

CHILEAN POET NERUDA HONoured AT UNESCO

PARIS, March - The Chilean government on Tuesday honoured the country's greatest modern poet Pablo Neruda, offering a copper medallion in his memory to the United Nations cultural organisation UNESCO.

Chile's ambassador to France Gonzalo Figueroa, handing the medallion to

UNESCO's director-general Federico Mayor in Paris.

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He described Neruda (1904-73) as "a poet who appealed for human understanding, solidarity with the poor and respect for nature."

A Marxist, patriot and 1971 Nobel literature laureate, Neruda was an outstanding figure of the Chilean left along with his friend Salvador Allende, the President who perished in a right-wing coup some two weeks before his own death.

Neruda died in Santiago, after a long fight against can-

A Chilean medallion for Neruda would have been unthinkable under General Augusto Pinochet, who ruled from 1973 until the change of government two years ago.

Neruda served as Chile's ambassador to France and UNESCO, the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

UNESCO said Neruda's work had "transcended the borders of his country, Chile, to become the music of a whole continent, America." Reuter

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