

JMCC Public Opinion Poll No. 46

On Palestinian Attitudes Towards the Palestinian Situation and the Second anniversary of the Intifada

September 21 - 25, 2002

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Introduction

Significant Opinion Results

- On the eve of the second anniversary of the Intifada, the majority of Palestinians remain supportive of continuing the Intifada with both its popular and military resistance forms in Israel and the Palestinian territories.
- A majority of Palestinians is pessimistic of the future saying neither a peaceful settlement to the conflict or peace with Israelis will be achieved.
- Palestinians support conducting general elections in January 2003, and most of them say Yasser Arafat will be re-elected, showing a significant increase of support for his re-election.
- A majority of Palestinians do not believe that the Palestinian leadership can conduct serious reform and internal changes during the current situation (Israeli re-occupation, attack and besiegement of Arafat).

Intifada and Resistance

A great majority of Palestinians, 80.6 percent, steadily remained supportive of continuing the Intifada with 48.4 percent saying its goal is to end the Israeli military occupation and establish the independent Palestinian state based on UN Security Council resolution 242. Only 16.4 percent strongly or somewhat oppose the continuation of the Intifada.

Popular opinion considering the aim of the Intifada is to liberate all of historic Palestine dropped to 43 percent from 51.1 percent last June. When asked what is the favored solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, 44 percent said a two-state solution, 28.9 percent said a bi-national state in historic Palestine, and 12.6 percent said there is no solution. In March 2002, 41.6 percent preferred a two-state solution, 31.6 percent said a bi-national state.

The majority of Palestinians, 52 percent, believe that the continuation of the Intifada and negotiations together is the best path to achieve Palestinian national goals and end the occupation, showing similar results as June 2002 (51.4 percent).

Of those interviewed, 73 percent said they are either pessimistic or very pessimistic that a peaceful settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict would be achieved while 24.8 percent said they are optimistic or very optimistic, very similar beliefs were found last June and March. Still, 57.2 percent believe that the peace process is alive either having an unknown future, 44.5 percent, or negotiations could be resumed, 12.7 percent, compared with 66.3 percent who believed the process is alive last March. Those who believe the peace process is dead were 38.9 percent compared with 29.4 percent last March.

Throughout the Intifada, the majority of Palestinians, 59.5 percent, support the continuation of both popular and military forms of resistance. A significant majority, 69.5 percent, believes that Palestinian military operations against Israeli targets are a suitable response during the current political situation as opposed to 23.2 percent who oppose them and consider them harmful to Palestinian national interests.

Yet, as in previous surveys this year, 46.1 percent do not see a difference between Palestinian military operations conducted inside Israel or in the occupied territories, while only 20.5 percent support them inside Israel only and 12.2 percent support them inside the occupied territories only.

As for suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians, there is a slight trend of decreased support for them since 64.3 percent of those interviewed supported them dropping from 68.1 last June, 72 percent last March and 64 percent last December. Only 27.7 percent opposed them. Yet 61.1 percent of Palestinians strongly or somewhat oppose ending all military/suicide operations inside Israel as opposed to 30.5 percent who strongly or somewhat support ending all operations.

Reform and Elections

Last June, 57.6 percent of Palestinians said the time is ripe for reform, but now, 64.2 percent of Palestinians say the Palestinian leadership is incapable of conducting serious reform and internal changes because of the current situation of Israeli re-occupation of Palestinian territory and the current besiegement of Yasser Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah, 23.9 percent said the leadership is still capable of reforming and 10.7 percent said they didn't know.

Forty-six percent of Palestinians believe the Palestinian leadership is serious in conducting reform as opposed to 40.7 percent who do not believe so while 12.1 percent said they did not know.

A majority of Palestinians support conducting elections in January 2003 with 65.2 supporting presidential elections and 73.2 percent supporting Legislative Council elections.

Fifty-two percent of Palestinians said Palestinian Authority performance is generally bad or very bad while 43.3 percent said it is good or very good. Also, 47.8 percent said Legislative Council performance is bad, 37.7 percent said it is in between and only 9.7 percent said very good.

A slight majority of those surveyed, 50.9 percent said they were very or somewhat satisfied with Arafat's performance as president compared with 42.3 percent who said they were very or somewhat dissatisfied with his performance. But 52.2 percent of Palestinians believe Arafat is totally or to some extent in control of Palestinian internal situation as opposed to 45.2 percent who said he is totally or to some extent not in control.

Most Palestinians, 60.6 percent, expected that if free elections were held, the Palestinian people would re-elect President Yasser Arafat compared with 47.5 percent last June, while 28.6 percent expected otherwise compared with 37.8 percent last June.

Palestinians are divided on the need for a prime minister position in the Palestinian Authority where 42.5 percent said there is a need and 41.7 percent said there is no need; 12.9 percent said they did not know.

Trust and Distrust in Figures and Factions

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and his mainstream Fateh faction are still the most popular amongst the Palestinian public with a slight rise in popularity. A rise to 27.6 percent of Palestinians who said Arafat is the most trusted Palestinian figure compared with 25.1 percent last June.

The second in line of trust is Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder and spiritual leader of Hamas, who was chosen by 10.3 percent of those interviewed as opposed to 8.8 percent last June.

The third in line of trust is Marwan Barghout, Fateh leader detained in Israeli jails, who was chosen by 3.3 percent as opposed to 6.3 percent last June.

