

TRACKING THE TREND LINES: REGIONAL PROSPECTS FOR PEACE AND CONFLICT

Panel Moderator: Mr. Joseph Jones

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Introduction

Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn

President - World Food Prize Foundation

For all the innovations that we do they have to be done in a stable climate. Conflict is such a critical threat to everything that is going to occur. And having peace through agriculture is an absolute essential. So is it going to be a peaceful world, or are we going to be facing continued threats and upheaval.

So I've invited four of my former colleagues from the State Department, four of the most distinguished ambassadors, career ambassadors with whom I worked, for whom I have such enormous respect. Collectively, they have been representing the United States as ambassadors in 14 countries. And if we throw in John Negroponte, who's on the program tomorrow, I think we're up at about close to 20.

So Kristie Kenney, and they're all career ambassadors, the highest rank and several above what I attained in the State Department. And Kristie Kenney has come. She has incredible experience in Southeast Asia. George Moose, who is a graduate of Grinnell College in Iowa is amazing – He and I went to Vietnam together – but amazing experience in Africa. Nancy Powell, also an Iowan from Le Mars and Cedar Falls. See, I have the two Iowans in the middle here. And Bill Brownfield. Nancy...

(Nancy: From Texas)

Yeah, Dr. Borlaug's from Iowa and Texas. But Nancy's incredible experience in South Asia. Bill worked in Latin America. And I said who can I get together? Joseph Jones, the Director of the Harkin Institute, here in Des Moines. And I lured him in here. And, Joseph, over to you.

Panel Members

Amb. William Brownfield	Former U.S. Ambassador to Chile, Venezuela, and Colombia
Amb. Kristie Kenney	Former U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador, Philippines, and Thailand
Amb. George Moose	Former U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and Benin
Amb. Nancy Powell	Former U.S. Ambassador to India, Nepal, Pakistan, Uganda, and Ghana

Panel Moderator

Mr. Joseph Jones

Executive Director, The Harkin Institute

Thank you, Ambassador Quinn, and good morning, everyone. As Ambassador Quinn said, my name is Joseph Jones. I'm the Executive Director of the Harkin Institute, which is a public policy think tank here at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. Thank you all for being here this morning for this important discussion, and I'd also like to thank the World Food Prize for putting this panel together, because it's going to be a really great conversation, I believe, with the former ambassadors. And as was mentioned earlier, we have a great wealth of knowledge and experience here on the panel. And I am not going to speak very long, because I want to get to them presenting to us.

But your presence here today is highly significant, because it's important that we understand the role that diplomacy can play in both food security and conflict resolution. And I know that all of your experiences have played into that. And this discussion is a step toward developing a dialogue around peace and conflict resolution around the globe.

And each of the ambassadors has taken upon themselves to discuss a specific region in which they have had experience in their career, and they'll address some of the nuances that those regions may have had when it comes to food security and what those conflicts in those regions have been as they served as ambassadors there. And there was no coin toss, so it was a unanimous decision that Ambassador Powell would go first, and so I'll turn it over. I'm sorry – Ambassador Moose would go first. Ambassador Powell will go second. Ambassador Moose.

Ambassador George Moose

Joseph, thank you very much. Good morning. Yesterday was quite rightly a day of celebration, a celebration of Dr. Borlaug, his vision and his legacy and of all of those in this room who have worked so hard to sustain and perpetuate that vision and that legacy. And I was especially pleased to be here on this occasion to celebrate and to honor the hard work and leadership of Ken Quinn, my friend and colleague of more than 50 years, and all that he has done to sustain that vision.

Today I would like to take my lead from something that the administrator for USAID said yesterday, which is that we are not here only to celebrate. We are also here to remind ourselves of the challenges that lie ahead. And I have spent a lot of time with my colleagues at the U.S. Institute of Peace over the last several years, looking at those challenges. And I have to say that, if you look at those challenges as they confront Africa, they are pretty daunting.

Any conversation about the relationship between food and peace and conflict in Africa, I think, has to begin with a discussion with two megatrends. The first is population, and the second is climate. The most disturbing news is that these trends, which will be powerful disrupters everywhere in the world, are going to have a greater destructive and disruptive impact on Africa than elsewhere.

