



Selahattin Ülkümen

(14 January 1914 in Antakya – 7 June 2003 in Istanbul)

Selahattin Ülkümen was a Turkish diplomat and consul in Rhodes during the Second World War, who assisted many local Jews to escape the Holocaust.

On 19 July 1944, the Gestapo ordered all of the island's Jewish population to gather at its headquarters: ostensibly they were to register for "temporary transportation to a small island nearby", but in reality they were gathered for transport to Auschwitz and its gas chambers. Ülkümen went to the German commanding officer, General Ulrich Kleemann, to remind him that Turkey was neutral in World War II. He asked for release of the Jews, including not only Turkish citizens but also their spouses and relatives, even though many of the latter were Italian and Greek citizens. At first the commander refused, stating that under Nazi law, all Jews were considered Jews foremost and had to go to the concentration camps. Ülkümen cited various treaties and neutrality agreements between Turkey and Germany and reluctantly the Germans released 42 Jews.

He has been honored by several organizations, including the B'nai B'rith, the Anti Defamation League.

In 1989 Israel recognized him as among the Righteous Among the Nations and listed his name at Yad Vashem.

Source “ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selahattin_Ülkümen ”