THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
Brookings Cafeteria Podcast
September 19, 2018

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DEWS: Welcome to the Brookings Cafeteria, the podcast about ideas and the experts who have them. I'm Fred Dews. The 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly is about to get underway in New York City. Delegates will grapple with issues ranging from economic growth, to sustainable development, to promoting human rights, to combating international terrorism, to maintaining peace and security.

The last item of peace and security is the topic of this special episode of The Brookings Cafeteria. Here to share his ideas and research on that matter is Bruce Jones, the Vice President and Director of Foreign Policy at Brookings, and author of numerous books on America's role in the global order, including “Still Ours to Lead: America, Rising Powers, and the Tension between Rivalry and Restraint.” And he is a co-author of a new paper titled “The New Challenges to International Peace and Security: Updating the Prevention Agenda.”

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And now on with the interview. Bruce welcome back to the Brookings Cafeteria.

JONES: Thanks for having me again.

DEWS: I say welcome back because you last appeared on the show in May of 2017 talking about your book about the Marshall Plan and the U.S. role in setting that up. So I encourage listeners to go find that and listen to a very interesting book and interview. But we're here today to talk about your new paper you’re the co-author with scholars including Charles Coll, Dan Toubolets, and Jason Fritz. It's on new challenges to international peace and security. And the opening sentence of the executive summary you write, “the world in 2018 faces an international security environment measurably worse than that of a mere five years earlier.” How is it worse?

JONES: Well there are two main factors. First of all, after roughly 20 years of steady declines in the level of war in the world in every continent and every region, we saw a

substantial and major reversal in that trend from about 2012 onwards, an increase in both the number and the intensity of wars in the world. Most of that is concentrated in the Middle East. The second thing we've witnessed is the beginnings of a sustained erosion of relations between the major military powers: the United States, China, and Russia in particular. Those are not yet at an acute phase or anything like that, but there is a steady deterioration, particularly in U.S.-Russia relations and increasingly now in U.S.-China relations. Those two things intersect because to respond to wars in the post-Cold War period, primarily the United States has either been the driver of action or it's gone to the U.N. Security Council and pushed the U.N. to act to respond to war. But that's been much harder to do in the last few years because tensions between the United States, Russia, and China have blocked the U.N. Security Council from acting in some of the critical cases. So wars are getting worse. And great power relations are impeding us from trying to treat that problem.

DEWS: Now there's a lot of data in your paper. I think it's a fascinating approach to put numbers behind these observations behind these research findings. And one of them it strikes me as very interesting, is that major wars, I think it's over 10,000 deaths a year, are the ones that are increasing and it's kind of overwhelming the decrease in less major wars. Can you explain kind of that dynamic?

JONES: Yeah, this goes to a maybe a controversial point in the paper. There's been a lot of pieces in the last couple of years from economics and policymakers talking about the fact that we're now at a global peak of an all-time peak in levels of conflict, et cetera. We find that that's not really true. It's true only if you measure wars by a metric which is used now in academic circles that I find very unsatisfying, which is wars that kill more than 25 people a year. That's a fundamentally different thing …

DEWS: 25?

JONES: 25 people a year. That's the threshold that is used now versus some years

ago [when] it was more conventional to use a thousand battle deaths a year as a threshold. And in this paper and in the academic literature we use 10,000 battle deaths as a threshold for major wars. When you look at major wars there is a slight increase in the number of them. There's not a large increase in the number of them. And so that's a very different way of looking at things than to say, oh we're at some sort of all-time peak in the numbers of conflict in the world. I think that's distorting. What is the case is that the wars in Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan are killing an awful lot of people, and particularly in Syria. And the number of battle deaths and the number of civilian deaths in those wars are very high. They're not higher than wars in, you know, the early 90s, the genocide in Rwanda, battle deaths in Angola, et cetera. But they are very high. And after roughly a 20 year period of continuous decline, it is a striking reversal.