So let me start with population. A colleague, Jack Goldstone, a demographer, has pointed out that Africa's demographics are exceptional. Whereas improvements in mortality and economic development have caused fertility rates in Asia and Latin America to drop significantly to

roughly equivalent levels of 2.1, 2.2 births per woman, Africa has the only large regions of the world with fertility rates above 5. Outside Africa, population growth is projected to end in this century. In Africa the current population of 1.2 billion is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050 and continue growing to 4.5 billion by 2100. In other words, Africa's share of the world's population will increase from 16% today to 26% in 2050 and to 40% by 2100. The number of young Africans age 15 to 24 will also grow rapidly from 230 million today to 460 million by 2050, almost one fifth of the total population. One can reasonably assume that this large youth bulge will lead to increased political instability and to the increasing likelihood of conflict.

Let's talk about climate. As climate expert Mark Jordano has pointed out, there is a great deal of uncertainty and a great deal of diversity across the African Continent. But it seems pretty clear that Africa will increasingly experience longer and hotter heat waves, longer periods without rain, and more intense precipitation when it does fall, with increases in rainfall in the wet equatorial regions and decreases in the drier North and South.

The outlook is for temperatures to rise faster in Africa than in any other part of the world. Temperatures across the Sahel have increased by nearly 1° Celsius since 1970, and they are projected to rise 1.5 times higher than the global average by 2050. Obviously, all of this will have significant adverse consequences for agriculture. Already roughly 80% of the Sahel's farmland is affected by degradation, including soil erosion and deforestation.

Taken together, these dramatic impacts are compounded and amplified by the ways in which they interact with one another. One of the consequences, frankly, is going to be to add further strains to already-overstressed systems of governments at the national, subnational and regional levels, making it even more difficult for governments to cope. And moreover, the basic trendlines are largely set. Nothing we can do now or in the next ten years will significantly alter these projections. The people who will cause the next surge in population growth have already been born, and the forces that will drive climate change over the next 50 years have largely been set by the patterns of the last 50 years.

So let's then try to understand what the implications of this are for agriculture. And I am not by any stretch of the imagination an agricultural expert. But as is obvious, the implications for African agriculture and food production are enormous. Agriculture currently employs roughly 60% of African workers, and it produces nearly one third of the Continent's GDP, so therefore improving productivity of food production and processing will be essential to feeding this growing population, while at the same time coping with the effects of climate change, disease and drought. And the success of those efforts to increase productivity will depend on closely related interventions, including investments in both physical infrastructure, roads, transportation, storage facilities – Ken Quinn, roads – as well as institutional infrastructure, things like extension services and marketing support. Issues of land tenure and land reform, which are both legal and cultural, are going to pose additional daunting challenges. (This is always the problem when you have paper in your hand – you have to figure out how to turn the page.)

So turning to the question of food and its relationship to conflict and to peace. I think against this background I would highlight three, at least three ways in which we can understand the relationship between food and peace or the absence of peace. The first and the most obvious is the fact that conflict directly affects food production and food distribution. The most dramatic illustration of that, frankly, is in South Sudan where over the past five years conflict has displaced more than three million people, 1.5 million internally displaced. And despite a

massive humanitarian effort, more than 6 million people are severely food-insecure. And it's projected that an estimated 1.3 million children under five will suffer acute malnutrition in 2020.

Secondly, another way in which conflict and agriculture and food production intersect are that in many instances conflicts are, as we know, being driven by the competition for limited supplies of both food and water. This is not a new pattern. I was in Senegal in 1988 and '89, and I wanted firsthand how the steady decline in arable land sparked the conflicts that erupted in 1989 between farmers and pastoralists in the Senegal River Valley, which escalated then into a larger conflict between Senegal and Mauritania.

Somalia. Clearly the competition for land and water resources was a major factor in the inter-clan conflict and resultant famine in Somalia in the early 1990s. And by the way, that's a conflict that continues unresolved to this day.

Rwanda. I think the research that has been done on the drivers, the factors that led to the Rwandan genocide show clearly that the competition for limited arable land in what is one of the most densely populated countries in the world was one of the factors that led to drive the Rwandan genocide of 1994.

