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Poll no. 74_June 2011

A public opinion poll conducted by Jerusalem Media & Communications Center

A majority wants a government of independent figures and believes that Fayyad is the most appropriate figure to head the government

Two thirds of the respondents are optimistic regarding the support from world countries to the Palestinians in September

A majority deems the reconciliation agreement as positive and thinks it will be implemented on ground

Rise in level of confidence in President Abbas and Ismail Haniyyeh

The public opinion poll conducted by Jerusalem Media & Communications Center showed that the Palestinian people prefer a government of independent figures. When asked if they prefer a government with a majority of its ministers from Fatah, Hamas or independent figures, a majority of the respondents (50.8%) said it prefers a government of independent figures compared with a ratio of 26.5% who said they prefer a Fatah-majority government while a ratio of 12.5% said they prefer a Hamas-majority government.

Regarding the most appropriate figure to head the next unity government, the poll results showed that Dr. Salam Fayyad is the most appropriate figure among the names of figures circulated in the mass media. A ratio of 44.4% said Dr. Salam Fayyad is the most appropriate while a ratio of 12.3% said Jamal al-Khudaree is the most appropriate and a ratio of 5.3% said Mazen Sunukrut is the most appropriate followed by Mohammed Abu Shahla who got a support ratio of 3.3% and Mohammed Mustafa got a ratio of 1.8%. A ratio of 23.7% said they don't trust anyone and a ratio of 9.2% refrained from answering the question.

According to the poll that was conducted during the period between May 31st and June 4th 2011 with a random sample of 1198 persons from the West Bank and Gaza, a majority of respondents (79.1%) said they consider the reconciliation agreement a positive step that serves the national interest while a ratio of 12.4% said the reconciliation agreement would not make any difference. A majority of respondents (81.1%) expressed optimism regarding the implementation of the agreement on the ground. A majority of respondents (76.9%) said the formation of a national reconciliation government of independent figures as stipulated in the reconciliation agreement is a good idea at the current phase compared with a ratio of 13.0% who said the opposite.

The political situation and the United States

With regards to the general public optimism vis-à-vis the PLO possible step next September to gain recognition of the Palestinian state, the poll results showed that two thirds of the respondents (63.6%) expressed optimism towards this step and the possibility of getting support from the majority of the world countries while a ratio of 30.2% of the respondents said they feel pessimistic regarding the chances to get international recognition. On the importance of such a step, a ratio of 64.6% said it serves the national interest compared with a ratio of 4.6% who said the step will harm the national interest and a ratio of 25.5% said the step will not make any difference regarding the national interest.

The poll shows that the speech of US President Barack Obama made the largest ratio of Palestinians (44.4%) more pessimistic regarding finding a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict compared with a ratio of 11.2% who said that the speech made them feel more optimistic. A ratio of 43.6% of the respondents said the speech of Obama didn't make any difference although a ratio of 52.1% said they read or watched one of the recent speeches of Obama regarding the Middle East.

The poll results showed that the general public believes that there is US regression in dealing with the Middle East issues at the current phase. The ratio of those who believe the US retreated in its dealings with the Middle East issues rose to 32.6% in this poll compared with a ratio of 12.8% in the poll conducted in October 2009. Generally speaking, a Palestinian majority of 91.8% still insists that the US is biased towards Israel compared with a ratio of 4.8% who believes that the US is neither biased towards Israel nor towards Palestine.

Popularity of parties and figures

With regards to the level of confidence in the Palestinian factions, the ratio of those who trust Fatah more rose from 36.2% in April 2010 to 39.2% in this poll. Level of confidence in Hamas also rose from 14.4% in April 2010 to 16.6% in this poll. Along the same lines, the level of confidence in President Mahmoud Abbas increased from 17.8% in April 2010 to 22.2% in this poll. Level of confidence in Ismail Hanniyeh also rose from 11.2% to 13.6%. Marwan Barghouthi maintained his third rank in this poll with a confidence ratio of 6.8% following by PM Salam Fayyad who received a confidence ratio of 6.3%. Ratio of those who don't trust anyone went down from 32.5% to 28.5%.

