

## **JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 32 - Part One**

### **On Palestinian Attitudes Towards Politics - August 1999**

- [Introduction](#)
  - [Methodology](#)
  - [Sample distribution](#)
  - [Occupation of respondents](#)
  - [Results](#)
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#### **Introduction**

JMCC's latest poll, conducted on 26, 27 August 1999, prior to the signing of Sharm Sheikh agreement, shows a decline in optimism among Palestinians regarding peace chances during Barak's reign. The results confirm the Palestinian constant position that Palestinians reject any solution that does not end the Israeli control over Jerusalem.

- The majority of the Palestinian people (59%) believe that three months after Barak assumed power in Israel, there seems no improvement in opportunities to achieve peace in the region compared with (50%) of Palestinians who thought in March 1999 that Barak winning the Israeli elections will not improve conditions towards achieving peace. Moreover, (19.7%) of Palestinians believe that peace chances have narrowed further since Barak took office while (17.8%) believe peace chances are better now.
  - The issue of Jerusalem in the final-status negotiations received no less attention amid the Palestinian public opinion. (93.7%) of Palestinians oppose any solution that keeps Jerusalem as the unified capital of Israel, even if this issue constitutes the final obstacle facing a Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty. As for the best solution of this issue, (48.9%) said Jerusalem must be the capital of Palestine while (24.3%) said Jerusalem must be the capital of the Islamic nation. (10.4%) of Palestinians believe that East Jerusalem must be the capital of Palestine and West Jerusalem must be the capital of Israel. (6.7%) demanded that Jerusalem become international while (5.1%) said Jerusalem should remain unified but a capital for two states. On PA attention and care towards Jerusalem, (17.5%) said the PA does not give attention to Jerusalem while (44.5%) said the PA attention and care are not enough. (33.3%) believe that the PA gives due attention and care to Jerusalem.
  - The most notable result is the change in public opinion regarding the popularity of Fateh Movement and President Yasser Arafat among Palestinian figures. Ratio of Palestinians who support Fateh decreased from (37.6%) last March to (28%) this month. The same trend occurred in the popularity of President Arafat with ratio moving down from (38.8%) last March to reach (28%) this September. The decrease in popularity of Fateh Movement and President Arafat accounts for the notable increase from (31%) last March to (41.3%) of Palestinians who do not trust any faction. In addition, (42.2%) of Palestinians do not trust any Palestinian leader compared with (26.8%) last March.
  - Regarding the performance of the PA apparatuses, (58.8%) of the Palestinian people see the performance of the PA ranging between good and very good while (34.3%) of the respondents believe the PA performance is somewhere between bad and very bad. (6.9%) did not respond to this question. On the performance of the PLC, (51.3%) of the Palestinian people consider it good or very good while (36.7%) viewed it as bad or very bad, a decrease by 3% compared with a similar question last March. As for the PA security apparatuses, (8.5%) believe their performance is very good; (45.6%) view it as good; (21.9%) view it as bad and (15.3%) view it as very bad. (8.7%) did not answer this question.
  - On the role of the judicial system in Palestine, nearly half of the respondents (47.7%) view it as good and very good while (24.3%) believe the role of the judicial system in Palestine is bad.
  - Meanwhile, the majority of the Palestinian people (71.1%) still believe there is widespread corruption in the PA apparatuses compared with (4.2%) who do not see any corruption in the PA apparatuses while (17.6%) believe that corruption is limited.
- Finally, the poll tackled the issue of NGOs where (19.2%) of Palestinians said they are members in NGOs,

including (25%) are members in sports and youth organizations. On their role in the society, (29.4%) believe they have a good or very good role in the Palestinian society while (9.3%) believe their role is bad or very bad. (34.2%) said they do not know enough about those NGOs.

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## Methodology

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 26, 27 August 1999. The interviews were conducted in randomly selected homes, and the subjects inside each home were also selected randomly according to Kish tables. The interviews were conducted in 60 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the West Bank, 763 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Tubas, al-Fara refugee camp, silat al-Harithiya, Arraba, Silat al-Dahr. **Nablus:** Nablus, Biddya, Salfit, Burqa, Nafoura, Beit furik, Huwwara, and Balata refugee camp. **Tulkarem:** Tulkarem, and 'Ateel. **Qalqiliya:** Qalqiliya and 'Azzun. **Hebron:** Hebron, Yatta, a-Dahiriya, Halhoul, Idna, Beit-Kahel, and al-Shyoukh. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Za'tara, Dheisheh refugee camp, Husan and al-Khader. **Jericho:** Jericho and Aqbat Jaber refugee camp **Ramallah & Jerusalem:** al-Bireh, al-'Amari refugee camp, 'Ein Yabrud, Ramallah, 'Ein 'Areek, Kafr Nima, a-Ram, a-Dahyia, Beit liqiya, Qalandiya refugee camp, Shu'fat, Shu'fat refugee camp, Old City, Ras al-Amoud, al-Ezzariya, Abu Dis, Kufr 'Aqab, Bir Nabala, and Silwan.