And lastly, Mali, which over the past three decades has lurched between droughts and floods, which have inflicted a huge cost on crops and livestock and have fueled overlapping conflicts between farmers and herders but also among different tribal groups. And interestingly, I think, Al-Qaeda and other armed groups have both exploited and fueled the conflict by manipulating food shortages to further their own political, ideological or criminal agendas. Young men who have no cows to herd or no land to farm are much more easily recruited by armed groups.

And finally, there is the Lake Chad Basin, where over the past half century, Lake Chad has shrunk by over 90% while the population living around the lake has doubled from 17 million to more than 30 million. The resulting scarcity and unequal distribution of natural resources has fueled instability and violent conflict throughout the region, which includes of course Northern Nigeria, the center of operations for the notorious local Haram movement.

Thirdly and finally and perhaps less obviously, there are the conflicts that arise from the ways in which food itself is produced and distributed. So just one example of which I am somewhat familiar is coastal Ghana where over in recent years an effort has been made to industrialize rice production and indeed with the involvement of a firm from Texas and the firm and a project that has been very mindful of the impacts of their efforts with regard to traditional farming. But notwithstanding their sensitivity and their attentiveness to the concerns of local farmers, apprehensions and tensions have continued to rise with the potential that, if they're not effectively managed, they could in fact lead to conflict.

So, closely related to this is something I think you all were talking about in the previous panel, which is the fact that in many cases in many parts of the world the methods that are being introduced are ones that, at least over the long run, are potentially unsustainable. Just as in Latin America, Africa has witnessed the introduction of the destruction of forests in order to introduce increasing production of palm oil, which we know over the long term poses serious concerns about the ecological and environmental sustainability and the potential that those disruptions of natural growth patterns could instill conflict.

So where does this leave us? These are, and I intended them to be, stark realities. So they are the realities of conflict across the African Continent, and they are also the trends that are certain to shape the conflict environment for the future. They are the realities that pose some very hard questions for every one of us in this room.

And how will Africa find ways to produce enough food to feed a population that will double in 30 years during a period when arable land will dramatically be shrinking? How can we do this in ways that do not contribute to the long-term environmental damage? And how can we do this in a way that does not in and of itself exacerbate social, cultural and political tensions that can lead to violent conflict?

These are questions that my colleagues at the U.S. Institute of Peace are increasingly focused on. They are also some questions, I think, that involve everybody in this room. Nancy Lindborg, our president, was in fact here last year, and she was moved to come here precisely because of her concern about how these patterns and these trends intersect. And I think one of the things it means, frankly, is that all of us, those of you who know a lot about agriculture and those of us who pretend to know something about peacemaking and the peace movement, are going to have to spend an awful lot more time together if we are in fact going to have any hope or any chance of managing the trends and consequences of these trends in the future.

The need for answers is clearly very urgent, and frankly, time is not on our side. Thank you.

Joseph Jones

Thank you, ambassador, and thank you for setting the stage of the conversation. I think you've laid out a lot of great points, and as we move to Ambassador Powell to give us a different perspective or from a different region, I should say, her thoughts on these trends as well.

Nancy Powell

Let me start out by saying a big thank you for allowing me to come back to Iowa, to come home. I had the honor of growing up in Norman Borlaug's shadow. As a child, we were very aware of his accomplishments around the world and that the world was a bigger place than just our local neighborhood in Iowa. I also had the honor of hosting him, as the ambassador to Uganda. It was one of the thrills of my career. So it's very nice to be here.

I'm going to focus today on South Asia, and I'm going to talk a little bit about two immediate concerns and three trends that I see. But I want to start out by just acknowledging that, if we look back over the last 50 years in South Asia, there are enormous strides – and we need to not lose track of that. We have strides in reducing poverty, improving education and medical care, and in regional and civil conflicts in the region, addressing human rights issues, and that these remain challenges for the region but that there has been progress, and we need to acknowledge that.

