

JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 20

On Palestinian Attitudes Towards Current Issues

April 1997

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Introduction

- 91.2% of Palestinians believe that the US role in the peace process is extremely biased in favor of Israel. In addition, only 0.8% think the US role is biased towards the Palestinians, while 4.1% think it plays a neutral role.
 - In general, opposition to the peace process has increased from the period of April to May 1997 from 23.1% to 26.3%, whereas the support of the peace process has declined, the same period from 72.9% to 68.8%. Moreover, only 12.5% of Palestinians support the Oslo track whereas 55.1% support it with caution.
 - The period between April 3 and May 15, 1997 shows a remarkable change in people's attitude towards the role of the Palestinian Authority. In comparison with the results of April 97, May's results show a sharp decrease in the percentage of people who think that the PA's role is good by 12.1% (79.6% in last month to 67.5% in May). Also, the percentage of people who think that the PA's role is bad, has remarkably increased by 11.8% (16% to 27.8%).
 - In opinions of people towards the role of Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), results show a decline of 6.5% (53.8% in April to 47.3% in May) of the number of people who think PLC's role is good. Also, results show a sharp decline in people's attitude towards the performance of Arafat. A comparison with the poll conducted in April, shows a decrease in Arafat's "good" performance from 67.8% to 53.8% (a decrease by 14%).
 - There is also further decline in people's trust in Palestinian leaders. Arafat's approval rating fell from 43.4% to 39.8%. In addition, the number of Palestinians who don't trust any Palestinian figure has increased from 25.9% to 31.3%. Moreover, trust in political or religious factions has also declined. Fateh's percentage declined from 38.5% to 37.9%. Support for Hamas and other Islamic factions declined from 10.6% and 5% to 10.3% and 4.2% respectively.
 - A comparison with the April survey shows that the number of Palestinians who believe that corruption in the Palestinian Authority is widespread increased from 34.8% in last month to 38.8% in May. Moreover, the number of people who think that corruption hardly exists in the PA decreased from 11.8% to 8.7%.
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Methodology

A random sample of 1,185 Palestinians, over the age of 18 years, were interviewed throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 3 and 4 April 1997. 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, 750 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jerusalem:** Old city, a-Ram, Dahiya, Silwan, Wadi al-Joz, Sheikh Jarrah, Ras al-Amoud. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Shahour, khader, Dheisheh Refugee Camp. **Hebron:** Hebron, Arrub Refugee Camp, Bani Na'im, Thahiriya, Tarqumiya, Dura . . **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin Refugee Camp, Tubas, Zababdeh, Yamoun, Kafr Dan, Yabad, Oabatiya, al-Shuhad'a. **Tulkarem & Qalqiliya:** Qalqiliya, Tulkarem, Tuklarem Refugee Camp, Attil, Allar, Azun.. **Nablus:** Nablus, Beit Furiq, Balata Refugee Camp, Salfit, Burqa, Madama, Asira al-Shamaliya. **Ramallah:** Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Deir Dibwan, Beitunia, Ein 'Ariq, Jalazon Refugee Camp, Birzeit., **Jericho:** Jericho.

In the Gaza Strip, 435 people were surveyed from: Gaza, Naser, Al-Darj, al-Tufah, Sheikh Radwan, Khan Younis Refugee Camp, Sabra, Magahzi Refugee Camp, Khan Younis, Rafah Refugee Camp, Rimal, Khan Younis al-Balad, Nuseirat, Rafah/ Tal al-Sultan, Brazil, Deir Al-Balah, Jabaliya al-Balad, al-Shija'ieh, Rimal al-Shamali, Sheikh Ajaleen, Shaboura, Beit Hanoun, Beit Lahiya, Breij Refugee Camp, Beach Refugee Camp, Jabaliay Refugee Camp.

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

Sample Distribution

- 55.1% of the respondents were from the West Bank
- 36.6% from the Gaza Strip
- 8.3% from Jerusalem
- 29.7% said they live in villages
- 22.8% in refugee camps
- 47.5% in towns/cities
- 50.5% were male
- 49.5% were female
- 63.1% were married
- 31.1% were single
- 4.1% were widowed
- 1.0% were divorced
- 0.7% No answer
- The average of age of the respondents was 34 years.