On the other hand, the recent political developments have increased the ratio of respondents who are satisfied with the way in which President Abbas is running the PNA from 18.6% in April 2010 to 24.3% in June 2011.

Methodology:

A random sample of 1198 people over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 31st May and 4th June 2011. 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 130 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the **West Bank** 750 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Hebron:** Hebron, Halhoul, Beit Ummar, Yatta, al-Shyoukh, Tarqoumiya, Ithna, Bani Nai'm, Khursa, Der al-Assal al-Tahta, al-Arroub Refugee Camp. **Jenin & Tubas:** Jenin, Qabatiya, al-Yamoun, Ya'bad, Arraba, Kufeirt, al-Fandaqoumiyah, al-Tyabah, Jenin Refugee Campm Aqaba, Tayaseer. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Nahlin, Beit Jala, al-Shawawreh, Aida Refugee Camp. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Beir Zeit, Ramallah, Beitounia, Ni'lin, al-Bireh, Jifna, Bili'n, Qarawat Bani Zeid, 'Aboud, al-Am'ari Refugee Camp. **Jericho:** Jericho, al-Jiftlik. **Jerusalem:** al-Ram, al-Dahiyeh, Biddo, Beit Iksa, Beit Hanina, Shu'fat, Old City, Silwan, Ras al-Amoud, Shu'fat Refugee Camp. **Nablus & Salfit:** Nablus, Beita, Jama'een, Huwwara, Till, Beit Iba, Qusin, Burin, Beit al-Ma' Refugee Camp, Safit, Deri Istiya. **Tulkarem:** Tulkarem, Allar, Baqa al-Sharqiya. Safareen, Kaffa. **Qalqilya:** Qalqilia, Kufr Thulth.

In the **Gaza Strip** 448 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** al-Rimal a-Shamali, a-Rimal a-Janoubi, a-Zeitoun, a-Shuja'ia, a-Tufah, a-Daraj, a-Naser, a-Sheikh Radwan, Tal al-Hawa, al-Mughraga, Shati RC. **Khan Younis:** Khan Younis, Absan al-Kabira, Bani Suheila, al-Qarara, Khuza', Khan Younis RC. **Rafah:** Rafah, Shouket a-Soufi, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al-Balah, Buriij, -Zawaydeh, Nussirat, al-Maghazi RC, Bureij RC, Deir al-Balah RC.

The margin of error is ± 3 percent, with a confidence level of 95%.

Sample Distribution

52.6% of the respondents were from the West Bank, 10.0% from Jerusalem, 37.4% from the Gaza Strip.

16.7% said they live in villages, 8.7% in refugee camps, and 74.6 % in towns/cities.

50.2% were male, 49.8% were female.

66.6% were married, 26.5%, single, 3.6% widowed, 1.9% divorced, 1.4% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 34.9 % years.

Occupation of Respondents

- Students 15.1%
- Laborers 12.1%
- Housewives 34.1%
- Farmers/fishermen 2.5 %
- Craftsmen 0.9%
- Businessmen/private business 6.4 %
- Public Sector Employees 12.2%
- Private Sector Employees 7.5 %
- Professionals (e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers) 1.3%
- Unemployed 5.4%
- Retired 1.9 % ,
- No answer 0.6 % .