In terms of immediate concerns, I would focus on two. One of them is Afghanistan and the other one Kashmir. Afghanistan because of its potential – the instability in Afghanistan has the potential to provide safe havens for terrorists. We saw this after the Soviet withdrawal and the creation of the Taliban, Al-Qaeda using Afghanistan. It also is a major setback to our efforts and those of the Afghanistan people to develop good governance, to deliver basic services to an incredibly underserved population, especially women and children. It also has the potential to

destabilize the border areas with Pakistan. Pakistan has its own issues, but they are complicated by the fact that the border is rather porous, and the arms can go back and forth. It also contributes to a rise in India and Pakistan tensions as they conduct proxy rivalries within Afghanistan.

For those of you who don't follow Kashmir, the Indian government this summer changed its status within the Indian constitution, creating a government from New Delhi rather than a locally based government. It was a setback to the secular vision of India, because it's a Muslim majority region and the only in India where you have a Muslim majority. It continues the trend towards super-nationalism in India that threatens to undermine the secular vision. It's also been a major setback to human rights in India. The usual use of the National Human Rights Commission, the court system – they have not been allowed to operate in Kashmir. We've had a near total shutdown of the economy, the education system, which is open now, but all of the schools have monitors in them, and you have the press shut down, very little communication coming out from the international community or the very vibrant Indian press.

It also creates the potential for Pakistan or Pakistan-based groups to create a confrontation with India. In previous confrontations up until the current prime minister, Narendra Modi, there were shellings back and forth but relatively small engagements. Prime Minister Modi has responded in a more robust way, and so far the Pakistanis have managed that, but it's not a given.

And that leads me into my second set of points in terms of trends. One of these is the India-Pakistan rivalry and a reminder that they are both nuclear-powered countries. They've fought three wars. Pakistan in particular has miniaturized its nuclear weapons. This creates command and control concerns for us. They can be deployed much easier in the field with local commanders or, if they are not secured, with terrorists having access to them.

It also in this confrontation between India and Pakistan, they've not been able to establish a sustained dialogue. They're deeply influenced by domestic politics in both countries. And in the most recent confrontation between the two, an Indian pilot was shot down, captured by the Pakistanis. It created a hyper response in India of nationalism, a war fever that we've not seen before. And whether that will continue in future confrontations is a real concern. Pakistan's governance remains fragile. The military influence remains very, very high, and although they have had recent elections, the potential for democracy remains under attack.

The second trend to keep an eye on is the influence of China and its attempt to interfere in areas where India has in the past shown dominance. This is particularly true in Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan through the Belt Road Initiative and other infrastructure projects. And as I mentioned, a growing nationalism throughout the region that has the potential to make conflict resolution much more difficult.

I'm going to take my last 30 seconds and talk just a little bit about another job that I had in the Foreign Service, which was to be the coordinator for our international response to the 2005, 2006 avian influenza pandemic and the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. These have enormous impact on food security, on stability. And I do want to raise that as something that people need to be aware of. International effort has improved some since 2014 and the Ebola effort, but it has a long ways to go. And the current outbreak in Congo that we've been unsuccessful in stopping, is an example that we still have a long ways to go.

These diseases can have a major impact on economy. For avian influenza requires the destruction of people's flocks, their livelihood. It has an important impact on tourism, on air travel, on the labor pool. And it has the potential for undermining what are already in many cases weak political structures. We saw this in the three countries in West Africa, particularly in Liberia – they survived it, but it wasn't a given.

And the last thing I would say, particularly with our own experience in the 2014 Ebola outbreak is that fear and panic undermine reliance on science and rational problem-solving. We revert back to almost medieval responses, even in America. And so these are troubling aspects of what the impact of pandemic disease can be. Thank you.

Joseph Jones

Thank you very much. Ambassador Brownfield, take us to South America.

William Brownfield

This is going to make very uncomfortable, going before Ambassador Kenney. However, I will attempt to do so, and I will do it very briefly, because I was viciously and aggressively attacked at breakfast this morning by Ambassador Powell and accused of excessive wordiness. So I'm going to bring this presentation home in three minutes, beginning right now.

