

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.4/506  
25 May 1950  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

Commission on Human Rights

LETTER FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE USSR

The Secretary-General has the honour to circulate to the members of the Commission on Human Rights the following letter dated 5 May 1950, together with a communication from the Civil Rights Congress, which he has received from Mr. Yakov A. Malik, the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations:

I have the honour herewith to communicate to you a letter from the Civil Rights Congress dated 24 April 1950 and addressed to Mr. S. Tsarapkin, representative of the USSR on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

I would request you to circulate this letter to the members of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed) Yakov A. MALIK

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Letter dated 24 April 1950 to the USSR member of the  
Commission on Human Rights from the Chairman of the  
Board of Directors and the National Executive  
Secretary of the Civil Rights Congress

New York, 24 April 1950

Nazim Hikmet, the greatest living poet of Turkey, is on a hunger strike to force his release from the prison in which he has been incarcerated for the past twelve years. The twenty-eight years in jail to which this great poet was sentenced was based on only one charge: that his poetry was "spreading communist ideas in the ranks of the Turkish army and navy." No matter with what philosophical label these poems were described, that they advanced the interests of the great mass of the people could not be denied, and that the continued imprisonment of this man constitutes a violation of free speech as set forth in the Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, is obvious to all forward-minded people.

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As a member of

As a member of the Human Rights Commission, most certainly it is incumbent on you to act in this case. If a people's poet can be jailed and permitted to die because of his ideas expressed in his poetry, is this not a gross violation of human rights? We therefore appeal to you to raise this question in the Human Rights Commission. Your action in this matter can save the life of this great poet of democracy.

(Signed) George MARSHALL  
Chairman, Board of Directors

William L. PATTERSON  
National Executive Secretary