

# *New Top Rabbi of Israeli Army Says It's OK to Rape Non-Jewish Women*

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Tel Aviv, July 14 (RHC)-- The Israeli government is facing fresh criticism over the appointment of Rabbi Colonel Eyal Karim to the role of chief rabbi of the Israeli military despite his previous comments suggesting that Israeli soldiers could rape non-Jewish women in time of war because their identities are erased.

Karim's comments were first published in 2002 on a religious website when he was asked by one of the users: "Is it allowed in our time for an IDF soldier, for example, to rape girls during a fight, or is such a thing forbidden?"

The rabbi answered by saying that during war there are "cases in which the personality of the individual is 'erased' for the benefit of the whole," according to a translation from Hebrew to English by the local website +972 Magazine. He added that the Torah states that "war removes some of the prohibitions on sexual relations" and thus allows things such as raping non-Jewish women prisoners.

He continued by saying that because maintaining the army's fighting ability was one of the most important things in time of war, "the Torah permitted the individual to satisfy the evil urge (of having sexual

relations), under the conditions mentioned.”

Political observers say that Karim's nomination is not surprising considering the fact that the country's Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who took over the post less than two months ago, is a far-right politician who had previously called for the “beheading of disloyal” Arab citizens in Israel.

Several women groups in Israel as well as women lawmakers slammed the government for choosing Rabbi Karim for the position and called for the nomination to be withdrawn. Activists say that Karim is notorious for sexist and racist comments and such a post would mean that he would have direct influence on the Israeli military moral code.

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