Ladies and gentlemen, three points from the Latin America perspective. One, there is a symbiotic relationship that we must remember between food security in North America and in South America. If you drink coffee in the morning, if you eat citrus fruit at any time of the day, if in a bad weather day in the plains states, a bad weather year in the plains states, you eat bread, you are eating a South American or Latin American product. And in fact if you eat fruit at all in the course of the winter months, I assure you with 95% certainty, you are eating fruit that is produced in Chile or in Peru.

Second point, if I may. Food security in Latin America is not just driven by conflict or security issues. For example, if you're an environmentalist, you might be a bit grumpy right now at watching the Amazon jungle disappear before your very eyes. What is driving that? It is thousands of Brazilian farmers who want to remove these annoying trees so they may have more pasture for tens and thousands of livestock from which they can make more money and respond to their perception of food security requirements in Brazil. Good thing, bad thing. Environmentalists had better start thinking about this relationship.

How about drugs? It is possible, ladies and gentlemen, to charter an aircraft and fly over Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia and see tens and thousands of acres green, neatly cultivated, but they are not producing food. They are producing opium poppy in Mexico or coca in the Andean countries to meet a largely American demand for heroin and cocaine. Does that have an impact on food security? You bet your bippy it does. It unquestionably is, one, taking farmers and farmland out of useful production, in my humble opinion; and, second, making it extremely difficult for even legitimate commercial farmers, or even subsistence farmers, to operate in those areas.

Finally, the area that probably I was asked to talk about when brought up to this stage, the more traditional conflicts and crises and their impact on food security in the region. I'll offer three. First, Venezuela. Heard of it? It's been in the news recently. More than 50% of the Venezuelan

population today suffers from malnutrition, leading to in some cases risk of starvation. If that is not enough in terms of food security in Venezuela, it has now produced more than five million refugees who then bring those food security issues into neighboring nations. That number is predicted to rise to up to ten million – that would be one third of the entire population of Venezuela within the next two years. Food security issue – I suggest that it is.

Second, Central America, also frequently in the news – the estimate now is one million Central Americans from a Northern Triangle population base of about 35 million, leave their countries every year and start heading north. Logically, under those circumstances, in 35 years there would be no living human remaining in Central America – not going to happen. But what is happening is that people who are fleeing, not because of food insecurity – there is great poverty, but for the most part these are subsistent-level nations, so they are not starving, they're fleeing violence and security concerns. But as they depart, they obviously are removing much of the productive capacity of their countries behind. As they come north, say to our nation... This will surprise many, but I predict within five miles of where we are sitting right now, you can hear Spanish spoken with Central American accents, and many of them are involved in food production in Iowa or any other state in the Union, with the possible exception of Alaska. And I suggest to you that the reaction to their presence has an impact as well.

Finally, every ten to twelve years in Latin America, unfortunately there is a financial crisis. And one thing that happens when there is a financial crisis is the entire export/import structure comes screeching to a halt. Ladies and gentlemen, it's been about ten years since the last financial crisis in Latin America.

My point is – it doesn't necessarily get the headlines, but there all right serious food security issues involving us here in North America in our neighbors in Latin America. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time.

Joseph Jones

Thank you, Ambassador Brownfield. And now batting cleanup, the person, I would submit to you, is the biggest Washington Nationals fan in the room right now. Ambassador Kenney will bring us home.

Ambassador Kristie Kenney

So I'm the last speaker, and I'll try to be our briefest speaker. Let me talk first about two global trends before I turn to Asia. Before I do that, I want to thank Ambassador Quinn. I've been all over the world. This is my first time in Iowa, so thank you for bringing me here to America's Heartland. And, thank Ambassador Negroponte, a longtime mentor and coach for taking the time to listen to all of us.

Two global trends I want to look at, and you've heard about the first one from my colleagues. But it is what I call the movement of people. Not the happy movement of people, not people coming to Des Moines looking for jobs but displaced people and refugees due to conflict, due to violence. And that includes people coming out of the Middle East, Syria, Yemen, maybe more to come, people in Southeast Asia, fleeing Myanmar into neighboring Bangladesh. You heard about Venezuela. We heard about some of the Africa conflicts, seeing people pouring out of Afghanistan over the many years. And the truthful matter is it's not only an impact on the countries in which they land – some of them in the case of the neighbors, for example, in

Myanmar, do not have the capacity to provide food, medicine, security. So you have health issues, you've nutrition issues, but they also leave behind, as Ambassador Brownfield mentioned, fields untilled – small farmers who aren't producing. And the ultimate impact will indeed affect all of us. And this is a global problem – every nation faces it, but we're seeing it increasingly around the world as people flee conflict.

