

## CASE STUDY 7

### Yanina and Dvir

#### Sisters in arms

Sergeant Yanina and Corporal Dvir are soldiers in the Israeli army. They belong to David Company, a search and rescue combat unit that operates near the Palestinian town of Nablus.

Yanina was born in Argentina, but moved to Israel in 2013 to join the army. By 2015 she had been a soldier for one and a half years. Her siblings have moved to Israel too.

“Children come with drawings to wish you a Shabbat Shalom and say thanks... I say, wow... These are the aspects... that give you strength to say: ‘Today I will wake up in the morning and help my brothers, citizens, everyone.’”

Yanina

#### Israel Defense Forces mission

“To defend the existence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state of Israel. To protect the inhabitants of Israel and to combat all forms of terrorism which threaten the daily life.”

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) website: [www.idf.il/en](http://www.idf.il/en)

The IDF was set up in 1948, integrating the forces of the Haganah, the Jewish paramilitary group. Conscription – compulsory military service – was used from the beginning, and today this applies to women and men.



This image of Israeli soldiers does not show Yanina and Dvir, but you can see them in videos online.

#### Motivated by faith

Yanina also talks about her Jewish faith. In a statement published by the Israel Defense Forces for Yom Kippur in 2015, Yanina said:

“This holiday is the time for finding yourself, forgiving others and putting behind any wrongdoings or feelings of anger and hurt.

“It’s the holiday when we all come together and appeal to God to protect our beloved country.”

Information drawn from Israel Defense Forces media



**Video of Yanina:**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiGfpKZloh8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiGfpKZloh8)

**Video of Dvir:**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrpFouqxjzg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrpFouqxjzg)

## CASE STUDY 7 (CONT.)

Dvir is from the Israeli town of Eilat. In an Israel Defense Forces video, she says she wanted to prove to her family and friends that she is capable.

“My dream since the tenth grade has been to be an Israeli combat soldier.”

### Dvir

Dvir and Yanina are among the first female combat soldiers to be deployed near Nablus. Dvir is proud of her role, saying “It’s a great honour for the Home Front Command.”

Yanina says there have been many attacks by Palestinians against Israeli settlers, and she wants civilians to feel protected. In another IDF video, she says: “We guard day and night and we barely sleep so that the citizens can feel protected.”

“Israel remains the most heavily militarized country in the world. With a comparatively small population of 8.3 million, the country maintains a military with around 176,500 soldiers and a further 465,000 reservists.”

**Bonn International Center for Conversion, Global Militarisation Index 2018**



A Palestinian village near Yanoun. The buildings top left are part of the expansion of an illegal Israeli settlement. Photo: EAPPI/R.W

### Do the soldiers stop violence?

Under international law, Israeli soldiers have a duty to maintain public order and protect the Palestinian civilian population in the territory they occupy. Settlers have attacked school buses, killed farm animals and burnt trees and crops. Ecumenical companions (EAs) stay in a village near Nablus to offer a protective presence.

“I feel safe at night when I see that there is light in your house.”

Palestinian woman speaking with ecumenical companions.



Dvir and Yanina