DEWS: Is there anything that ties together that increase in battle deaths in those three countries in the region? You mention the Middle East, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Why is it happening in those areas of the world?

JONES: Well I think there are two reasons. First of all Afghanistan has its own particular trajectory and has actually been in a war for more or less three decades, for a full decade before we intervened militarily it was struggling with a range of forms of violence and oppression and terrorism. Syria, Yemen, Libya, some of the other cases, these are all manifestations of the Arab Spring and the backlash to the Arab Spring, breakdown of regional order, breakdown of social order within the region.

I think what's particular about that region is that unlike, say, conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America or the fringes of East Asia, it's much more difficult in the Middle East for international actors to come together to help to try to resolve those conflicts because the region simply plays a much weightier role in geopolitical affairs than does, say, sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America. Oil interests, security interests, democratic interests, aligned interests, all mean that the United States, Russians and others have very

significant interests in these states. And so they don't view the conflicts through the prism of how can we stop the violence against civilians; they view the conflict through the prism of their strategic interests. And so rather than working together through the Council or through a regional organization to try to resolve these wars, rather, we and others have been trying to make sure our side wins or make sure that we see an outcome that's aligned with our interests. And that's fueling these wars.

Second point to make is that these are states with large, capable armies and large, capable states. They've been deteriorated through the course of violence. But, for example, in thinking about potentially responding to the Syrian civil war, you had to contend with the fact that Assad had a 500,000 strong army. That's a serious fighting force, whatever their degree of capability. So you can't just roll up with a few U.N. peacekeepers and take care of them like that. They're much, much tougher problems.

DEWS: And now we have seen Russian military involvement in Syria which leads me to segue to Russia and its involvement in Ukraine and Crimea. I guess we could track back to Georgia, even in other places in Central Asia. You talk about how those kinds of conflicts are changing the global security picture.

JONES: Yeah, we're seeing a return to a phenomenon that we were very familiar with during the Cold War, namely proxy wars involving the great powers. Almost all civil wars or proxy wars in one form or another, i.e. local combatants, the government itself have some support from neighbors or external parties, but it's a very different thing when that external party is a major military power. And so when either we or the Russians or somebody of that scale decides to lend support—financial, military advice, weapons, or direct deployments to one side of the conflict or another—it becomes a much, much more difficult proposition to resolve. And what we know from the Cold War is that proxy wars can last literally for decades. In a civil war, there are some finite level of resources or some finite level of pain the society can suffer and the pressures mount to resolve the situation.

But when you're fueling those wars through the flow of weapons and money and sometimes people, then they can extend essentially indefinitely. And I worry greatly that we're moving back into a phase of that kind of proxy warfare: huge human cost and cost to the relations between the powers.

DEWS: And do you think that's spurred by Vladimir Putin and Russia's newfound aggression? Or do you think they're responding to external factors that make them want to be kind of returned to their, I don't want to call it expansionist, but their kind of near abroad focus. Syria is hardly Russia's near abroad …

JONES: We need to treat that differently region to region. I think in Ukraine, Putin is doing a number of things. He's implementing a vision that he has of trying to expand Russian influence to his near abroad. He's trying to undermine the West, he's trying to undermine our efforts, which were substantial to expand the zone of the European institutions, EU etc. right up to his border. He's pushing back against that, as well as wrong footing U.S. and wrong putting the Europeans; causing havoc.

Syria is very different. I think in the Middle East, writ large, what Putin saw was an opportunity in the chaos that came in Syria as we were holding back from intervening, debatable you know whether those are good or bad thing we can debate, but we were holding back from intervening. And he saw an opportunity to shape the course of events to flex his muscles to demonstrate that he has been putting a huge amount of money and sophistication in the development of new weapons systems and training his armed forces in a variety of ways to showcase that. And he's been very successful in using that as a platform essentially to showcase Russian power. Now, an extraordinary quantity of his actually deployable military power is in Syria, at some level that's a vulnerability for him. But we have not chosen to make that a particularly acute vulnerability so far, and he has built his credibility with the Sunni world and in weapons sales and shown himself to be a player in geopolitics. I think that's his core objective in Syria.

