

The IDF Sword Battalion

by Norman Berdichevsky (July 2015)

Two non-Jewish minority communities in Israel, the Druze (a deviant Shi'a Muslim group) and Circassians (Sunni Muslims whose ancestors were exiled to Palestine from the Caucasus), are subject to mandatory conscription to the IDF. Additionally, members of several Bedouin tribes volunteer as well as individual Muslim and Christian Arabs. The decision of the first two groups to accept obligatory service in the Israeli military forces was made at their own request. As early as the summer of 1948, after years of intense pressure by the Palestinian Higher Arab committee to join in the fight to prevent a Jewish state, units of the three groups defected and switched sides to fight with the Jews. [more>>>](#)