In the Gaza Strip, 437 people were surveyed from: **Gaza North:** Jabaliya refugee camp, Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun. Gaza: Sheikh Radwan, a-Darjy, a-Tufah, Sabra, al-Mighraqa, a-Zaytun, a-Nasir, a-Shoujaia', a-Rimal north and south and Beach refugee camp. **Deir al- Balah:** Nuseirat refugee camp, Deir al-Balah refugee camp, Deir al- Balah. **Khan Younis:** 'Abasan al-Saghir, Khan Younis refugee camp, Khan Younis, al-Qararah and Bani Suheila. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah refugee camp and Tal al-Sultan refugee camp, Shawkat al-Soufi.

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## Sample Distribution

- 57.6% of the respondents were from West Bank, 6.0% from Jerusalem, 36.4% from the Gaza Strip.
- 39.3% said they live in villages, 16.4% in refugee camps, 44.3% in towns/cities.
- 45.6% were male, 54.4% were female.
- 65.2% were married, 28.8%, single, 3.6% widowed, 1.3% divorced, 1.1% no answer.
- The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

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## Occupation respondents

- Students 10.7% laborers 11.3% Farmers/fishermen 2.5%
  - Craftsmen 2.5% Businessmen/private business 8.5%
  - Employees e.g. secretaries/municipal employees/teachers/nurses 17.4%
  - Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers 2.2%
  - Housewives, unemployed and retired 44.9%
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## Results

**Q1. To what extent do you feel optimistic or pessimistic regarding the future in general? Would you say that you are very optimistic, optimistic, pessimistic or very pessimistic?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very Optimistic	6.8	6.0	8.0
Optimistic	64.3	66.7	60.2
Pessimistic	19.5	19.8	19.0
Very Pessimistic	7.6	6.3	9.8
No answer	1.8	1.2	3.0

**Q2. In general, what do you feel towards the Israeli-Palestinian peace process?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	13.9	13.9	14.0
Somewhat support	43.8	46.5	38.9
Neither support nor oppose	19.1	18.6	19.9
Somewhat oppose	10.9	8.8	14.6
Strongly oppose	10.0	9.3	11.2
No answer	2.3	2.9	1.4

**Q3. In general, how would you evaluate the performance of the Legislative Council?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	3.9	3.6	4.6
Good	47.6	49.9	43.5
Bad	24.8	21.8	30.2
Very Bad	12.1	9.8	16.0
No answer	11.6	14.9	5.7

**Q4. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian Authority?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	7.0	6.6	7.7
Good	51.8	53.0	49.4
Bad	23.5	21.2	27.5
Very Bad	10.8	10.4	11.7
No answer	6.9	8.8	3.7

**Q5. How do you evaluate the role of the Judicial System in Palestine?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	5.4	5.3	5.7
Good	42.3	43.1	40.7
Bad	24.8	22.0	29.5
Very Bad	13.4	12.2	15.6
No answer	14.1	17.4	8.5

**Q6. What do you think of the Palestinian security apparatuses?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	8.5	8.8	8.2
Good	45.6	46.2	44.4
Bad	21.9	19.4	26.3
Very Bad	15.3	15.5	14.9
No answer	8.7	10.1	6.2

**Q7. To what extent do you think corruption is widespread in Palestinian Authority institutions? Is it widespread to a great extent, widespread to some extent, widespread to a small extent, or not widespread at all?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
To a great extent	35.8	33.6	39.8
To some extent	35.3	35.2	35.5
To a small extent	17.6	17.6	17.6
Not widespread at all	4.2	4.8	3.0
No answer	7.1	8.8	4.1

**Q8. Three months after the Labor Party, headed by Barak, assumed power in Israel, do you think that the opportunities of achieving peace between Israelis and Palestinians are better than before?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Better than before	17.8	16.8	19.7
Less than before	19.7	18.1	22.4
The situation remains the same	59.0	61.3	54.9
No answer	3.5	3.8	3.0

**Q9. Who is the Palestinian figure you mostly trust?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yasser Arafat	28.0	25.4	32.5
Ahmed Yassin	3.6	2.5	5.5
Haydar Abdel Shafi	3.2	2.4	4.6
Saeb Erekat	3.3	3.5	3.0
Other figures	11.2	13.7	6.8
I don't trust anybody	41.3	42.7	38.9
No answer	9.4	9.8	8.7

**Q10. What is the most political faction you mostly trust?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh	28.0	29.1	26.1
Hamas	8.5	7.9	9.6
Popular Front Party	2.8	3.3	1.8
Islamic Jihad	2.0	1.0	3.7
Other factions	3.4	3.4	3.6
I don't trust any faction	42.2	41.9	42.6
No answer	13.1	13.4	12.6