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
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Very optimistic	10.8	10.7	10.9
Optimistic	63.9	58.8	72.3
Pessimistic	17.5	19.7	13.8
Very Pessimistic	7.4	10.3	2.7
No answer	0.4	0.5	0.3

Q2. Some believe that a two-state formula is the favored solution for the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, while others believe that historic Palestine cannot be divided and thus the favored solution is a bi-national state on all of Palestine where Palestinians and Israelis enjoy equal representation and rights. Which of these solutions do you prefer?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n=750	n= 448
Two-state solution : an Israeli and a Palestinian State	54.3	55.9	51.6
Bi-national state on all of historic Palestine	23.8	22.7	25.7
Palestinian State *	8.3	6.7	10.9
Islamic State *	1.9	1.9	2.0
Others	0.4	0.0	1.1
No solution	8.7	10.7	5.4
I don't know	1.7	2.0	1.1
No answer	0.9	0.1	2.2

* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

Q3. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied about the way that Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) is dealing with his job as a president to the Palestinian National Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Very satisfied	24.3	23.1	26.3
Somewhat satisfied	33.5	33.2	33.9
Somewhat dissatisfied	14.7	16.0	12.5
Very dissatisfied	25.8	25.5	26.3
No answer	1.7	2.2	1.0

Q4. What is your opinion about the performance of the US Administration headed by President Barack Obama regarding the Middle East? Do you think the United States has improved its dealings with the Middle East problems, or have you noticed regression, or no change?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
There has been improvement in the dealings of the United States with the Middle East problems	9.2	10.5	6.9
There has been regression in the dealings of the United States with the Middle East problems	32.6	29.1	38.4
There has been no change in the United States dealing with the Middle East problems	56.3	58.5	52.7
I don't know	1.8	1.9	1.8
No answer	0.1	0.0	0.2

Q5. With regards to the US policy vis-à-vis the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, do you think the US is biased more towards the Israelis or more towards the Palestinians or that it is neutral?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Biased more towards the Israelis	91.8	91.3	92.6
Biased more towards the Palestinians	1.0	0.4	2.0
Neutral	4.8	5.6	3.3
I don't know	2.3	2.7	1.8
No answer	0.1	0.0	0.3

Q6. Have you listened to or watched any of Obama's recent speeches concerning the Middle East?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Yes	52.1	53.6	49.6
No	47.9	46.4	50.4

Q7. Following the two recent important speeches by US president Obama, -a speech on the Middle East and Africa and a speech at AIPAC conference- do you feel more optimistic on finding a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict or more pessimistic or do you feel that the speeches won't make any difference?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 624	n= 402	n= 222
More optimistic on finding a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict	11.2	12.9	8.1
More pessimistic on finding a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict	44.4	45.0	43.2
It won't make any difference	43.6	41.3	47.7
I don't know	0.6	0.7	0.5
No answer	0.2	0.1	0.5

***This question was asked to those who answered that they listened or watched any of Obama's speeches**

Q8. The various Palestinian factions have recently signed a reconciliation agreement, do you believe that this is a positive step that serves the national interests or a negative step that harms the national interests or a step that won't make any difference?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
A positive step that serves the national interests	79.1	75.5	85.3
A negative step that harms the national interests	3.8	4.9	2.0
The step does not make any difference	12.4	15.7	6.9
I don't know	2.4	3.1	1.3
No answer	2.3	0.8	4.5

Q9. How optimistic or pessimistic do you feel towards the implementation of the reconciliation agreement that has been signed recently between the various Palestinian factions? Would you say you are very optimistic, optimistic, pessimistic, or very pessimistic?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Very optimistic	16.9	16.7	17.4
Optimistic	64.2	60.7	70.1
Pessimistic	14.7	17.1	10.7
Very pessimistic	1.8	2.3	0.9
No answer	2.4	3.2	0.9

Q10. The Palestinian people have tried a Fatah–majority government and a Hamas–majority government, now there is a government with the majority of its ministers as independent figures, in your opinion and from the past experiences, which is the government that best serves the interests of the Palestinian people?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
A Fatah–majority government	26.5	25.1	28.8
A Hamas–majority government	12.5	11.7	13.8
A government with the majority of its ministers as independent figures	50.8	50.3	51.6
No answer	10.2	12.9	5.8

