interfaith relations. A priest from Sweden who directs programs for youth will approach her leadership role and creation of spaces in a wholly new way. A politician and former member of parliament from Spain has learned to listen openly, not only with her head, but also with her “heart.”

News also reaches us of farther-flung impacts coming about through RPP’s public offerings and online presence: A professor at a local college invites her students to watch RPP Colloquium videos for her course on world religions and finds that those who do so offer the most thoughtful responses. She draws upon methods from an RPP January term workshop to design a student-facilitated intercultural dialogue on campus, and the students experience peers engaging and sharing more than they anticipated.⁶⁴ An associate of a dialogue and consensus-building center in Beirut who is assembling resources on religion and peacebuilding makes use of RPP’s online bibliography.⁶⁵ A rabbi and scholar references the establishment of RPP at Harvard as a “very important precedent” in his efforts to establish a similar theory and practice initiative for religion and peacebuilding at his university in Israel.⁶⁶

Harvard faculty and associates often tell us of the synchronicity between RPP’s focus and directions into which they are expanding, or wish to expand, in their work. A number have echoed our RPP Colloquium speakers in expressing appreciation for the invitation to be freer in academic and public settings to bring serious consideration of religion and of spiritual and cultural resources into their research, writing, speaking, and teaching. On the occasion of Harvard Divinity School’s bicentennial in April 2017, I convened a panel at which I asked the Deans of Harvard’s Business School, Law School, and Graduate School of Education what they would most look to at the Divinity School to contribute to their schools and the wider University.⁶⁷ All spoke of the critical importance in today’s world of providing opportunities for students to learn to engage religious topics and differences constructively, including insofar as such learning may inform matters such as ethics that are fundamental to their fields. Nitin Nohria, Dean of Harvard Business School, echoed comments from the other Deans in observing that in the classroom, faculty and students “feel compelled to have that conversation in very secular terms” and “retreat into trying to find . . . universal ethical principles” rather than exploring the varied beliefs in which individuals’ ethical viewpoints are “grounded.” Unequipped to have such conversations productively, he said, they do not “unearth or even try to understand” the “different” and “deeper” meanings that a given ethical concept may have for persons from different communities and traditions. Dean Nohria indicated that the main obstacle is the faculty’s current lack of competence in this area and that the Divinity

⁶⁴ Julene Tegerstrand, MDiv, Assistant Professor of Intercultural Studies and Spiritual Director at Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy Massachusetts.

⁶⁵ The Common Space Initiative in Beirut, Lebanon, <http://www.commonspaceinitiative.org/>, per email communication with Jeff Seul in 2014 and on August 12, 2018.

⁶⁶ Rabbi Dr. Daniel Roth, faculty member in the Graduate Program on Conflict Management, Resolution, and Negotiation at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel.

⁶⁷ For the video of this public panel in celebration of Harvard Divinity School’s bicentennial featuring four Harvard Deans, “Religion Matters: HDS at Harvard University,” on April 28, 2017, visit <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2017/05/04/video-religion-matters-hds-harvard-university>.

School might help provide ways to bring “more nuance and richness” to this aspect of educating “leaders who make a difference in the world.”⁶⁸

Our latest endeavor in RPP is the emerging Sustainable Peace Initiative (SPI).⁶⁹ SPI is a cross-Harvard initiative of faculty, students, fellows, staff, and alumni who wish to contribute to a world of more harmonious, cooperative, and equitable human relations that will help reduce destructive conflict, prevent violence, and foster flourishing for all. SPI was incubated within the Harvard community in 2017–18 in a Sustainable Peace Working Group (SPWG) facilitated by graduate students and alumni from a number of Harvard Schools.⁷⁰ SPWG drew over 100 “regulars” and “drop-ins,” including faculty and student presenters from Harvard’s Business School, Kennedy School, Law School, School of Education, School of Design, School of Public Health, Medical School, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, College, and Divinity School, and culminated in a public event to elicit ideas from members of local communities, organizations, and universities.

SPI is founded upon the recognition that humanity’s quest to solve its “big problems” and its quest for peace that is substantive, shared, and sustainable are inextricable. These complex endeavors will require tapping into the vast latent energy, talent, and potential for people to do much more in the way of leadership, collaboration, and creativity for sustainable peace locally and globally. SPI promotes the mainstreaming of sustainable peace as a goal of leadership across sectors and the development of innovative, strategic approaches to operationalizing this goal in particular institutional and community contexts. It takes as a model the environmental sustainability movement, which (limitations notwithstanding) has been remarkably successful in mainstreaming its goals among non-specialists in diverse settings.

