

## Israel Releases Mordechai Vanunu After Three Months in Prison

Whistleblower says repeatedly harrasing and arresting him over unauthorised meetings is 'Israel's problem'

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Vanunu was convicted for holding unauthorised meetings with foreigners, including journalists and his Norwegian girlfriend in 2007. Photograph: Ammar Awad/Reuters

[Mordechai Vanunu](#), the Israeli whistleblower who spent 18 years in jail for exposing [Israel's](#) nuclear capabilities was released today after completing a further three-month sentence.

Vanunu, 56, a former technician at a secret nuclear plant near the desert town of Dimona, was convicted after handing over details of Israel's nuclear arsenal to a British newspaper in 1986.

The revelations led to the belief that Israel held a sizeable nuclear arsenal - a claim Israel has neither confirmed nor denied under its policy of "ambiguity".

Vanunu served much of his 18-year sentence in solitary confinement.

His latest three-month sentence came after the Moroccan-born whistleblower was convicted of holding unauthorised meetings with foreigners - banned under the conditions of his release - including journalists and his Norwegian girlfriend in 2007.

Since his release in 2004 Vanunu's movements have been subject to strict conditions, including a ban on leaving Israel, but it is not the first time that Vanunu has been arrested and imprisoned for breaking them. Despite the length of time Vanunu has spent in prison, Israeli security agencies claim he still holds information which could threaten national security.

After his release, Vanunu said: "All this harassing me and arresting me again and again is Israel's problem, not my problem."

Vanunu was originally sentenced to six months for breaking conditions again, although this was reduced on appeal. He refused the option of community service in West Jerusalem voicing fears that he could be attacked.

After leaking secret nuclear details in 1986 Vanunu was kidnapped in a honeytrap set by Mossad agents in Rome. Israel has since sought to keep a close eye on his whereabouts, subjecting him to a military order which is renewed every six months. Amnesty International called Vanunu a prisoner of conscience, who had been forced to live under the "draconian"

military order after serving his full term.

Speaking before his sentence in May and in English – Vanunu refuses to speak Hebrew in public – said: “Everyone knows that Israel has [nuclear weapons](#) but no one is talking about it. The world doesn’t want nuclear weapons – not in Israel, not in the [Middle East](#) and not anywhere in the world.”

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