DEWS: Can we switch to China now, another great global power? Where do you see the challenges to international peace and security in the U.S.-China relationship?

JONES: This is very different because when you look at places like Africa, maybe some parts of the Middle East, that's becoming more complicated, you see in security terms that Chinese interests are not particularly misaligned with ours. China has a kind of overweening interest in the stability of places that produce resources; that requires huge flows of natural resources—oil, gas, minerals, and all sorts of things. And it has chosen to invest in a lot of places beyond its borders where those resources can be found. It has begun to contribute to peacekeeping forces and things like that as part of its effort to maintain stability. That is globally.

In Asia it's very different. And in Asia, China is flexing its political muscles, its economic muscles, and it’s sort of laying the groundwork for potentially flexing its military muscles in the region. [The] challenge to that is this is a region that we have maintained security in for a long period of time; the countries it's flexing politically against are our allies or many of them are. And so we see a significant threat to our interests and a significant threat to the order that we've backed in the region. It's not an acute military threat, but there are serious flashpoints in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, the Korean peninsula where things could escalate. Taiwan Straits. And so what we're watching is a relatively rapid, I think, escalation of security tensions between the United States and China in Asia. Although I think constrained by a deep debate in this country about what we should be doing in Asia or not and debates in the key Asian allies about these questions.

DEWS: Switching topics again, how does the spread of terrorism complicate the global security picture? And in particular I'm thinking about the Islamic State. It seems like it was pretty severely defeated in the Middle East in Iraq and Syria and, I may get that wrong. But talk about Islamic State, talking about terrorism and how that complicates this picture.

JONES: You know this is an important question and it's going to be particularly important as a backdrop to the debates at the U.N. General Assembly. One of the phenomena we've witnessed is that although ISIS was substantially degraded in Iraq, as well as to a degree in Syria, it's also metastasized. It's taken new forms. It spread into new places. We've seen sort of offshoots of ISIS morphing onto a local terrorist movements or rebel movements of a variety of type. Most significantly, Boko Haram in Nigeria which in 2014 and 2015 killed more people than ISIS did—a very significant organization. We've seen it spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa and parts of sub-Saharan Africa as well. What's become very significant is the almost total fusion now of the phenomenon of civil wars and the phenomenon of the spread of terrorism. And one of the things that we point to in the paper is if you look at wars where people are dying in large numbers, 93 percent of all battle deaths in civil war occurred in countries where there was also a very significant terrorism presence and problem.

So there's been a fusion of the counterterrorism agenda on the one hand and the kind of managing civil wars agenda on the other. That's very complicated for the U.N. because the U.N. was really a leading actor in managing civil wars during the 1990s and the 2000s. But it's been extremely shy of taking on a counterterrorism agenda. The United States has been pretty much the leading actor until pretty recently, in driving the counterterrorism agenda. Now there's a wider coalition of actors supporting that. But we haven't been as central to the management of civil war, so you have these two separate regimes the civil wars regime on the one hand and a counterterrorism regime on the other. Yet the cases have fused.

And what we're watching right now is a lot of policy uncertainty and a lot of debate and the kind of disorganized way about how we should be approaching these situations where there is both the terrorism problem and a civil war problem. Which should come first which is the dominant factor, who should do what? And this is a bit of a mess to my mind.

The U.N. itself has been too hesitant and too reluctant to acknowledge that terrorism is simply a central part of the wars that they are grappling with and to adapt their tools and instruments to that effect. I think the United States is also being too reluctant to notice that resolving the civil wars themselves is a central part of the strategy for dealing with the terrorism problem. Terrorists thrive in environments of instability and uncertainty like civil wars.

DEWS: Is there a structural issue that maybe drives that bifurcation of the two issues? And I'm thinking in terms of, you know, the actual agencies in the U.S. government, the State Department, Defense Department, or agencies in the U.N. where you've got people who are experts in civil war on one side and people over here who are experts in counterterrorism and they haven't heretofore had to really talk to each other; and I'm just speculating here.

