

North American Old Catholic Church

Office of the Presiding Archbishop

March 10, 2008

Mr. Viktor Yushchenko
President of Ukraine
Bankovaya Str. 11
01220 Kyiv
UKRANE

Dear President Yushchenko:

I write to you today from the United States regarding Chechen refugee *Lema Susarov*. Despite being granted recognition as a refugee by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and subsequent arrangements for his resettlement in Finland, Mr. Susarov is still being held in detention in Kyiv.

UNHCR determined he was a refugee in August of 2007, and his status and resettlement was accepted by Finland was approved on 11 October 2007. Despite these actions by the international community, your government continues to hold Mr. Susarov in Kyiv since his original detention on 20 July 2007.

Mr. President, the international community continues to watch the activities of your government, with particular attention to how you deal with and respond to the crises of the human persons in your borders. I assure you, that in addition to this watchful international eye, God also is watching how you treat and deal with your fellow man. Most assuredly, the errors you continue to make in this life will certainly come to bear and affect you in the next life.

For the sake of Mr. Susarov, and indeed for the sake and preservation of your own soul, I enjoin our voices to those of the United Nations, the international refugee community, and all those who are concerned for the dignity of human life that you comply with 1951 Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) and release IMMEDIATELY Mr. Susarov and give him full and unfettered access to the UN High Commissioner so that he may be re-settled in Finland. Remember, the tenants of the 1951 Convention state that refugees should not be returned to any country where their life or freedom would be threatened.

We will pray for Mr. Susarov, for your presidency, and for the people of the Ukraine.

Cordially,

The Most Reverend Michael V. Seneco, SPSA, DD, L.Th.
Presiding Archbishop of North America