The second issue we haven't talked about as much but affects all of us, and that is the impact of natural disasters. The truthful matter is we're seeing more of them – that's probably due to climate issues – but whether it's flooding, whether it's drought, whether it's the typhoons that hit Southeast Asia where I spent a lot of time, whether it's volcano eruptions, these have immense impacts on the ability of communities to maintain their economy, to keep nutrition flowing, to keep food chains flowing, and much more of an impact in places like Southeast Asia where the resilience, the ability to recover, the government capacity to provide relief, to provide loans to people to get back on track, is virtually nonexistent. And so you have places such as I saw in the Philippines where you get communities and rice crops wiped out, where rice producers sometimes become rice importers. And this happens around the globe, and it's something to be aware of, because of course even in our own country we see massive flooding and see the need to respond and to develop something this year's World Food Prize laureate is famed for – crops that are more resistant, crops that can endure, ways to help build resilience.

Finally, I'm here to talk to you about East Asia. I will talk two very quick issues. Potential for conflict, potential for peace, immense impact on the prosperity and security of the United States of America and other nations. The first is North Korea, a nation that is a dictatorship, has weapons of mass destruction that if properly deployed probably can't hit us here in Iowa, that we're safe, but can hit the U.S. West Coast, can certainly hit Hawaii, Guam, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia. And at the same time, despite the efforts, really all of the past U.S. presidents for the past four, we have not been able to bring North Korea to any kind of peace dialogue that convinces them to get rid of these weapons of mass destruction. If that does happen some happy day, we will see a North Korea that has extraordinary food insecurity – famine, starvation – and that will be an issue and, I predict, a part of any kind of peace deal is the rebuilding reinvigorating or starting up of a moribund economy, and that will impact all of us.

The last, and I think maybe the most complicated relationship for the United States and much of the world is the relationship with China. China is of course a partner in some issues. They partnered with us on Ebola. They are an enormous market for U.S. goods and services. They're also a country with an extraordinarily different system from the United States. And as you see now, we are once again the United States of America, working to find some kind of agreement to mesh our economies better to reduce the Chinese tendency to manipulate their currency to not provide a level playing field. And that's complicated. I don't know how it will end. But it's not the only part of the U.S.-China relationship. There's a huge security piece. They are a partner in working with us on North Korea and absolutely critical in that. There is also the potential for enormous conflict over Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the South China Seas. And with respect to all of my incredibly distinguished and talented colleagues, I would say that getting China's relationship, not with just the United States but with the rest of the world, right is an immense, enormous and hugely consequential challenge.

Thank you all for listening. I thank you for inviting me to come here to Iowa, and I hope you'll invite me to come back. Thank you.

Joseph Jones

Thank you very much, all of you, for offering your perspectives and giving us your expertise on the regions of the world in which you worked and have really studied over time.

During Ambassador Moose's opening comments, he kind of set a call. I don't know if you would consider it a call to action, but a call. Part of that was to bring together those who are agriculture experts with those of you who are diplomacy experts as well. And my question to each of you is – If you think about combining the gaps that are missing between food security and promoting peace, what are some of the ways that we can address that? What are some of the concrete steps that can be taken to put those things together?

George Moose

Well, since I put the issue on the table, let me at least try to take a stab at it, and it's going to be a feeble one, but I'll try. By the way, I understand why us diplomats don't get invited very often to these things, because we are the purveyors of doom and gloom, and we are unfortunately. But I mean those are the realities of the world in which we live.

So one of the things that we've learned at the Institute of Peace is we think we know something about peacebuilding. But we've also learned that often some of the solutions that we design are not really solutions, because they wind up not taking into account the realities that you all are aware of, which is the realities of agriculture, the culture of agriculture and the politics and the economics of it. But some of the times those solutions frankly aggravate, they exacerbate tensions within societies rather than helping resolve them.