JONES: That that's a little bit of it, it's certainly a phenomenon that the debates at the U.N. Efforts to try to push the U.N. in a more constructive direction on counterterrorism, these kinds of things are heavily driven by State Department and with some backstopping from the Department of Defense, whereas the counterterrorism operations that we're engaged in around the world are really driven by special operators and DOD directly into the combatant commands. So they do operate in quite different spheres, and there's not been today a huge amount of overlap. There are some places where they overlap, Mali for example, there is both a counterterrorism operation and a peacekeeping and civil war management operation. They kind of coexist.

The other phenomenon that we're starting to see, and we talk a little bit about in the paper, is the spread of counter-terrorism coalitions. We all know about the global coalition against Daesh or against ISIS that our president John Allen led when it was established. But we've seen several of these come into being a multinational force combating Boko Haram, what's known as the G5 which is a group of five countries fighting against an ISIS

offshoot in the Sahara desert, and in North Africa a similar coalition in northern Uganda dealing with the Lord's Resistance Army and related groups. So you're starting to see the spread of these sorts of informal coalitions to undertake counterterrorism fight and there's quite a lot of countries participating in that and that's I think a phenomenon that most Americans aren't aware of and it's happening outside of the U.N. And so there's an issue there that has to get resolved as well.

DEWS: So we've recently observed the 17th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks that were carried out by al Qaeda. So al Qaeda comes to mind in this conversation. Can you talk about what is the status of al Qaeda as a global terrorist organization?

JONES: Well, as I mentioned earlier it's metastasized so it's sort of operational punch inside Iraq has been substantially deteriorated, its operational punch inside Syria has been deteriorated. But that's not to say it has been eliminated by any means and it spread throughout the region. We see offshoots of it in Libya, Yemen, and Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and that mistrust association is very dangerous. For a considerable period of time, we were also watching it developing substantial online recruiting and dissemination capacity, some of the attacks in Europe that we saw two. three years ago had links into that. I'm not quite sure where that stands, we've seen the last of that in the last couple of years. It's been hard to know whether that as a consequence of substantial or effective prevention efforts on the one hand or simply because it's put its resources into some of these newer movements on the other I suspect a little bit of both.

DEWS: So in the paper you and the coauthors identify these characteristics of the global security environment, but then you say cutting through all of that are what you call the frontier threats of cyber technology and artificial intelligence. Can you just talk a little bit about what those two phenomena are?

JONES: They're quite different. So first of all when it comes to cyber, you know almost everything we do now is organized around the flow of information via computer

systems and the vulnerability of those systems to attack, to hacking, a variety of types of cyber offensive weapons, et cetera, is quite acute. We are starting as a country to grapple with this in terms of the vulnerability of those systems to major attack in the form of warfare from a country like China or North Korea or Iran, etc. But at the same time, we have to be aware that even a new group like ISIS would have the capacity to use a number of online tools to improve its targeting, to improve its dissemination, to improve its recruiting, to try to undermine our systems in a variety of ways. So that's a concern.

Artificial intelligence, I think, is going to be a different phenomenon. It's got sort of two major parts. One is this may be being exaggerated in some of the contemporary literature, I think, but … as AI infuses itself into a variety of forms of industrial technology and displaces work, think about driverless cars, etc. In some contexts it can have substantial social dislocation and political dislocation affects. I think that's going to be phenomena we see over a longer period of time.

We're also starting to see the application of artificial intelligence to weapons systems, autonomous weapons systems, and the ability to operate large numbers of drones in swarms. So far, that's how technology that lies primarily in the hands of state actors but it's not a very complicated technology at this stage, and I don't think it's going to be very long before we see a significant terrorist organization—al Qaeda or al Qaeda 2.0—using an AI enabled drone swarm, for example, to execute a very sophisticated attack on critical systems someplace. So getting our handle and getting our heads around that problem is a growing challenge. That's not something that happens at the U.N. in the first instance, that's going to be great powers' effort in the first instance. Though I think in the end, the U.N. will play some role in particular in terms of limiting the access to of tools to non-state actors that can be hard to do.

