In the spring of 1945, just before the war ended, Rubinstein gave a recital at San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House for an audience that included many of the delegates who had assembled to create the United Nations. “A long range of multicolored flags represented the nations which had convened for the historic act of signing the charter,” Rubinstein recalled. “I tried to find the Polish flag but there was no sign of it.” After he had played “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which was required at the beginning of all wartime public events in the United States, “a blind fury took hold of me,” he said. “I addressed the audience in a loud, angry voice: ‘In this hall where the great nations gather to make a better world, I miss the flag of Poland, for which this cruel war was fought.’ And now I shouted, ‘I shall play the Polish anthem. . . . I played it with a tremendous impact and very slowly and repeated the last phrase with a big resounding forte. The audience stood up as one man when I finished and gave me a great ovation.’” The story is “authentic,” said Nela Rubinstein, who was present, and she added that “Poles all over the globe were moved” by her husband’s gesture.

Rubenstein on Symphony Finale

The 33rd season of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra will close with two performances of the orchestra with Artur Rubenstein, pianist, as guest artist, on Friday afternoon and Saturday evening in the Opera House. Rubenstein will play Beethoven's Concerto No. 3 in D minor with the orchestra. Conductor Pierre Monteux also has scheduled selections from Suite No. 5, Bach-Wood; "The Afternoon of a Faun," Debussy; "Suite Protee, Milhaud," and Cesar Franck's Symphony in D minor.

Two Concerts today and one Wednesday night provide the entire music schedule for the coming week. Artur Rubinstein will give a piano recital this afternoon at the Opera House under the auspices of California Concerts. He will not use a printed program but will
Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco
1945

Representatives of the Polish government in exile were not allowed to participate in the founding conference of the United Nations.

“Artur Rubinstein... was invited to the inauguration of the United Nations in San Francisco and was asked to play in the San Francisco Opera House... since among the flags he did not see that of Poland, he began his concert with the Polish national anthem.”
Honorable Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.,
Secretary of State,
Hotel Fairmont,
San Francisco, California.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Absence of Poland, a charter member of the United Nations, from the San Francisco Conference, indicates that the International Organization intended for the preservation of future world peace is being constructed on a very shaky foundation. Such a structure, with the tomb of Poland as its cornerstone, cannot endure. "Pax Americana," the only hope of mankind, must not be based upon injustice. Victory, achieved through sacrifice of our sons on the battlefields of the world, dare not be rendered futile by a new policy of appeasement at this Conference.

It is evident to all that the fate of the heroic Polish nation has become a test case of the sincerity and strength of our American policy. For that reason, the silence of the United States delegation on the absence of legal representatives of Poland at this Conference has aroused our apprehensions. This silence permitted the delegate of Soviet Russia to take upon himself the role of a false "defender" of Poland. With unequalled cynicism, Mr. Molotov praised the merits and sacrifices of the Polish nation, recalling the appalling losses suffered by Poland in her struggle with our common enemy. The only purpose of his oratory was to obtain an invitation for a fictitious Polish delegation, composed of Russian puppets. There is no doubt that the "Lublin-Warsaw Provisional Government" of Poland is an agency of the Soviet Government and therefore committed to the destruction of the independence of the Polish nation through ruthless persecution of her people.

Because no voice has been raised at the San Francisco Conference which would tell the world the whole truth about the methods employed by Soviet Russia in those parts of Europe occupied by the Red Army, and particularly in Poland, we consider it our duty to restate certain basic facts which

Another rejection of the proposal to invite Poland appears inevitable, with the majority of delegations lined up solidly behind Britain and America.
18 June 2015
Concert "A Tribute to Arthur Rubinstein"

Message by Mr. Michael Møller
Director-General, a.i. of the United Nations Office at Geneva
United Nations Under-Secretary-General

A Tribute to Arthur Rubinstein
Concert on the Occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations

Thursday, 18 June 2015 at 18:30
Assembly Hall, A Building, 3rd Floor – Door A15

Ambassador Henczel,
Ms. Rubinstein,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the United Nations Office at Geneva for this exceptional concert paying tribute to one of the greatest piano virtuosos of the 20th century, Arthur Rubinstein. I would like to thank the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland and the Arthur Rubinstein International Music Foundation for making this event possible. We owe a special thanks also to Mr. Marek Drewnowski for treating us to some of the best loved pieces by Frédéric Chopin that convey so much of Poland’s musical identity, and which were particular favourites of Rubinstein.

If there ever was a classical musician that could be related to the United Nations origins, Arthur Rubinstein was definitely the one. Performing at the historic conference in San Francisco where the United Nations Organization was established, Arthur Rubinstein not only displayed his performing talents, but also his political awareness and sense of justice when standing up for Poland, his beloved home country.

From the original 51 founding members, including Poland, the Organization has grown to become a truly world entity of nearly 200 states. Seventy years later, the quest for world peace, justice, and rights for all still continues. This year’s anniversary is a major landmark for the United Nations on their way to a better world, as proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

On our path, we have achieved many milestones: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with the promise of dignity and fulfillment for every individual; General Assembly resolution 1514, granting independence to colonial countries and peoples, which put on the map of the world dozens of countries in Africa and Asia. The Organization today is a foremost stakeholder in ensuring sustainable development.

These treasured musical pieces we will be treated to tonight, are a fitting tribute to the momentous pianist who was there at the birth of our Organization. Let this wonderful music inspire us to be faithful to the original aspirations of the United Nations’ founding fathers, for our Organization to continue to serve both present and future generations.

Thank you.
Thursday 18 June 2015
at 6:30 p.m.
Palais des Nations
Assembly Hall, A Building, 3rd floor, Door 15

A tribute to
Arthur Rubinstein
on the occasion of the 70th anniversary
of the United Nations