

Open the Door to Dreams with Advanced Research

RESEARCHERS

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Contributing to peacebuilding in the world through research founded on actual lives in actual places

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Prof. Katayanagi graduated from the Department of French Language (course in international relations) at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and completed a master's course in the Graduate School of Area Studies at the same university. After working in an international law firm, she went to the UK and obtained a master's degree in international human rights law from the University of Essex and a Ph.D. in law from the University of Warwick. She then worked as a senior advisor at the Embassy of Japan in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later as a political advisor of an international organization in the same country. She joined Hiroshima University in 2014. Her areas of specialization are peacebuilding and international human rights law. Her main research themes have been human rights-based peacebuilding, HLP (housing, land and property) rights, and business and peacebuilding.

The starting point of my research on human rights and peacebuilding is the three years I spent in Egypt as an elementary to junior high school student. Seeing local children's plight, being forced to work and so on, was a strong culture shock for me. Back in Japan, I finished graduate school, worked in a law firm, and went to the UK to do postgraduate studies. While I was there, I began thinking about working in an international organization. So I worked as a UN volunteer and served in a peacekeeping operation in Croatia. After that, I obtained my Ph.D. and had the opportunity to be involved in peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a devastating armed conflict had taken place. Looking back now, I have had quite a few unusual experiences, even if I say so myself. I believe that all these experiences and the people I have encountered have nourished me and support the research I conduct today.

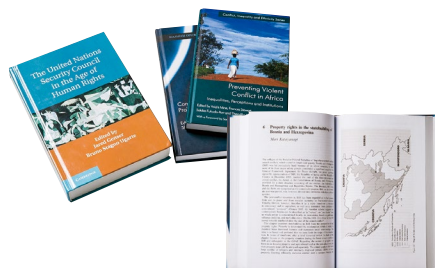
At present, my research is about peacebuilding from three perspectives: human rights, land and property, and business. In my research on human rights-based peacebuilding, I study the violation of human rights that occurs as causes or consequences of conflicts, examining and analyzing the society in which it occurs. Regarding land and property and peacebuilding, I look into actual cases of forced displacement following armed conflicts to examine how such cases should be handled or prevented. Research into business and peacebuilding is a new approach. Previously, peacebuilding was left to the United Nations. Today, civil society organizations and many other actors participate in peacebuilding, and one of them is private business. Some are of the opinion that profit-oriented business entities cannot contribute to the process of building peace. However, from my experience, I believe that business has the power to overcome disputes and division because it is often inclined to find common interest and points of compromise by surpassing political and ethnic frameworks.

For peacebuilding, it is important to draw new lessons from past events. So a large part of my research is interviewing people to collect their accounts. For example, I have interviewed people who had lost their opportunity for education because of conflicts. It is painful to listen to them relive their hard experiences, which I also undergo indirectly, but this is indispensable for realistic peacebuilding. I also believe that it is important to know the actual site. In Japan, I feel a difference in the intensity of people's feelings about peace between Tokyo and Hiroshima, which was A-bombed. There is something you can discover only when you actually go to the place of an incident and stand there, smelling its smell and breathing the air there. I hope to conduct research that is firmly planted on the ground, draw out and propose viewpoints and solutions from there, and contribute to peacebuilding in the world.



Left: Interviewing a returnee in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia represents an extremely special case so far in that over 90% of the property plundered following forced displacement during the conflict was returned to the original owners through the intervention of international organizations.

Right: Prof. Katayanagi served as an advisor to the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Prof. Katayanagi's recent publications (book chapters): left: On UN peacekeeping and human rights; center: On the prevention of conflicts in Africa from the standpoint of horizontal inequalities, perceptions, and political institutions; right: On the land and property problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



少しでも武力紛争の少ない世界にあること。
そのために共に働けるようにしたい多くの
人々と繋がってみたい。

Making the world as free of armed conflicts as possible – I want to connect with as many persons as possible whom I can work with toward this goal.