And so that's one of the reasons that we have realized that, if we're going to be successful in what we're trying to do, we're going to have to spend a lot more time understanding the things that you all understand – and vice versa, I would argue. Going back to Nancy's point, when bad things start to happen, we tend to cease to be terribly rational in our approaches to them. And so therefore we need to understand that tendency towards irrationality and to factor it into the design of the approaches and the peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacebuilding strategies that we are trying to make work.

So just that's one thing that comes to me. You know, we in the peacekeeping world, in the peacebuilding world are not always wearing the right hats when it comes to figuring out, how do we find sustainable solutions and ones that actually build peace rather than engender further conflict.

Nancy Powell

I'll take a more positive one, based on just two quick examples. The cell phone is an enormous tool for dealing with this. In Uganda, which was now 20 years ago, just as the cell phones came out, they didn't have an extension service like I had in my county seats in Iowa, but they had enough work that would say now is the time to put the fertilizer on your corn crop, now is the time to plant your soybean crop. And it was an enormous help to people that perhaps were growing crops that were new to them or they were raising them differently.

If you fast forward ten years to Nepal, village ladies with a vegetable cooperative had been selling to a middleman who took them to the cleaners every day. We gave them a cell phone as part of USAID, one cell phone. They could call down to the market and say, "What are the tomatoes selling for today?" They knew whether it made sense to get on the bus and take the

tomatoes themselves or to sell to the middleman. Huge difference. And those differences in both Uganda and in Nepal, almost all, particularly if you were working with women, went to their children's education. So it's a multiplier. But I think the cell phone has enormous impact on agriculture and our food security issues.

Kristie Kenny

Can I just chime in a little bit?

Joseph Jones

Sure.

Kristie Kenney

I think one of the points, ambassador Powell made, it is technology. Technology, whether it is teaching people how to grow more efficient crops, how to improve the planting times and previously people didn't have that. I mean, it won't solve conflicts, but if you help people have productive incomes... And the second is – Forgive me for feeling a little prejudiced – the inclusion of women, women in the production of food; as Nancy points out, they are often the producers, the sellers – but increasing across the globe. And I do think this is the effort of not just governments but a lot of businesses, global businesses, NGO communities. You know, we can have that impact and can help play that positive role on seeing that not only do people have information about modern, improved agricultural methods but that women are included as a part of that, and that then feeds back to education, which ostensibly should reduce the propensity for conflict and also raise the prosperity level for all those involved.

Joseph Jones

Many of you have mentioned roads at some point during your comments. Talk just a little bit about infrastructure improvements and the investment in infrastructure and the role that might play in the escalating conflict or promoting and food security.

William Brownfield

Well, I'll start from this end, and then we can work down. And I'll be the voice of negativism, just to allow everyone else to become more positive as we go down the road. And I'll be very personal in it. I have worked with three countries, clearly in conflict, all of which will ring a bell with you. One as an ambassador – that was Colombia at the end of the last decade; and two, as the Assistant Secretary of State for Drugs and Law Enforcement with a heavy security focus, two countries you may have heard of, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In all of them roads and road building were part of the solution that was designed. And by the way, we're not idiots in the United States Government. We all actually do know something about agricultural development. But of that package of three, may I suggest from my perspective, there was exactly one success out of those three – that was Colombia. By the way, it took about 10 years to get there. And the one conclusion that I reached... And I will now stop, but I urge all of you to keep this in mind – It is a whole lot easier to build a successful food security strategy and program before the nation has gone into violent, armed conflict, than after. And we have learned this lesson very, very aggressively in the three countries I've mentioned. You can build all the roads you wish with your design to facilitate farm-to-market

communication and allow subsistence farmers to get their product to market and have a reasonable living, but if you then cannot control or maintain those roads, you haven't solved the problem. Take it from there, you optimists.

Joseph Jones

Ambassador Powell.