Q11. The reconciliation agreement that has been signed recently between the Palestinian factions stipulated the formation of a national reconciliation government consisting of independent competent figures with no presence of any member of the various political or religious factions. Do you think that the idea of a government of independent competent figures is a good idea at the present phase or a bad idea at the current phase?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
A good idea at the present phase	76.9	73.1	83.3
A bad idea at the current phase	13.0	13.6	12.1
I don't know	7.6	10.7	2.5
No answer	2.5	2.6	2.1

Q12. Who do you think is the most appropriate Palestinian independent figure to assume the post of PM in the coming national reconciliation government as stipulated in the reconciliation agreement?*

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
Salam Fayyad	26.5	24.3	30.4
Jamal al-Khudaree	5.2	1.9	10.7
Mustafa al-Barghouthi	3.8	4.4	2.9
Ismail Hanieh	2.7	2.1	3.6
Mazen Sunukrut	2.1	2.8	0.9
Mohamed Abu Shahla	2.0	1.3	3.1
Muneeb al-Masree	1.7	2.5	0.2
Mahmoud Abass (Abu Mazen)	1.7	1.3	2.2
Marwan al-Barghouthi	1.4	1.7	0.9
Others	7.8	9.5	5.1
I don't trust any one	25.9	25.1	27.2
No answer	19.2	23.1	12.8

* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

Q13. Recently, reports started coming out about nominations for the PM post in the national reconciliation government that was agreed upon in the recent reconciliation agreement, who do you think is the most appropriate from the following names:

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
Mohamed Abu Shahla	3.3	2.7	4.5
Salam Fayyad	44.4	45.3	42.9
Jamal al-Khudaree	12.3	6.0	22.8
Mohamed Mustafa	1.8	1.7	1.8
Mazen Sunukrut	5.3	7.2	2.2
I don't know	23.7	25.5	20.8
No answer	9.2	11.6	5.0

Q14. The Palestinian leadership announced recently its intention to head to the UN in September to get UN recognition of an independent Palestinian State. Do you believe that this is a good step that serves the Palestinian national interests or a bad step that harms the Palestinian national interests or a step that won't make any difference?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
A good step that serves the Palestinian national interests	64.6	60.4	71.7
A bad step that harms the Palestinian national interests	4.6	3.5	6.5
The step won't make any difference	25.5	30.5	17.2
I don't know	4.2	4.8	3.1
No answer	1.1	0.8	1.5

Q15. In case the PLO heads in September to the UN to get recognition of an independent Palestinian state, how optimistic or pessimistic are you regarding getting the support of the majority of the world countries?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 750	Gaza n= 448
Very optimistic	10.4	10.1	10.7
Somewhat optimistic	53.2	51.5	56.0
Somewhat pessimistic	21.9	22.0	21.7
Very pessimistic	8.3	8.5	7.8
I don't know	5.3	7.1	2.2
No answer	0.9	0.8	1.6

Q16. Which political or religious faction do you trust the most?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Fatah	39.2	38.0	41.3
Hamas	16.6	13.6	21.7
PFLP	2.5	2.8	2.0
Palestinian National Initiative	1.3	1.7	0.7
Islamic Jihad	1.0	0.1	2.5
Independents	2.8	4.0	0.9
Other Islamic Factions	1.7	0.5	3.6
Others	1.4	1.7	0.9
Don't trust any one	28.4	30.7	24.6
No answer	5.1	6.9	1.8

* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

Q17. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 750	n= 448
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	22.2	21.1	24.1
Ismail Hanieh	13.6	8.8	21.7
Marwan al- Barhouthi	6.8	6.9	6.7
Salam Fayyad	6.3	7.5	4.5
Mustafa al-Barghouthi	3.0	3.6	2.0
Ahmad Sa'adat	1.5	1.6	1.3
Mohammed Dahlan	1.5	0.0	4.0
Khaled Mash'al	1.3	1.5	1.1
Mahmoud al-Zahar	1.0	1.5	0.2
Others	6.7	6.4	7.1
Don't trust any one	28.5	31.7	23.0
No answer	7.6	9.4	4.3

* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee