

IDF: 60 Years of Service and Counting

The IDF marked 60 years since the formation of its first reserve armored brigade, the Fist and Spear Formation, in a ceremony held Wednesday in memory of the brigade's fallen soldiers. Attendees included GOC Central Command Maj. Gen. Nitzan Alon, Steel Formation commander Brig. Gen. Moti Baruch, current brigade commander Col. Effi Difrin, and the brigade's first commander, Brig. Gen. (res.) Yitzhak Pundak, as well as the families of 147 of the brigade's fallen soldiers.

"The Fist and Spear Formation, which marks 60 years since its establishment, has already written great chapters in the history of the IDF, but between the pages of heroism are hidden the tears and grief of the fallen," said GOC Central Command Maj. Gen. Nitzan Alon. "Then and today, the brigade's strength is in its spirit and its people, and the memory of its fallen is the source of its power. The reality of our lives has proven to us that national resurrection is impossible without a spirit of sacrifice."

"Today, the IDF is in the midst of defensive missions in all of the sectors, in developing its power and in looking ahead to the next challenges," Maj. Gen. Alon added. "Today, Israeli society is strong and powerful, and together we will be able to meet every mission and challenge."

The armored brigade's commander also discussed the unit's legacy.

"Almost from the moment of its formation, the brigade needed its capabilities on the battlefield, intertwined with the state fighting for its existence—and still today, the brigade continues with modesty and excellence to take part in the continuing effort to protect the State of Israel," Col. Difrin

said. "It is a great honor to belong to the command of this wonderful brigade, still alive and kicking, which maintains norms and standards in every mission. We can meet the many challenges and missions lying ahead of us, because now it is our turn. We will do our utmost to be deserving of the brigade's legacy."

The ceremony also honored Col. (res.) David Teperson (86), the IDF's longest-serving reservist and chairperson of the Fist and Spear Formation's members association. Col. (res.) Teperson has served as a reservist in the brigade since its inception.