Occupation respondents

- Students 12.7%
- Waged laborers 11.2%
- Housewives 33.4%
- Employees e.g. secretaries/teachers/nurses/municipal employees 18.4%
- Private sector employees 1.8%
- Businessmen/private business 7.8%
- Farmers/fishermen 2.1%
- Craftsmen 1.8%

- Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/pharmacists/engineers 1.8%
 - Unemployed 6.4%
 - Retired 1.8%
 - No answer 0.8%
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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	7.8%	7.5%	8.3%
Optimistic	60.9%	57.7%	66.4%
Pessimistic	22.5%	25.2%	17.7%
Very Pessimistic	6.9%	7.6%	5.7%
I do not know	1.7%	1.6%	1.9%
No answer	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%

Q2. In general, do you support or oppose the current peace process between the Palestinians and Israel? Do you strongly support, somewhat support, strongly oppose or somewhat oppose?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	24.5%	23.6%	26.0%
Somewhat support	44.6%	39.9%	52.9%
Strongly oppose	12.6%	14.3%	9.7%
Somewhat oppose	13.7%	16.1%	9.4%
I do not know	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%
No answer	4.3%	5.7%	2.0%

Q3. Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh	37.9%	38.0%	37.7%
Hamas	10.3%	8.0%	14.3%
PFLP	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%
DFLP	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
Islamic Jihad	1.4%	1.1%	2.1%
PPP	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%
FIDA	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Pro Peace Secularists	0.6%	0.9%	0.0%
Other Islamic Organization	4.2%	5.3%	2.3%
Others	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%
Do not trust anyone	31.3%	30.3%	33.1%
No answer	8.4%	9.7%	5.0%

Q4. Which Palestinian political or religious personality do you trust most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yasser Arafat	39.8%	35.7%	46.9%
Ahmed Yassin	5.6%	4.7%	7.1%
Hadydar Abdel Shafi	3.4%	2.7%	4.6%
George Habash	2.6%	2.9%	2.1%
Hanan Ashrawi	2.1%	2.1%	1.8%
Faisal Husseini	1.6%	1.7%	1.4%
Saeb Erekat	1.6%	1.7%	1.4%
Mahmoud Abbas	0.8%	0.5%	1.1%
Nayef Hawatmeh	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%
Others	9.5%	10.8%	6.0%
Do not trust anyone	25.4%	26.9%	23.2%
No answer	7.3%	9.9%	4.4%

Q5. In general, how would you rate the overall performance of the Palestinian Authority? Would you say that its performance has been very good, good, bad, or very bad?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	10.2%	9.7%	11.0%
Good	57.3%	55.3%	60.7%
Bad	20.8%	21.9%	19.1%
Very bad	7.0%	7.3%	6.4%
I do not know	3.7%	4.5%	2.3%
No answer	1.0%	1.3%	0.5%

Q6. In general, how would you rate the overall performance of the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat? Would you say that his performance has been good, average, or bad?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	53.8%	46.0%	67.1%
Average	30.3%	34.3%	23.4%
Bad	11.6%	14.1%	7.4%
I do not know	3.0%	3.9%	1.6%
No answer	1.3%	1.7%	0.5%

Q7. Do you support the continuation of military operations against Israeli targets as an adequate response to the current political conditions, or do you oppose it and see it as harmful to Palestinian national interests?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Support military operations	34.2%	35.1%	32.6%
Oppose military operations	52.7%	51.3%	55.2%
I do not know	9.0%	8.9%	9.2%
No answer	4.1%	4.7%	3.0%

Q8. What about the suicide bombing operations?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Support suicide operations	23.6%	23.3%	24.1%
Oppose suicide operations	64.7%	64.0%	66.0%
I do not know	7.8%	7.9%	7.8%
No answer	3.9%	4.8%	2.1%

Q9. In general, how would you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Very good	5.9%	6.3%	5.3%
Good	41.4%	41.6%	41.1%
Bad	25.0%	23.1%	28.3%
Very bad	9.7%	8.9%	11.0%
I do not know	17.0%	19.2%	13.1%
No answer	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%

Q10. Now that Oslo agreements have been partially implemented for some time, to what extent you support or oppose such agreements?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Strongly support	12.5%	12.4%	12.6%
Support with cautious	55.1%	51.9%	60.7%
Oppose	23.4%	26.4%	18.2%
I do not know	7.2%	7.5%	6.7%
No answer	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%

Q11. The United States is acting as the sponsor and broker in the peace process, do you believe that the US is siding with the Palestinians, acting as neutral side, or biased towards Israel?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Siding with the Palestinians	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%
Neutral side	4.1%	2.8%	6.4%
Biased towards Israel	91.2%	92.1%	89.7%
I do not know	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%
No answer	1.0%	1.3%	0.4%

Q12. What is your general opinion about returnees? Better than you expected, similar to your expectations or worse than you expected?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Better than I expected	9.5%	8.3%	11.7%
Similar to my expectations	30.8%	32.7%	27.6%
Worse than I expected	46.8%	43.5%	52.6%
I do not know	11.1%	13.3%	7.1%
No answer	1.8%	2.2%	1.0%

Q13. Some think that the level of corruption in the Palestinian Authority is high; others think that there is corruption but it is not widespread while others think there isn't any corruption. What do you think?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
There is a great deal	38.8%	36.5%	42.8%
There is a fair amount	43.8%	45.2%	41.4%
There is hardly any at all	8.7%	9.1%	8.0%
I do not know	7.7%	8.1%	6.9%
No answer	1.0%	1.1%	0.9%