**Q11. When you say Jerusalem which of this do you mean?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Old City	12.3	13.1	11.1
East Jerusalem before June 6, 1967	17.2	20.4	11.7
Jerusalem - East & West, before the expansion on June 9, 1967	26.2	29.4	20.6
The Israeli's Municipality boundaries in 1999	0.5	0.5	0.5
Israeli greater Jerusalem	2.3	2.6	1.6
The Palestinian Jerusalem governance	33.2	26.9	44.2
I don't know	5.0	5.5	4.1
No answer	3.3	1.6	6.2

**Q12. If Jerusalem represents the last obstacle for signing the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, would you then support the idea of making Jerusalem the unified capital of Israel?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Agree	2.0	2.5	1.2
Disagree	93.7	93.2	94.5
I don't know	2.8	2.8	2.7
No answer	1.5	1.5	1.6

**Q13. What is your opinion of the best final resolution to the issue of Jerusalem?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Unified capital of Israel	0.1	0.1	0.0
West Jerusalem for Israel, Old City under joint sovereignty, and East Jerusalem under the Palestinian sovereignty	2.9	3.8	1.3
East Jerusalem the capital of the Palestinian state, and West Jerusalem the capital of the Israeli state	10.4	12.5	6.9
Jerusalem as an open city and a capital for both states	5.1	6.7	2.3
International Jerusalem	6.7	8.0	4.3
The unified capital for the Palestinian state	48.9	42.3	60.2
The capital of the Islamic nation	24.3	24.1	24.5
No answer	1.6	2.5	0.5

**Q14. Some people think that the Palestinian Authority cares about Jerusalem issue, others believe that the Palestinian Authority ignores it, what do you think:**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Palestinian Authority cares about Jerusalem issue	33.3	35.4	29.5
The Palestinian Authority doesn't care enough about Jerusalem issue	44.5	40.6	51.3
The Palestinian Authority doesn't care about Jerusalem issue	17.5	18.2	16.5
No answer	4.7	5.8	2.7

**Q15. In general, how do you evaluate the local services which the municipality / the village council provides in your city or village?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	27.4	33.0	17.6
Very good	6.8	8.0	4.8
Excellent	3.5	4.7	1.4
Fair	28.7	26.0	33.4

Weak	29.3	22.8	40.5
No answer	4.3	5.5	2.3

**Q16. If you needed an urgent help on a social issue, to whom do you resort first?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The municipal council of the city	8.0	11.5	1.8
The Palestinian Authority representative of my area or the Palestinian Legislative Council's member	6.5	6.8	5.9
The representative of my party (ex.: Fateh, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, etc...)	6.0	7.2	3.9
The local chamber of commerce	0.5	0.5	0.5
Local religious person in charge	3.3	3.7	2.7
The Mukhtar (Chief of village)	8.1	5.0	13.5
A foreign NGOs	0.3	0.4	0.0
The neighbors	1.9	1.7	2.3
Charitable organization	1.4	1.8	0.7
One of the relatives including husband, wife, etc...	34.2	32.8	36.6
I won't resort to anybody (nobody will listen)	22.3	22.3	22.4
Others	1.9	1.8	2.1
No answer	5.6	4.5	7.6

**Q17. On a scale of 1 through 5, how would you evaluate your proficiency in the Hebrew language?**

**Compromise**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I know nothing at all (1)	68.2	67.9	68.9
I don't know (2)	8.8	10.5	5.7
In between (3)	11.9	11.8	12.1
I know a little (4)	5.3	4.8	5.9
Fluent (5)	5.3	4.5	6.9
No answer	0.5	0.5	0.5

**Conversation**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I know nothing at all (1)	69.3	69.5	69.1
I don't know (2)	9.3	9.7	8.7
In between (3)	10.1	9.7	10.8

I know a little (4)	4.9	4.7	5.3
Fluent (5)	5.2	4.7	5.9
No answer	1.2	1.7	0.2

### Reading

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I know nothing at all (1)	79.0	80.7	76.0
I don't know (2)	7.2	6.0	9.3
In between (3)	6.6	5.8	8.0
I know a little (4)	3.1	3.1	3.0
Fluent (5)	3.7	3.9	3.2
No answer	0.4	0.5	0.5

### Writing

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I know nothing at all (1)	80.8	82.4	77.8
I don't know (2)	6.0	4.3	9.2
In between (3)	6.1	5.6	7.0
I know a little (4)	2.7	2.8	2.5
Fluent (5)	3.8	4.2	3.0
No answer	0.6	0.7	0.5

### Q18. When do you usually use the Hebrew Language?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
To watch TV	8.5	6.2	12.6
Listen to the radio	0.3	0.5	0.0
Read the newspapers	0.3	0.4	0.0
For official bureaucratic issues	2.3	3.4	0.5
Working needs	17.3	19.4	13.7
Chat with friends/social issues	1.8	2.3	0.9
Follow up cultural events/ movies	2.3	2.2	2.3
Others	2.5	2.7	2.3
No answer	64.7	62.9	67.7