
Poll no. 67_January 2009

Press Release

A public opinion poll conducted by Jerusalem Media & Communications Center

Rise in popularity of Hamas' leaders and government with decline in popularity of Fatah

The Palestinian public prefers resistance over negotiations

The majority believes that US President Obama won't bring change; however, a small ratio still feels optimistic

Turkey, Venezuela, Iran and Hezbollah are the most popular regional parties

A majority supports international supervision over the process of Gaza reconstruction

Fatah and Hamas

The results of the public opinion poll conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC) during the period 29-31 January, 2009 show that the majority of respondents (46.7%) believes that Hamas came out of the war victorious compared with only 9.8% who said that Israel won the war. Over one-third, 37.4%, said that neither side achieved victory in this war.

A striking finding in this field poll is the disparity between opinions in the West Bank and opinions in the Gaza Strip on most of the issues tackled in the poll. For example, 53.3% of respondents in the West Bank believe that Hamas won in the recent war, while 35.2% of respondents in Gaza Strip felt the same.

The poll, with a random sample of 1,198 respondents, found a rise in the popularity of the Hamas movement – especially in the West Bank – and the popularity of its leaders and government in Gaza Strip alongside a decline in the popularity of the Fatah movement and its leaders and government in the West Bank.

When asked if PLC elections were held today, the percentage of those who would vote for Hamas rose to 28.6% in this poll compared with 19.3% last April. On the other hand, the popularity of Fatah Movement declined from 34% last April to 27.9% in this poll.

This change was also reflected in the level of public trust in the two movements. Trust in Hamas rose from 16.6% last November to 27.7% in this poll. With regards to Fatah, popular trust in the movement declined from 31.3% to 26% in the same period. It is clear from the poll that the rise in Hamas' popularity is due to an increase in its popularity in the West Bank – it rose from 12.8% last November to 26.5% in this poll.

This same trend applies to public trust in leading figures. The percentage of those who trust discharged PM Ismail Hanieh went up from 12.8% last October to 21.1% in this poll; this is due to a rise in his popularity in the West Bank from 9.2% to 18.5%. Trust in President Mahmoud Abbas went down from 15.5% last October to 13.4% in this poll.

The percentage of respondents who believe that the performance of the government of Fayyad is better than the performance of Hanieh's government declined from 36% last April to 26.9% in this poll, while those who believe that the performance of Fayyad's government is worse than Hanieh's government rose from 29.1% to 40.7%.

The military operations and negotiations

This JMCC poll found that Israel's war on Gaza contributed to an increase in support for military action against Israel. The percentage of respondents who believe that locally-made rockets help achieve the Palestinian national goals rose from 39.3% last April to 50.8% in this poll, with a decrease in the percentage of respondents who believe that the rockets harm national interests from 35.7% last April to 20.8% in this poll.

In the same trend, the percentage of those who support military operations against Israel targets as an appropriate response under the current political conditions increased from 49.5% last April to 53.3% in this poll. Moreover, this poll found that the percentage of supporters of bombing operations against Israeli civilians increased from 50.7% to 55.4% for the same period.

According to the JMCC poll results, the war led to an increase in the percentage of those who oppose peace negotiations. Nearly 41% (40.9%) of respondents polled opposed peace negotiations compared with 34.7% in a JMCC poll conducted last October.

International positions

The war on Gaza contributed to a rise in popularity of several leaders and countries who adopted positions against Israel, and the organizations that played a humanitarian role. Turkey won satisfaction from the highest percentage of Palestinians (89.6%), followed by Venezuela (80.6%), the International Committee of the Red Cross (79.8%); UNRWA (at fourth place with 78.6% of respondents satisfied), followed by Qatar (68.3%), Hezbollah (66.9%), the Muslim Brotherhood Movement (57.6%) and Iran (55.9%).

On the other hand, respondents' satisfaction with the positions of countries that sided more with Israel during the war was very minimal. The United States received the satisfaction of 2.8% of respondents, followed by Britain (10.4%), then Germany (14.4%). France was the western country that received the satisfaction of the greatest percentage of respondents (at 21.5%).

Egypt received the satisfaction of 35.1% of respondents, while Jordan enjoyed a satisfaction level of 41.7%.

In spite of this, the new US administration, headed by Barack Obama, injected some optimism into Palestinian public opinion. Although almost half of the respondents (48.2%) said that Obama's election as

president of the United States won't make any difference in the chances of achieving a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, 28.1% said they are more optimistic about solving the conflict (this is the highest percentage ever received by a US president in JMCC polls) while a ratio of 18.9% said they feel more pessimistic.

