

Berlin, December 1st
2012

**On the occasion of awarding the Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal 2012
the International League for Human Rights
calls upon the State of Israel
to lift the restrictions on Mordechai Vanunu's right to free departure**

This year the Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal will be awarded to the film director Peter Lilienthal on the 9th of December 2012 at 11:00 in the GRIPS Theater. This occasion is a reminder of the Medal 2010 awarded to the pacifist Mordechai Vanunu who has since not been permitted to depart from Israel in order to receive the Medal.

Vanunu displayed extraordinary courage and determination in his struggle for complete nuclear disarmament und transparency within a democratic state. For this reason he was awarded with the Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal 2010.

As is known, in 1986 he was the first Israeli to reveal information about the nuclear research center which was constructed and operated mostly underground by Israel in the Negev Desert close to the city of Dimona during the 60s. Until this point the nuclear site was kept secret from the international as well as the Israeli public and only supported by France and tolerated by the U.S. The plutonium generated and processed at the site has enabled Israel to produce several hundred nuclear warheads.

Even before the information reached the public Vanunu was lured to Rome by the Israeli secret service in September 1986 where he was captured and brought to the Israeli city of Ashdod by boat.

In the context of strictly classified proceedings he was sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment for treason and espionage by a military court in March 1988.

On the 21st of April 2004 after serving his sentence of which he spent 11 years in solitary confinement in a small cell, Vanunu was released.

He has still however been denied the right to freedom of movement and of expression guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Vanunu is not permitted to leave Israel and is forbidden to attempt any contact to foreign embassies or journalists. He must inform the authorities about any planned change of residence or location.

The International League for Human Rights in Berlin demands:

- **the political leaders of Israel in particular the Prime Minister Netanyahu, as well the Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of Defence to grant Mordechai Vanunu the right to free departure out of Israel in order for him to receive the Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal 2010 in Berlin personally**
- **the political leaders of the Federal Republic of Germany to increase political pressure by condemning Israel's violation of its duty as a signatory state to the International**

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to demand Israel to grant Mordechai Vanunu his right to freedom of movement and to freedom of expression

The courageous stance of Vanunu reflects the bold resistance of Carl von Ossietzky against military armament and warship in the Weimar Republic. Vanunu's requests for free departure and movement were continuously rejected by the court including the Israeli Supreme court in reference to the threat and danger he is believed to pose to the military security of Israel. This relentless retaliatory approach is incompatible with the principles of the rule of law in a constitutional democracy.

With 18 years of imprisonment and further 8 years with restrictions of movement, Mordechai Vanunu has spent 26 years of his life without freedom, all because he attempted to inform the Israeli and international public of the dangers concerning nuclear armament.

50 years after the nuclear bomb was dropped on Japan's Hiroshima Günter Grass, who was awarded with the Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal as well as the Nobel Prize for Literature, wrote the following to Japanese author Kenzaburo: "Did Vanunu betray his own country or did he simply act out of a sense for responsibility?" In the same letter he answers: "I am of the opinion that after all the wars this murderous century has faced, it is time to reveal the secrets of the military even if this results in betrayal"

In an alarming way the current developments in the region of the Middle East show Mordechai Vanunu's foresight. The nature of his motivation remains to be admonishing in view of the future.

The occupation and military pacification of the citizens of the Gaza Strip without the perspective of a life where human or humanitarian rights can be secured, the instable political situation in Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, Iran, and Israel, the military upheavals at the Turkish-Syrian border; all these factors contribute to an uncontrollable situation in the region.

With at least two nuclear powers in the region – Pakistan and Israel – as well as the unclear situation in Iran and considering the fact that nuclear bombs are being stored on Israeli and NATO carriers in the waters of the region, any potential escalation of the conflict must be regarded as of considerable danger.

In this context the International League for Human Rights condemns the exportation of several Dolphin class submarines to Israel subsidized by German taxes. Dolphin class submarines can be armed with nuclear warheads. The Israeli government clearly takes this option into account.

The tendency towards a nuclear arms race in the Middle East must be halted.

It is therefore incomprehensible why the conference of 189 signatory states of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) "On the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and All Other Weapons of Mass Destruction" scheduled for 2012 was adjourned in response to the withdrawal of the U.S. and pressure from Israel.

At the moment bi- and multilateral negotiations between the countries that have agreed to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction would be most necessary. It is unreasonable to wait until each State of the region takes the initiative to start negotiations. The process toward a Middle East region without nuclear weapons could start now, this would be a hopeful contribution to the goal of complete international nuclear disarmament.

The International League of Human Rights demands the Federal Republic of Germany,

- **To publically and insistently work towards the convention of the UN Conference "The Middle East should become a region free of nuclear arms"**
- **To set a good example and stop all exports that are suited to contribute to the nuclear armament thus fueling the nuclear arms race in the Middle East**