

P3.5.2.3
(occ also H2.6.2 and
C3(SA))

SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY

40 WASSENAARSEWEG
2598 CJ THE HAGUE

FAX NUMBER: 070-3480888
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ZUIDAFRIKAANSE AMBASSADE

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8 November 1995

Professor Matthew Meselson
Harvard Sussex Program
Department of Molecur and Cellular Biology
Harvard University
7 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge MA 02138
U.S.A.

Dear Professor Meselson,

As the South African Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, I was appointed to serve as Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for the period August 1995 to February 1996. I write to you now in both of these capacities.

As part of my work with the Preparatory Commission, I recently had the pleasure of meeting your colleague, Ms. Mitslal Kifleyesus, Harvard Sussex Program Researcher, in Brussels and I write to record my favourable impressions from that meeting and to express my support for the important work which Ms. Kifleyesus is undertaking, particularly in the crucial area of working towards achieving a truly universal Chemical Weapons Convention.

As you will be aware, one third of the membership of the Preparatory Commission - 58 Member States - have assigned their embassies/missions in Brussels the task of following the activities of the Commission. These 58 Member States do not have diplomatic representation in the Netherlands. Normally, delegations from Brussels are not in a position, for logistical and financial reasons, to attend most of the meetings of the Commission. Consequently, they face difficulties in following the deliberations in The Hague and advising their respective capitals about the work of the Commission, about preparation of national legislation, or about ratification. This has the potential to undermine the universality of the CWC and its effective implementation.

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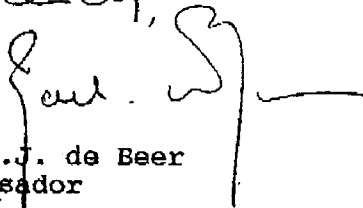
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Efforts aimed at achieving both the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and its effective implementation (both of which will be critically important during the initial years after its entry into force) require and will continue to require the active involvement of all Member States, including those whose representatives are based in Brussels, and not in The Hague. Historically, Africans are well represented in the Belgian capital and their active involvement in the Commission's and the future OPCW's activities has to be fostered in Brussels. Therefore, it is deemed useful that Ms. Kifleyesus continues to assist the Commission in the Belgian capital with particular emphasis on the needs of African States. She is able to gain the necessary introductions quickly and effectively and understands how to establish and to maintain a stable working relationship with a politically, culturally, and linguistically heterogeneous range of target groups and individuals. I understand that in recent months she has been particularly active in the areas of implementing legislation and organisational measures necessary for internal preparation for ratification in various countries, in particular from Africa. At the same time, she also assists delegations from Latin America and Eastern Europe whose representatives are based in Brussels.

Unfortunately, resources of the Commission aimed at supporting this important activity are limited and I therefore take this opportunity to ask if the Harvard Sussex Program might be in a position to contribute towards the cost of maintaining this very useful work of Ms. Kifleyesus in Brussels.

Please be assured of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Z.J. de Beer
Ambassador