DEWS: Well, I know that one of the top priorities of our president, John Allen, is artificial intelligence and its implications for nearly everything in the world. So I know we'll

be hearing a lot more about that from you and from other Brookings scholars so, more to come on that. Let's switch to the U.N. itself. As I said, the U.N. General Assembly is happening in September in New York City. And one of their agenda items is peace and security. Can you talk about specifically how the U.N. General Assembly will be addressing the issues that you raise in the paper?

JONES: I think the reality is that almost all of the substantial issues—sustainable development. climate change. research security, etc.—are going to be overshadowed by just a giant gunfight. The General Assembly as a stage, it doesn't do things, it's a stage on which countries project. And I think what we're going to see this year is an awful lot of countries projecting their dissatisfaction with what they see as a kind of radical unilateralism of the Trump administration. And you'll see the Trump administration broadcasting its sort of firmness in its disdain for forms of multilateralism that in any way constrain American sovereignty, not that they can meaningfully do. So I think we'll see an awful lot of heat in the rhetoric around the General Assembly, I'm not sure we'll see a lot of light.

DEWS: So the Trump administration is pushing its idea of unilateral, radical unilateralism, but that conflicts squarely with the multilateral nature of the United Nations and of other global institutions like NATO. How does that conflict play out in the world and where does it end?

JONES: This is one of these funny ones where the ideological debate is in a way much sharper than the reality. There is almost nothing in the multilateral sphere that in any meaningful way constrains American sovereignty. It constrains the sovereignty of other countries, that's true, but it doesn't constrain American sovereignty in a meaningful way and everybody in the administration knows it. It's just a point of … principle and a way to push back on even the prospect that there could be reforms of multilateralism that constrain American sovereignty. Fine, that's a kind of rhetorical point and a point of

principle—I don't disagree with the point in principle, I just think it's essentially meaningless in practice. And the reality in practice is that in almost every place where we have a concern with terrorism or security of some type, or nuclear proliferation, some part or other of the multilateral system is deployed alongside us trying to solve that problem.

So it seems to me an important part of the agenda should be making sure that those institutions are performing effectively. To do that, you have to have a theory of the case, you have to have a strategy, and you have to have diplomacy. We can derive a lot of these institutions but we can't actually reform them by ourselves. We do need a larger coalition to do that just in the nature of multilateral itself. Some drives some people nuts that you have to actually work with other people in the world to get things done. But you know what, you do actually have to work with other people in the world to get things done overseas. That's just the nature of reality.

DEWS: In the paper you note that there are fewer peacekeepers, U.N. peacekeepers deployed this year than just a few years ago, although the level today is still higher than it has been. But they're not deployed in the most needed places. When we talk about tools that the United Nations has to address global security problems, peacekeepers is one of them, but they're not necessarily in the places where it appears that they're needed most. Why not?

JONES: Right. Well this is the debating point at the U.N. … a sort of fighting point. I've been part of a very small minority of voices arguing that the U.N. needs to get serious about the fact that in the places where it's deployed and in the wars that we're confronting, terrorism is an essential part of the problem and if it can't harden its own posture, bring more capable troops into its peacekeeping deployments, and be part of the answer in pushing back on terrorism, then it's going to start becoming essentially irrelevant to the management of war. And frankly that's what we're starting to see. These numbers are coincidentally identical but they're not from the same phenomenon, again, I think it's 93

percent are certainly, about 90 plus percent of battle deaths occur in places where there are no peacekeepers deployed. In other words, where there are sort of major wars underway, we're not seeing the deployment of UN peacekeepers.

