

## “Arad”.. Why Did the Occupation Create an All-Female Force to Protect Its Air Bases?

The “Al-Aqsa Flood” operation on October 7, 2023 did not only expose the collapse of the border fence with the Gaza Strip; it also shattered the image of Israeli military bases that “Tel Aviv” had long promoted as “safe” rear installations.

According to investigations Israeli investigations, elite Qassam fighters, the military wing of Hamas, carried maps of air force bases, including Hatzerim in the Negev and Tel Nof in the central occupied Palestinian territories, as part of plans aimed at expanding the attack deep into the occupation’s military system.

From this came the birth of the “Arad” unit, whose formation was announced by the occupation army in mid-May 2026. It is a new force in the air force made up exclusively of female soldiers, tasked with “rapid response” to scenarios involving infiltration or raids on bases and their surroundings.

The following report explains what we know about “Arad”: why it was created, how it operates, and what it reveals about the transformation of the occupation’s air bases from rear sites into anxious military installations seeking additional protection.

### What Is the “Arad” Unit?

“Arad” is an intervention unit newly established in the occupation army’s air force, and it is seen as evidence of its manpower crisis, being the first group to rely exclusively on female conscripts.

The unit belongs to Wing 7, which is responsible for special units, and its mission is essentially to try to deal with any incursions or commando-style attacks inside fortified air force bases until additional reinforcements arrive to salvage the situation.

About 100 female conscripts joined the first course, according to the occupation army’s website, while the Hebrew-language site Mako said the female soldiers would initially be divided into three operational teams, and the army expects to recruit two cohorts each year.

Despite the specialized nature of the training, the unit is not officially defined as a “commando” force like “Shaldag,” but rather as a “specialized intervention force.”

### Why Was It Created Now?

The creation of “Arad” was directly linked to the occupation army’s disastrous

failure during the Al-Aqsa Flood operation, as Israeli investigations showed that Hamas elite fighters had been planning attacks against air force bases, and maps of Haterim and Tel Nof were found in their possession.

This revealed that air bases were no longer beyond the reach of the Palestinian resistance, and that traditional guard systems were insufficient to prevent such incursions. This coincided with internal Israeli warnings about military risks around some bases in the Negev, especially Nevatim.

What Is the Unit’s Main Mission?

Its declared mission is to try to contain collapse and form a “first line of defense” in the event of any major breach of air bases.

According to the Israeli description, the female conscripts are deployed to try to isolate the area and engage resistance fighters in an attempt to delay the fall of the base until reinforcements arrive.

Leaks indicate they may later be assigned to guard so-called “temporary operating zones” for fear of ambushes.



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## How Are “Arad” Female Conscripts Trained?

The occupation army’s website indicates that training lasts about a year and includes shooting, urban warfare, and attempts at psychological preparation for the shift from a state of calm to the shock of a sudden raid.

Hebrew-language reports expose the state of confusion, as the first course was shortened to just eight months because of the “urgent operational need” and the attrition the occupation army is experiencing.

They add that training also includes navigation and combat in an urban environment, while no details are available about the type of weapons or equipment used.

## Why Is It an All-Female Unit?

Amid evasion of military service and the depletion of male soldiers in the genocidal war on Gaza, the occupation army found no way to fill the gap other than deploying female conscripts.

Although it is an all-female unit, its command remains mixed, as it is led by an officer from the “Shaldag” unit, and male and female officers serve in it in an attempt to repair the gaps created by October 7.

The declared goal, therefore, is to capitalize on the growing interest among female conscripts and build a force that fills military gaps after October 7.

## What Does the Name “Arad” Mean?

In the enemy’s literature, the term “Arad” refers to a type of alloy or metal from which the so-called “first Hebrew shield” was made, according to a description on the occupation army’s website.

Through this name, the occupation army is trying to market the possibility of integrating technology and intelligence work, in an attempt to reassure its public that its bases, whose fragility was exposed by Al-Aqsa Flood, are now protected.

## What Is the Occupation Concealing About It?

Despite what has been published, the occupation army is concealing the final number of female conscripts, their deployment locations, and the type of weapons they carry.

It is also concealing whether this unit will be pushed to the front lines outside the territories occupied in 1948, or whether it will remain confined within the walls of air bases, waiting for the unknown.