

December 15, 1969

Mr. William Epstein
United Nations Disarmament Staff
United Nations Building
New York, N.Y.

Dear Bill,

I notice that several speakers in the First Committee have stated that fewer than half of the members of the United Nations are parties to the Geneva Protocol. This is not in agreement with the enumeration of parties to the Protocol recently completed by the Treaty Office of the United States Department of State. For your interest, I enclose a summary of their conclusions. If they are correct, more than sixty percent of the states maintaining permanent missions to the United Nations are parties to the Geneva Protocol. If you are unable to bring this possible discrepancy to the attention of the Netherlands delegation and others who seem to be unaware of it, please let me know and I shall attempt to do so by another means.

Incidentally, I notice that Saudi Arabia is absent from the State Department's list of parties. However, I find that the statements of Mr. Baroody are so strong in support of the Protocol as to make me wonder if our State Department is correct. This leaves me to ask how many delegations to the United Nations consider their countries to be parties to the Geneva Protocol. Is there any way in which they could be polled in this regard? It is rather an absurd situation in which seriously divergent views are put forward regarding how many states are parties.

With warm regards,

As ever,

Matthew Meselson

MM:ls
Encl.