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ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: AFTER 10 YEARS' IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT MORDECHAI VANUNU MUST BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY.

Amnesty International is again calling for the immediate release of Mordechai Vanunu as the 10th anniversary of his arrest and solitary confinement approaches.

“Mordechai Vanunu has been held alone in a cell for 10 years which is cruel, inhuman and degrading. He is suffering mental health problems and he still does not know when he will be released,” Amnesty International said today.

“Any military secrets he may know would be 10 years out of date. Other secrets that the Israeli authorities appear not to want him to reveal relate to his kidnapping. He has suffered enough abuse and should be immediately released.”

Mordechai Vanunu was abducted by agents of the Israeli Government, in Italy on 30 September 1986, and secretly taken to Israel. He had provided classified information about the Atomic Research Reactor at Dimona where he had worked from 1977 to 1985 to the British newspaper *The Sunday Times*. The information was published on 5 October 1986 and indicated that Israel was running a major nuclear military program.

Once he had been taken to Israel Mordechai Vanunu was held in secret detention -- the Israeli authorities did not admit holding him until 9 November 1986. He was tried and convicted on charges of treason and aggravated espionage. He was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment. His trial and appeal before the Supreme Court were held *in camera*. Since then, appeals to the Supreme Court have also been shrouded with secrecy.

Mordechai Vanunu has been imprisoned in solitary confinement in Ashkelon Prison for 10 years. He has a further eight years' imprisonment to serve. In meetings with Amnesty International delegates in February 1996, Israeli Government officials, including the then Minister of Justice, stated that Mordechai Vanunu could not be released now because they fear he may yet reveal secrets.

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