Nancy Powell

I would just take that, my experience in Pakistan, which had an enormous drug-producing problem on the border areas with Afghanistan. The creation of farm-to-market roads that brought in the possibility of selling tomatoes, sunflowers, sunflower oil and products like that, they actually made more money on those at the farmer level than they did with the opium poppy. But you had to be able to get it to market. And as exactly what Bill has said, the security situation deteriorated where they couldn't get it to market, then they would revert back. But it can have an enormous impact if there is a viable way to get the produce to market.

George Moose

What he said. No, it's true. And one of the things that concerns me is that some of our institutions, the World Bank, some of the regional banks that used to prioritize infrastructure development are no longer doing that. And that's a concern.

Joseph Jones

And finally, since we don't have very much time.

Kristie Kenney

Two minutes.

Joseph Jones

Two minutes. And this is going to be a tough question, but hopefully we can get it answered. Since the time of you beginning your career to now where your colleagues are who are still out in the field, how has the role of diplomacy evolved for talking about food security or that person's job in those embassies and in those consulates? How has their role evolved, and what challenges are they going to face in the next decade?

Kristie Kenney

I'll start, but I don't think we can really cover that in a minute and 30, so if we have a chance to run into any of you all later in the course of the day or tomorrow, here's supplement. But I will say... I'll take the positive side. The role of technology has connected Americans, not just diplomats, has brought many more actors into the role of diplomacy, into building connections. Universities, NGOs, businesses, are now able to connect with people around the world. As a diplomat, I found that terrific. It wasn't just me trying to bridge America and some other country. I have a whole country full of people helping build those bridges, helping build education, agriculture, U.S. business, cultural ties. And I found that phenomenal. I think that is a real asset. There is, of course, we know a downside to technology, but I found the upside

really broadened and deepened and improved those kind of connections. And I think that's tremendous and bodes very well for U.S. diplomacy in the future.

Nancy Powell

I would just add a couple things to that. I think one of them is that the resources available to our diplomats have gone down in terms of the total amount and compared to the needs. The second thing I would say is that we are in a competition with China on this. They have a very different approach to these kinds of projects. In the past in many of the countries where I was, we had a dialogue, and we asked for some improvements in governance or in human rights or in a variety of things in return for the assistance. The Chinese do not put any of those... It's a loan. If you default on it, as they did in Zambia Electric Corporation while I was in Zambia last year, they take it over. Maybe that message is starting to get out. But the Chinese lack of any kind of ties to aid is creating a very different dynamic for how we deliver our foreign assistance and the kinds of things that we had hoped to see in human rights or governance issue.

Joseph Jones

Anyone else have any?

William Brownfield

I'll offer some closing comments, since I see the numbers are now coming in red. First, I would like to make a pitch for the importance of public/private kind of partnerships as we address agriculture and food security issues anywhere in the world. My experience in Latin America, one of my embassies was Chile, the long, skinny country in the far southern end of South America. May I tell you that the relationships that were established between the U.S. wine producers and Chilean wine producers, between U.S. salmon producers and the salmon aquaculture community of Chile, between fruit and vegetable producers in the United States and in Chile and how they would negotiate their seasons and basically reach agreement as to when Chilean producers could begin to ship to the United States so as to avoid any and all possible conflicts, it actually solved far more problems than just those. At the end of the day, the fact that the actual private sector was in agreement made it much easier for the two governments to work through issues. And we actually slipped a free trade agreement through with Chile, a standalone, because there were virtually no agricultural issues that stood in the way. That's thing number one.

Thing number two, if I could mention—Life hasn't always been that way in U.S. agricultural relationships with Latin America. In the late 19th and early 20th century, particularly in Mexico and Central America, it was much more one of the large conglomerate that would then own hundreds of thousands of acres that would produce the fruit or the vegetables to come back to the United States of America. You have to deal wherever you are with the history of the agricultural sector with that particular country. And you've got to be attentive to that as you work through those issues. To a very considerable extent, the fact that we have countries and governments that are not necessarily in agreement these days, we have perhaps flipped where we might have been 30 or 40 years ago where the government can sort it out to where now you need the private sector to be able to assist in reaching the resolution. Thank you.

Joseph Jones

And I think with that, we are out of time, so would you join me in thanking our panelists for being here. And we appreciate all the challenges you've given us.