

# **JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 25**

## **On Palestinian Position and Attitudes Towards the Current Crisis between Iraq and the United States**

### **February 1998**

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

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#### **Introduction**

The results of JMCC's February opinion poll, on the Palestinian position and attitudes towards the current crisis between Iraq and the United States, can be summarized as follows:

- The majority of the Palestinian people support and sympathize with Iraq in the current crisis.
  - Palestinian support for Iraq is based on feelings of sympathy for the Iraqi people and an expression of hostility towards the US and its policies in the region.
  - The majority of Palestinians believe that the US adopts a double-standard policy in dealing with crises in the region.
  - A slight majority of those interviewed oppose the Palestinian police commander's order banning demonstrations and marches that could lead to acts of violence and burning flags.
  - A majority of Palestinians expects a US attack on Iraq. Only half predict that Iraq will launch missiles against Israel, and only half expressed concern over the possibility of being in danger.
  - Levels of support for Iraq are slightly higher in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip; concern about the danger is slightly higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank. Support for the Palestinian police ban on demonstrations is higher in the West Bank than in Gaza.
  - This latest poll (February 1998) was conducted in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip on a sample population of 1,188 persons (over the age of 18).
  - The results show 94.1% of those interviewed support and sympathize with Iraq in the current crisis. When asked about the reasons for their support of Iraq, 25.2% said they support Iraq out of sympathy for the Iraqi people; 17.3% support Iraq because they are against the US and its policies in the region; and 4.5% express solidarity with Iraq because they support the Iraqi regime and its president Saddam Hussein.
  - A large majority, 80.5%, believe that the United States uses a double standard in its policies toward crises in the region; only 13.1% do not believe that US policy is double-standard, while 6.4% have no opinion on the issue.
  - With regard to Palestinian expectations, results showed that 62.3% of those interviewed expect a US attack on Iraq, compared with 33.2% who do not. When asked if they would predict a missile attack on Israel, 55.2% of the sample said they expect a missile attack on Israel, and 42.9% do not. Regarding concerns over the potential danger for Palestinians, 48.5% expressed concern that Palestinians might be in danger if an Iraqi missile attack is launched on Israel; 46.9% did not express any concern on this issue.
  - 77.2% of those sampled voiced support to Iraq launching a strike against Israel if the US attacks Iraq.
  - Finally, 57.6% oppose the order by Palestinian police on banning demonstrations and marches that can lead to acts of violence and burning flags while 32.7% support the order and 9.7% refused to answer this question. On the position of the Palestinian Authority, 46.2% support the PA position regarding the Iraqi crisis while 25.9% oppose the PA position, and 23.6% are not familiar with the PA position.
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## Methodology

A random sample of 1,188 Palestinians, over the age of 18 years, were interviewed throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 14 February 1998. The interviews were conducted on 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, 749 people were surveyed from the following areas: Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Bethlehem, and East Jerusalem.

In the Gaza Strip, 439 people were surveyed from: Gaza City, Khan Younis, Rafah, Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya, Deir al-Balah, al-Maghazi.

The major of error is plus or minus 3% with a confidence level of 95%.

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## Sample Distribution

- 54.7% of the respondents were from the West Bank
- 37.0% from the Gaza Strip
- 8.3% from Jerusalem
- 30.6% said they live in villages
- 15.6% in refugee camps
- 53.8% in towns/cities
- 56.7% were male
- 43.3% were female
  - (The interviewers reported that a large number of women declined to be interviewed, particularly in the Gaza Strip).
- The average of age of the respondents was 33.5 years.

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## Occupation respondents

- Students 11.5%
  - Waged laborers 14.6%
  - Housewives 23.1%
  - Employees e.g. secretaries/teachers/nurses/municipal employees 19.3%
  - Businessmen/private business 14.8%
  - Farmers/fishermen 2.6%
  - Craftsmen 2.4%
  - Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/pharmacists/engineers 2.6%
  - Unemployed 6.6%
  - Retired 1.9%
  - No answer 0.6%
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## Results

### Q1. Do you expect a US attack on Iraq?

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 62.3% | 65.6%     | 56.7%      |
| No         | 33.2% | 29.2%     | 39.9%      |
| No opinion | 4.5%  | 5.2%      | 3.4%       |

### Q2. If a war breaks out between Iraq and the US, do you expect Iraq to launch missiles against Israel like the last time?

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 52.2% | 50.6%     | 54.9%      |
| No         | 42.9% | 43.1%     | 42.6%      |
| No opinion | 4.9%  | 6.3%      | 2.5%       |

### Q3. If Iraq launches missiles against Israel, are you concerned that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza will be injured?

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 48.5% | 45.3%     | 54.0%      |
| No         | 46.9% | 49.7%     | 42.1%      |
| No opinion | 4.6%  | 5.0%      | 3.9%       |

### Q4. Do you support Iraq and sympathize with it in this crisis?

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 94.1% | 96.9%     | 89.3%      |
| No         | 4.8%  | 2.3%      | 9.1%       |
| No opinion | 1.1%  | 0.8%      | 1.7%       |

### Q5. If you support Iraq, is this support based on: *(This question was asked only to those who answered yes to Q.4 above)*

|   | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|---|-------|-----------|------------|
| You backing the policy of the Iraqi government headed by Saddam | 4.5%  | 4.8%      | 3.8%       |
| Your sympathy with the Iraqi people                             | 25.2% | 22.6%     | 30.1%      |
| Your position against the US and its policies in the region     | 17.3% | 10.5%     | 29.8%      |

|                        |       |       |       |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| First & second reasons | 6.4%  | 7.2%  | 5.1%  |
| First & third reasons  | 5.6%  | 6.9%  | 3.3%  |
| Second & third reasons | 28.4% | 32.2% | 21.2% |
| Al the three reasons   | 12.4% | 15.7% | 6.4%  |
| No opinion             | 0.2%  | 0.1%  | 0.3%  |

**Q6. Do you support the Palestinian Authority's (PA) position on the current Iraqi crisis?**

|   | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|---|-------|-----------|------------|
| Support                                   | 46.2% | 44.2%     | 49.7%      |
| Oppose                                    | 25.9% | 27.5%     | 23.2%      |
| Do not know the position of the Authority | 23.6% | 24.2%     | 22.6%      |
| No opinion                                | 4.3%  | 4.1%      | 4.5%       |

**Q7. Do you think the US implements a double-standard policy in dealing with crises in the region?**

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 80.5% | 84.6%     | 73.3%      |
| No         | 13.1% | 10.7%     | 17.3%      |
| No opinion | 6.4%  | 4.7%      | 9.4%       |

**Q8. If the US launches a strike against Iraq. Do you support Iraq launching a strike against Israel?**

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes        | 77.2% | 76.2%     | 78.8%      |
| No         | 15.7% | 14.3%     | 18.2%      |
| No opinion | 7.1%  | 9.5%      | 3.0%       |

**Q9. The Palestinian Police issued an order banning demonstrations and marches that might lead to acts of violence and disturbances, such as burning flags? Do you support or disagree with the order?**

|            | Total | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Support    | 32.7% | 30.3%     | 36.9%      |
| Oppose     | 57.6% | 59.3%     | 54.7%      |
| No opinion | 9.7%  | 10.4%     | 8.4%       |