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LETTER DATED 19 FEBRUARY 1969 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to convey to you our grave concern at the attack on an EL AL airliner in Zurich airport 18 February. This attack, which my Government deplores as a reckless and wanton interference with peaceful air transport, is only the most recent of a number of incidents growing out of the Arab-Israeli dispute and involving safety of civilian air transport.

The United States has made clear in the Security Council on past occasions its view that armed intervention that disrupts the movement of civilian air transport represents an outrageous disregard for the laws of nations and an intolerable interference with the safety of civilian passengers. It has also emphasized the importance that it attaches to perfecting and strengthening rules of international law that will safeguard international civilian aviation against acts of unlawful interference. This latest incident gives added urgency to efforts in appropriate international bodies to provide such vital protection.

The concern of the United States arises as well from the fact that the 18 February attack represents a continuation of the tragic cycle of violence that has come to characterize the Middle East situation and which in itself is so obstructive to the search for peace. This latest incident demonstrates once again how urgent it is that all concerned exercise restraint and prevent actions which increase tension and impede efforts toward peace.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Charles W. YOST