1980 Exchange: Mahdi Bseiso and William Nassar Freed in Return for Amina al-Mufti

On 13 February 1980 in Cyprus, under the Red Cross, an exchange took place in which Israel released the prisoners Mahdi Bseiso (“Abu Ali”) and William Nassar, in return for the release of the Jordanian Amina Dawood al-Mufti, held by the Fatah movement on the charge of working for the Mossad. [1][2][3]

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The deal at a glance

Item	Details
Date of the exchange	13 February 1980
Place	Cyprus
Mediator	The International Committee of the Red Cross
Freed by Israel	Mahdi Bseiso and William Nassar
In return	The Jordanian Amina Dawood al-Mufti
Captor	The Fatah movement

[1][2][3]

The deal

According to WAFA, on 13 February 1980 Israel released the detainees Mahdi Bseiso (“Abu Ali”) and William Nassar in return for the release of Amina Dawood al-Mufti, who was held by Fatah, and the operation took place in Cyprus under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross. [2][3]

Al Jazeera Net says Amina al-Mufti was arrested by Palestinian intelligence in 1975, that she spent five years in strict imprisonment before being released in an exchange for the two prisoners, and that President Yasser Arafat refused Ali Hassan Salameh’s request to execute her and chose to exchange her. [1]

Timeline

Date	Event
1975	Arrest of Amina al-Mufti according to Al Jazeera Net [1]
13 February 1980	The exchange in Cyprus under the Red Cross [2]

Frequently asked questions about the 1980 exchange

When did the exchange take place?

On 13 February 1980 in Cyprus. [2]

Who was released by Israel?

Mahdi Bseiso and William Nassar. [2]

Who was Amina al-Mufti?

A Jordanian held by Fatah on the charge of working for the Mossad. [1][3]

Sources and references

1. Al Jazeera Net (Encyclopedia), “Amina al-Mufti, the most famous Arab spy for the Mossad”, 6 March 2024 (in Arabic).
2. WAFA (Palestinian National Information Center), “Prisoner exchange operations” (in Arabic).
3. Alwatan Voice, “Prisoner exchange operations with the occupation from 1948 to 2011”, for Palestinian Prisoners’ Day (in Arabic; the link is to the site’s home page).