Palestinians also weighed in on the party most preferred to assume the process of Gaza reconstruction after the war on Gaza. A majority of 30.6% said they prefer an international mechanism under UN supervision to assume this task; the second choice was for a national unity government to assume the task (27.2%) while 23.2% prefer that the government of Hamas assume the task and a minority of 13.7% said they prefer the Palestinian Authority to assume the task of Gaza reconstruction.

Background

Sixty researchers from Jerusalem Media and Communication Center one-third of them from Gaza Strip, participated in this poll. They conducted direct face-to-face interviews with respondents. The researchers reached all regions in Gaza Strip. It was found that around 70% of the regions visited by the researchers suffered direct damage as a result of the Israeli operations, including Rafah, Abasan, Tuffah Quarter, Zaitoun Quarter and many other areas.

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 29-31 January 2009. 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** 758 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Hebron:** Hebron, Dura, Yatta, Bani Naim, Halhul, Al-Arrub Refugee Camp, Idna, Sair. **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin Refugee Camp, Yabad, Yamoun, Arraba, Silat al-Daher, Saris, Judeida. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Biet Sahour, Artas, al-Walaja, Jurat al Shama, Aida Refugee Camp. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Kafr Nima, Deir Ammar Refugee Camp, Budros, Abud, Biet Anan, Abwein. **Jericho:** Jericho, Aqbat Jaber Refugee Camp. **Jerusalem:** Dahiya, Al-Ram, Bir Nabala, Shufat Refugee Camp, Shufat, Old City, Biet Hanina, Biet Hanina tahta, al-'Issawia, Wadi el-Joz, Jabel el-Mukaber, Sour Baher. **Nablus:** Nablus, Biddya, Deir Istiya, Yatma, Qusra, Tal, Askar Refugee Camp, Rujeib, Beita. **Tulkarem and Qalqiliya:** Tulkarem, Toulkarem Refugee Camp, Bala, Jaroushiyeh, Qalqiliya, Kafr Sour.

In the **Gaza Strip**: 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Beach Refugee Camp, Shuja'ia, Atufah, Sheikh Radwan, a-Nasir, a-rimal North, a-rimal, South, Sabra, Zaytoun. **Khan Younis:** Abssan al-Saghir, Khan Younis, Bani Suheila, Abasan al-Kabur, Khan Younis Refugee Camp. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah Refugee Camp. **Gaza North:** Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya, Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir Al Balah, Nuseirat Refugee Camp, al-Maghazi Refugee Camp.

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

Sample Distribution

51.6 % of the respondents were from West Bank, 11.7 % from Jerusalem, 36.7 % from the Gaza Strip.

31.6% said they live in villages 15.0% in refugee camps, and 53.4 % in towns/cities.

52.2% were male, 47.8% were female.

59.7% were married, 31.3%, single, 3.8% widowed, 1.1% divorced, 4.1% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 34years.

Occupation of Respondents

- Students 16.1%
- laborers 8.3%
- Farmers/fishermen 2.5%
- Craftsmen 1.0%
- Businessmen/private business 9.7%
- Public Sector Employees 12.9%
- Private Sector Employees 8.0%
- Professionals (e.g. doctors/lawyers/pharmacists/engineers) 1.3%
- Housewives 31.3%
- Unemployed 6.4%
- Retired 1.3 %,
- No answer 1.2%.

Results:

Q1. Now that the Gaza war has ended, who do you think is the winning side? Israel, Hamas, Israel and Hamas or neither Israel nor Hamas?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n=440
Israel	9.8	8.6	12.0
Hamas	46.7	53.3	35.2
Israel and Hamas	2.9	4.1	0.9
Neither Israel nor Hamas	37.4	31.0	48.4
I don't know \ No answer	3.2	3.0	3.5

Q2. Hamas accuses Israel of targeting the civilians in this war while Israel accuses Hamas of hiding among the civilians, what do you think?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Hamas was hiding among the civilians	5.4	5.1	5.9
Israel was targeting the civilians	71.6	71.8	71.4
Hamas was hiding among the civilians and Israel targeted the civilians	20.4	19.7	21.6
I don't know \ No answer	2.6	3.4	1.1