Now, the U.N. tends to go in towards the tail end of a war, it doesn't go into the kind of acute heavy fighting phase. But even by that standard, we've watched this change over time and the 1990s for example if you did the same measure the number was more like 40 percent or 50 percent, so in other words the U.N. was deploying into some of the dangerous war, some of the hard cases, maybe towards the tail end of it of trying to bring it down to lower levels. But it was certainly a part of the solution set in tapering off levels of civil war. It really isn't part of the solution set right now in dealing with terrorism, and instead you're seeing these informal coalitions. That's fine. One level I tend to believe that over time, you get better performance if you can have a more systematic way of approaching these problems, do lessons learned share ideas about how to improve your performance, etc. So I would on balance rather, see the U.N. get serious about this problem and have more of those actions undertaken in that framework. But that's an issue that the U.N. are going to have to grapple with because right now it's essentially becoming irrelevant to the management of the key problems of international security.

DEWS: What are those tools at the U.N. General Assembly, that the U.N. as a body has to address these issues apart from deploying peacekeeping forces to hot zones?

JONES: Well that's a central part of it. So there are some examples where it's doing things like I'm suggesting. So for example in Mali, you have a combined deployment, you have a French deployment. It's receded now but you had a French deployment alongside a fairly tough U.N. deployment. And those two things together tackled both the rebel movement in Mali and the terrorist organization in Mali and they kind of cooperated in that fight. That was a reasonably effective paring of capabilities, but we haven't seen that kind of pairing very often. The French are now being replaced by the Dutch and the Canadians

in Mali. That's still proving to be an effective arrangement, reasonably effective arrangement, but it's one of the only places where we've seen that sort of pairing of capability sort of heavy fighting forces on the one hand and more traditional peacekeepers and the other to deal with different parts of the problem and variations on that kind of arrangement it seems to me are going to be necessary and a lot more cases and we're currently seeing it.

DEWS: But can the UN also deploy economic and political tools to deal with some of the underlying issues that cause violence to erupt in a place like Mali or even Nigeria?

JONES: To be very precise here, the UN is often the official lead of diplomacy through a special representative of the secretary general, et cetera. But where the UN really has weighed, it’s when it's seen to be acting with the support of the permanent members in the Security Council so that the UN is a kind of a framework through which the United States and France and Britain and Russia and others act. The UN by itself is a particularly powerful entity. It sort of has power if it's infused with that power by the permanent five. So the political framework for negotiation is often the UN, but it's the power of the key member states within that that gives it weight.

Economically, the U.N. is pretty marginal on these things yet does a lot of development programs. They're pretty flabby to be honest with you. Much more significant is the World Bank. The World Bank, though, has a serious problem and how it deals with questions of development and places where there is terrorism, it's really trying to get its head around how to grapple with that problem. We've begun a dialogue between President John Allen and President Jim Kim of the World Bank and a number of people on their respective teams to help the Bank think through this challenge of how do you do development and how do you treat some of these underlying causes in a case where there's a significant terrorism and civil war problem.

DEWS: So the U.N. announced that the theme for this year's General Assembly

meeting is “making the United Nations relevant to all people global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful and sustainable societies.” Do you think the U.N. is relevant today?

JONES: Sorry you lost me at about sentence four there. The U.N. is pretty good at coming up at sort of pretty banal phrases like that. I have no idea what that even means. Look, to my way of thinking about these things, multilateralism matters if and when it's a framework in which the major powers find tools with which they can work together to solve problems. And we've seen at various points in history the major powers, including the United States and the Soviets, or the United States by itself, for now the United States and the Chinese and the Russians, wants to find a solution to a problem needs some place where they can collaborate and it's easier to do that if there's an established infrastructure for that in a place where they meet any and a set of arrangements they can use. That's the potential of the U.N., to be a place where the major powers come together to solve problems. I'm always resistant to this notion of the U.N. as a kind of solution to global problems and kind of relevant forever. That's a little bit romantic. Frankly where the U.N. is effective is when powerful countries use it to try to solve problems.

