

Department of State FORM DS-4 1-7-55	CLASSIFICATION SECRET
TRANSMITTAL SLIP	DATE July 2, 1968
TO Department of State - Mr. Atherton - NEA <small>For the Attention of</small>	
FROM AmEmbassy, Tel Aviv, Israel	
TO THE FOREIGN SERVICE	TO THE DEPARTMENT
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<input type="checkbox"/> Transmit to: <input type="checkbox"/> Inform:	(U.S. Agency)
REFERENCE	
REF: TEL AVIV 4354 of July 2, 1968	
ITEMS/REMARKS	
<p>As stated in Tel Aviv 4354 transmitted herewith is the original of Foreign Minister Eban's reply to the Secretary's message of April 29, 1968, concerning the non-proliferation treaty.</p> <p>It will be appreciated if your office will transmit the original to the Secretary.</p> <p>RS/R FILES</p> <p>Attention <u>Mrs. Mullett</u> HB Keep this study together.</p>	
IN REPLY REFER TO FILE NUMBER AND DRAFTING OFFICE	
FILE NO.	SIGNATURE <u>E. Gibson Lanpher</u> E. Gibson Lanpher
CLASSIFICATION SECRET	OFFICE Office of the Ambassador

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority WMD 96900
 By JP NARA Date 6/27/08

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Authority MMD 969 000

By JF NARA Date 6/24/08

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MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

שר החוץ

Jerusalem, 30 June, 1968.

Dear Mr. Secretary,

My colleagues and I have given earnest thought to your message to me of 29 April, regarding the proposed treaty to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. I am sorry that my journeys to Europe have delayed my reply.

We fully grasp the implications of the proposed treaty for mankind as a whole, and, by speech and vote, have supported the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons during all the international discussions of the subject, including the recent debate and vote at the Resumed Session of the General Assembly. At the same time, your message has rightly and frankly placed the question of Israel adherence to the treaty in the context of our national security, which must obviously be Israel's first concern.

We are grateful for your Government's awareness of Israel's special and unique security situation and for the assurances which you reaffirm. Unfortunately peace is not yet in sight. Our neighbours remain obdurate in their hostility and in their desire to destroy us. In this attitude they are encouraged by the automatic political support they receive from a number of States, chief among them the U.S.S.R. - one of the proposers of the non-proliferation treaty - which at the same time is supplying them, at nominal cost, with massive quantities of the most modern military equipment. As long as this situation remains unchanged,

Signed: *Abba Eban* ./.

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By JF NARA Date 6/27/08

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we cannot (with all our understanding of the international aspects of the problem) regard ourselves as in the same category as other States that are recognized by their neighbours, and have their peace and integrity assured by the major powers.

Moreover, we learnt last year with special incisiveness that Israel cannot realistically count on external military aid if she is attacked. It is in this situation that we are being asked to make commitments for at least twenty-five years. It is not surprising that we should devote profound thought to such an undertaking for the uncertain future, and that we are unable to divorce it entirely from the contemporary realities to which you refer.

The draft treaty cannot in itself give us a sense of assurance that nuclear weapons will never become available to our neighbours - particularly as not all the nuclear powers are associated with the treaty. While the three-Power Security Council declaration is of political importance, it is a declaration of intention, and not a binding commitment. Its practical effect in a specific situation would depend on the three Powers concerned taking a common position and joint action. One of the three Powers is openly hostile to Israel, and has in the past threatened us with missile attack. The declaration does not appear to go beyond the provisions of the Charter concerning any act or threat of aggression; nor is the veto power affected.

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These are some of the considerations which dictate our special sensitivity on the long-term issues involved in the discussion on the treaty. Moreover, although Israel is a non-nuclear power in the military sense, her technological capacity is a potent element in her regional and international position. You also know of our difficulty with the structure and bias of the I.A.E.A. and of the strong position of the U.A.R. and the Communist States in its direction.

In mentioning these considerations, I can assure you that my Government is anxious to follow a course which takes into account the points you have raised in your letter. We shall continue to follow the progress of the draft treaty with close and constructive attention, having regard to all the factors I have outlined above.

Yours sincerely,

Abba Eban

The Honorable Dean Rusk,
Secretary of State,
WASHINGTON, DC.