Q3. There is a lot of debate these days on the best means to reconstruct Gaza Strip after the war, who do you think should assume the responsibility to rebuild Gaza? The Hamas government in Gaza, the PNA, or an international mechanism to be under the UN supervision, national unity government, or any other mechanism, please specify?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n=440
Hamas government in Gaza	23.2	24.3	21.4
The PNA	13.7	12.5	15.7
An international mechanism to be under the UN supervision	30.6	33.0	26.4
National Unity government	27.2	25.2	30.7
Other	3.9	3.4	4.8
I don't know \ No answer	1.4	1.6	1.0

Q4. Now that the Gaza war has ended, do you believe that it was possible for the Palestinian side to avoid it, or was Israel planning to launch the war in all cases?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Palestinians could have avoided it	20.1	17.5	24.5
Israel planned to launch the war in all cases	76.8	79.3	72.5
I do not know \ No answer	3.1	3.2	3.0

Q5. To what extent are you satisfied with West Bank solidarity with the Gaza Strip during the war?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Very satisfied	20.5	16.6	27.0
Somewhat satisfied	38.2	36.3	41.6
Somewhat dissatisfied	21.0	22.4	18.6
Very dissatisfied	19.3	23.5	12.0
I don't know \ No answer	1.0	1.2	0.8

Q6. Do you think that the locally-made rockets fired from Gaza Strip towards Israeli regions help, harm or don't make any difference with regards to the Palestinian goals?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n=1198	n= 758	n=440
Help	50.8	52.8	47.3
Harm	20.8	16.2	28.6
Don't make any difference	24.7	27.6	19.8
Other	0.5	0.4	0.7
I don't know \ No answer	3.2	3.0	3.6

Q7. To what extent are you satisfied with the role of the following countries, organizations and parties in the Gaza war? Very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
1. France			
Satisfied	21.5	18.9	25.9
Dissatisfied	71.8	75.5	65.5
I don't know \ No answer	6.7	5.6	8.6

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
2. Britain			
Satisfied	10.4	8.8	13.2
Dissatisfied	84.8	85.5	83.6
I don't know \ No answer	4.8	5.7	3.2

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
3. Germany			
Satisfied	14.4	13.2	16.6
Dissatisfied	79.3	79.2	79.5
I don't know \ No answer	6.3	7.6	3.9

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
4. The United States			
Satisfied	2.8	2.6	3.0
Dissatisfied	96.3	96.0	96.8
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.4	0.2

Total	West Bank	Gaza
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5. Egypt	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	35.1	24.7	53.0
Dissatisfied	64.0	74.3	46.4
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.0	0.6

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
6. Jordan	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	41.7	38.3	47.5
Dissatisfied	57.3	60.7	51.6
I don't know \ No answer	1.0	1.0	0.9

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
7. Qatar	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	68.3	74.1	58.2
Dissatisfied	30.5	24.0	41.6
I don't know \ No answer	1.2	1.9	0.2

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
8. Venezuela	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	80.6	82.7	76.8
Dissatisfied	16.9	14.4	21.4
I don't know \ No answer	2.5	2.9	1.8

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
9.The Muslim Brotherhood Movement in Egypt	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	57.6	57.8	57.3
Dissatisfied	39.0	37.2	42.0
I don't know \ No answer	3.4	5.0	0.7

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
10. The UNRWA	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	78.6	73.7	87.0
Dissatisfied	19.9	24.0	12.7
I don't know \ No answer	1.5	2.3	0.3

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
11. The ICRC	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	79.8	78.1	82.7
Dissatisfied	19.3	20.4	17.3
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.5	0.0

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
12. The UN	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Satisfied	32.6	30.5	36.4
Dissatisfied	65.3	66.4	63.4
I don't know \ No answer	2.1	3.1	0.2

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n=440
13. The EU			
Satisfied	33.0	28.5	40.7
Dissatisfied	61.8	64.4	57.3
I don't know \ No answer	5.2	7.1	2.0

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n=440
14. Iran			
Satisfied	55.9	64.4	41.4
Dissatisfied	42.4	33.2	58.2
I don't know \ No answer	1.7	2.4	0.4

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
15. Hezbollah			
Satisfied	66.9	74.4	54.1
Dissatisfied	32.2	24.5	45.5
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.1	0.4

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n=440
16. Turkey			
Satisfied	89.6	90.9	87.5
Dissatisfied	9.5	8.0	12.0
I don't know \ No answer	0.9	1.1	0.5