DEWS: So my understanding of the way that the U.N. Security Council, the wider body Security Council operates is that there's a rotating chair and the United States just coincidentally has the chair as the General Assembly gets underway. So we'll see. Ambassador Haley, we'll see President Trump in the chair kind of leading the discussion. What do you expect to see, what are going to be listening for in those presentations?

JONES: If they do, and I don't know whether they are but if they do a presidential meeting of the Security Council, it's only been done a handful of times in history, that should be an interesting session to watch. President Trump chairing the Security Council. Ambassador Haley has been a very effective ambassador to the U.N. She's chosen to make the theme of the presidency corruption. I'm a little torn on that one. Look, I think that

corruption is an important part of the international security agenda, the kind of massive state corruption of in a place like Russia, North Korea is a big part of why those states pose the kinds of challenge they do. Corruption is a part of a civil war agenda. That's all fair.

I confess I think we are as a country in a place where our credentials to be speaking out on issues of the rule of law are weaker than they should be and that's a substantial cost. OK fine, that's in the background. She'll try to move this agenda at the U.N. If there's a presidential meeting, those tend to be again sort of acts of drama more than substance. Presidents aren't people who roll up their sleeves and negotiate outcomes, they posture their country. And what we'll see is a lot of posturing. But it's within the role of the possible that you could see some alignment of not on the corruption agenda but on some of the counterterrorism agendas or nuclear proliferation agendas, you could see some alignment of interests among the players at the P5 under American leadership.

DEWS: So once it's all said and done, once the U.N. General Assembly is over, the delegates go back to their countries, then what happens to the international peace and security agenda moving forward?

JONES: Yeah I think that one of the themes that's beginning to really build up is this debate about whether or not the U.N. should be sort of toughened up to help handle the counterterrorism problem. And you'll hear in the subtext and in the kind of long form of the speeches you'll hear some leaders speaking to that. It's on the secretary general's mind, it's on the mind of his top leaders. And there's a big debate about it inside the U.N., some people think the U.N. should have nothing to do with it or that it can't be hard enough to do it. And some people will see what I see, which is that if it doesn't it's making itself sort of increasingly irrelevant to the peace and security agenda. So I think you're going to see that fight get elevated, you'll start to see some more serious discussion about what it would take to harden into the U.N. to deal with these problems. It's going to require more

participation by major countries in peacekeeping operations, it's going to require a more effective command and control operations etc. all that's within the realm of the possible. We've seen effective operations in the U.N. before. But that does take a change in the thinking inside the U.N. itself and a different kind of engagement from some of the more important countries who can do these things, the Dutch, the Canadians, the Swedes, the Chinese, ourselves, the Brits, and others who could infuse the UN with the kind of power we need to do these things in a more serious way.

DEWS: OK, well, then we'll pay attention to what you and other Brookings scholars have to say about all this in the coming weeks and months. Thanks, Bruce for sharing your time and expertise today.

JONES: Thanks for having me, Fred

DEWS: "The Brookings Cafeteria" podcast is the product of an amazing team of colleagues, including audio engineer and producer Gaston Reboredo, with assistance from Mark Hoelscher. The producers are Brennan Hoban and Chris McKenna. Bill Finan, Director of the Brookings Institution Press, does the book interviews, and Jessica Pavone and Eric Abalahin provide design and web support. Our interns this semester are Churon Bernier and Tim Madden. Finally, my thanks to Camilla Ramirez and Emily Horne for their guidance and support. "The Brookings Cafeteria" is brought to you by the Brookings Podcast Network, which also produces "Intersections" hosted by Adriana Pita, "5 on 45", and our events podcasts. E-mail your questions and comments to me at BCP@Brookings.edu. If you have a question for a scholar, include an audio file and I'll play it and the answer on the air. Follow us on Twitter @policypodcasts. You can listen to "The Brookings Cafeteria" in all the usual places. Visit us online at Brookings.edu/podcasts. Until next time, I'm Fred Dews.