SPI aims to raise awareness of our human family’s interconnectedness and interdependence and to promote holistic, cross-cultural approaches that amplify, catalyze, and learn from peace efforts at all levels, while incorporating knowledge and priorities from people at the grassroots, including women and youth. Drawing upon insights that we have gained from our RPP Colloquium speakers, colleagues, and participants to date, SPI encourages the integration of “six dimensions” of peace practice:

- sharing visions, wisdom, and inspiration for peace within and across communities;
- self-cultivation and virtue cultivation for peace practice and transformative ethical leadership;
- friendship-building and bridge-building across differences;

⁶⁸ As Dean Nohria stated at the event, the mission of Harvard Business School is to “educate leaders who make a difference in the world.” For more information, visit <https://www.hbs.edu/about/Pages/mission.aspx>.

⁶⁹ See my message on the emerging Sustainable Peace Initiative (SPI) at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/message-dean-hampton>. For more information, visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/programs/sustainable-peace-initiative>.

⁷⁰ The graduate student and alumni cochairs of the Sustainable Peace Working Group 2017–18 were Enoch Aboi, Tajay Bongsa, Christina Desert, and Lucia Villavicencio from Harvard Divinity School; Qing Guan and Andre Uhl from the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; and Prathima Muniyappa of the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

- leveraging resources of culture for peace;
- leveraging institutions and community resources for peace; and
- practical projects for mutual benefit and shared flourishing across divides.

From the many experts whom we have been fortunate to learn from thus far, it has become clear that just as the field of medicine has been revolutionized by expanding its focus from pathology to wellness, and by complementing the study of disease with the study of the body's internal mechanisms to heal and support health, a similar holistic revolution is called for in our approaches to sustainable peace. And just as drawing upon traditional and indigenous knowledge and methods has been key to recent progress in the promotion of health, a similar expansion in our thinking and strategies to enhance human harmony and cooperation will be essential to new breakthroughs. To quote Albert Einstein, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."⁷¹

We are grateful to the generous donors and foundations that have seeded RPP's work in these initial years.⁷² Like so many similar initiatives, we will require much more support to ensure that our programs continue to thrive and expand to realize their full potential.⁷³ Convinced that innovative programming of this kind is essential for Harvard University and the wider world in our twenty-first century, I have announced a goal of obtaining an endowment to establish RPP as a permanent program at Harvard Divinity School for present and future generations.⁷⁴

At the recent RPP Colloquium with Ben Ferencz with which we began, in offering his view as to why our human family has not yet risen to the task of working more concertedly and intelligently for sustainable peace, Ben stated that apparently "We haven't suffered enough yet." May this sobering comment from a near-centenarian who has witnessed some of history's worst atrocities—yet has never lost hope in humanity's capacity to collaborate for a more peaceful future, nor slackened in his personal and professional contributions toward this goal—galvanize us all to place this pressing task among our top priorities. It is a task to which we are called by both our contemporary conditions and the wisdom of our traditions. In this, we in Religions and the Practice of Peace at Harvard Divinity School and our RPP Colloquium speakers look forward to joining with you.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Albert Einstein, quoted in Marilyn Jackson, "Critical Thinking Models and Their Application," in *Conversations in Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment*, eds. Marilyn Jackson, Donna D. Ignatavicius, and Bette Case (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2004), 47.

⁷² We are grateful for the generous support that RPP has received in its early years from the Rev. Karen Vickers Budney, MDiv '91, and Albert J. Budney, Jr., MBA '74; the Once Here Foundation; the Planethood Foundation; the Whitehead Foundation; the Provostial Fund for the Arts and Humanities at Harvard University; the El-Hibri Foundation; the Jewish Women's Fund of Colorado; and other donors.

⁷³ Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/giving>.

⁷⁴ Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/news/hds-establishing-place-peace>.

⁷⁵ To be apprised of RPP's events and resources, join our mailing list at <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/join-our-mailing-list>.

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Visit <https://rpp.hds.harvard.edu/> for more information on RPP and the Sustainable Peace Initiative, for videos of the RPP Colloquium sessions and other resources, and to join the RPP mailing list.

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