Q8. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the President (Abu Mazen), are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or not satisfied at all?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n=1198	n= 758	n= 440
Very satisfied	13.2	11.5	16.1
Somewhat satisfied	20.4	18.5	23.6
Somewhat dissatisfied	12.4	11.6	13.9
Very dissatisfied	49.9	53.3	44.1
No answer	4.1	5.1	2.3

Q9. How would you evaluate the performance of the caretaker government headed by Salam Fayyad in the West Bank at the present time compared with the performance of the discharged government headed by Hanieh in Gaza; would you say that the performance of Fayyad's government is better, similar, or worse than the performance of Hanieh's government?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
The performance of Fayyad's government is better than the performance of Hanieh's government	26.9	23.9	32.0
The performance of Fayyad's government is similar to the performance of Hanieh's government	21.7	23.2	19.1
The performance of Fayyad's government is worse than the performance of Hanieh's government	40.7	41.7	39.1
I don't know	7.9	8.7	6.6

No answer	2.8	2.5	3.2
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Q10. If PLC elections were to take place today, which party would you vote for?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 758	Gaza n= 440
Hamas	28.6	29.0	28.0
Fatah	27.9	24.5	33.6
Other parties	14.6	15.2	13.6
I will not vote	24.6	26.9	20.7
No answer	4.3	4.4	4.1

Q11. 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 n= 1198	West Bank n= 758	Gaza n= 440
Two-state solution : an Israeli and a Palestinian	54.8	57.1	50.9
Bi-national state on all of historic Palestine	18.4	19.8	15.9
Palestinian State *	10.7	4.7	20.9
Islamic State *	1.6	1.8	1.1
Others	0.7	1.0	0.5
No solution	10.0	12.1	6.4
I don't know	2.7	2.5	3.0
No answer	1.1	1.0	1.3

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

Q12. In principle, do you strongly support or somewhat support or somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the resumption of peace negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 758	Gaza n= 440
Strongly agree	19.2	21.1	15.9
Somewhat agree	38.0	36.7	40.2
Somewhat oppose	16.4	15.0	18.9
Strongly oppose	24.5	25.3	23.2
I don't know	1.9	1.9	1.8

Q13. Do you support the continuation of military operations against Israeli targets as an appropriate response under current political conditions or do you oppose them and believe they harm Palestinian national interests?

	Total n= 1198	West Bank n= 758	Gaza n= 440
An appropriate response under current political conditions	53.3	56.2	48.2
Oppose them and believe they harm Palestinian national interests	38.1	35.0	43.6
Other	0.9	0.9	0.9
I don't know	5.8	5.7	6.1
No answer	1.9	2.2	1.2

Q14. How do you feel about the suicide bombings operations against Israeli civilians? Do you strongly support it, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Strongly support	30.1	30.9	28.6
Somewhat support	25.3	21.5	31.8
Somewhat oppose	22.7	23.9	20.7
Strongly oppose	14.9	16.0	13.0
I don't know	5.9	6.3	5.2
No answer	1.1	1.4	0.7

Q15. Barak Obama was recently sworn in as president of the United States, does this make you feel more optimistic on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict or more pessimistic or do you think it won't make any difference?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
More optimistic on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict	28.1	26.5	30.9
More pessimistic on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict	18.9	20.6	16.1
This will not make any difference	48.2	48.9	47.0
I don't know	4.8	4.0	6.0

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

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n=1198	n= 758	n= 440
Hamas	27.7	26.5	29.8
Fatah	26.0	24.3	29.1
Popular Front	3.3	4.0	2.0
Islamic Jihad	2.8	2.1	4.1
National Initiative	1.1	1.7	0.0
Other Islamic Faction	2.0	1.5	3.0
Others	2.7	3.0	2.0
Don't trust anyone	29.4	31.3	26.1
No answer	5.0	5.6	3.9

** This is an open-ended question*

Q17. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1198	n= 758	n= 440
Ismail Hanieh	21.1	18.5	25.7
Mahmoud Abbas	13.4	10.3	18.6
Marwan Barghouthi	8.1	9.6	5.5
Khaled Meshaal	4.1	5.0	2.5
Mustafa Barghouthi	2.8	3.7	1.4
Muhammed Dahlan	1.8	0.1	4.8
Ahmed Saadat	1.4	1.7	0.9
Salam Fayyad	1.3	0.8	2.3
Ramadan Shalah	1.3	0.4	3.0
Mahmoud al-Zahar	1.3	1.7	0.7

Others	5.6	7.1	3.0
Don't trust anyone	31.1	35.0	24.5
No answer	6.7	6.1	7.1

** This is an open-ended question*