There are 26.7 percent of Palestinians who do not trust any Palestinian figure.

As for Palestinian factions, Fateh maintained the most trusted faction at 32.9 percent rising from 27.3 percent last June. The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, was chosen by 20.9 percent compared to 22.6 percent last June.

There are 25.8 percent of Palestinians who do not trust any faction.

Methodology

A random sample of 1199 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 21-25 September 2002. 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** 759 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin Refugee Camp (RC), Arabeh, Zababdeh, Silat Al-harithia and Sanour . **Nablus:** Nablus, Zawata, Hiwara, Kufr Qaleel, salfit, Balata RC. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, Tulkarem RC, Qalqilya, 'Azoun, Rameen and Beit Leid. **Hebron:** Hebron, Yatta, Beit umar, Sa'eer, Dura, Beit Kahel, Beit Ula and Aroub RC. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Za'tara, Husan and 'Azza RC. **Jericho:** Jericho, 'Ain al-Sultan RC. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** al-Bireh, Ramallah, beit Rema, Al-Amari RC, Koubar and al-Mizra'a al-Sharqiya . **Jerusalem:** a-Dahia, A-ram, Beir Nabala, Shufat, Beit Hanina, Beit Hanina Al-tahta, Old City, Ras al-Amoud, Qalandia RC, al-'Isawia , Silwan, Wadi Al-joz and Jabal al-Mukaber.

In the **Gaza Strip:** 440 people were surveyed from: **North Gaza:** Jabalia RC, Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Beit Hanoun. **Gaza City:** Sheikh Radwan, al-Darj, al-Tufah, Sabra, al-Naser, al-Zaytoun, al-Shaja'ieh, al-Rimal north and south, Shati RC. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al-Balah, Nuseirat RC Al-Breig and Al-Maghazi RC. **Khan Younis:** Khan Younis, Khan Younis RC, Bani Sahila, Abssan al-Kabeera, Abssan AL-Saghera. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah RC, Tal al-Sultan RC.

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

Sample Distribution

- 55.0% of the respondents were from West Bank, 8.3% from Jerusalem, 36.7% from the Gaza Strip.
- 32.3% said they live in villages, 16.2% in refugee camps, and 51.5% in towns/cities.
- 49.1% were male, 50.9% were female.

- 68.5% were married, 24.9%, single, 4.0% widowed, 1.6% divorced, 1.0% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

Occupation respondents

- Students 10.6%,
 - laborers 9.1%,
 - Farmers/fishermen 4.3%
 - Craftsmen 1.9%
 - Businessmen/private business 7.8%
 - Employees e.g. secretaries/municipal employees/teachers/nurses 17.2%
 - Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers 1.9%
 - Housewives 34.3%,
 - Unemployed 10.3%
 - Retired 1.3%,
 - No answer 1.3%.
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Results

Q1. In general how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel towards the future?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Very optimistic	3.3	4.2	1.8
Optimistic	39.3	38.7	40.2
Pessimistic	30.1	27.9	33.9
Very Pessimistic	26.7	28.3	23.9
No answer	0.6	0.9	0.2

Q2. In principle, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose peace negotiations between Palestinians and Israel?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	7.4	9.0	4.8
Somewhat support	39.1	37.8	41.4
Somewhat oppose	23.4	22.7	24.8
Strongly oppose	28.5	28.5	28.6
No answer	1.6	2.0	0.4

Q3. How optimistic or pessimistic are you towards reaching a peaceful settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Very optimistic	2.1	2.8	0.9
Optimistic	22.7	19.8	27.7
Very Pessimistic	41.1	39.9	43.2
Pessimistic	31.9	34.5	27.3
No answer	2.2	3.0	0.9

Q4. What do you think of the Oslo agreement? Would you say you strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	3.4	3.7	3.0
Support	25.1	24.4	26.4
Oppose	35.5	33.5	39.1
Strongly oppose	30.8	31.6	29.3
No answer	5.2	6.8	2.2

Q5. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that at a certain point peace will be achieved between Palestinians and Israelis?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly agree	6.0	7.6	3.2
Somewhat agree	34.0	31.9	37.7
Somewhat disagree	30.1	27.7	34.3
Strongly disagree	23.2	23.6	22.5
No answer	6.7	9.2	2.3

Q6. Under the current conditions, some believe that the peace process is dead and there is no chance of resuming the negotiations, while others see that the peace process is passing through difficult conditions with an unclear future and there is another group that believes that the peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
The peace process is dead and there is no chance of resuming the negotiations	38.9	41.0	35.2
The peace process is passing through difficult conditions with an unclear future	44.5	42.0	48.6
The peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations	12.7	12.6	12.7

Other	0.4	0.4	0.5
Don't know	3.3	3.6	3.0
No answer	0.2	0.4	0.0

Q7. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the continuation of the al-Aqsa Intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	44.1	42.0	47.7
Somewhat support	36.5	34.4	40.2
Somewhat oppose	11.7	13.2	9.1
Strongly oppose	4.7	5.7	3.0
No answer	3.0	4.7	0.0

Q8. The current Intifada includes popular characteristics, such as the demonstrations, and military characteristics. In your opinion, do you support the continuation of a popular or military Intifada or both of them together?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
I am with the continuation of a popular resistance Intifada	19.4	22.3	14.5
I am with the military resistance Intifada	11.5	14.5	6.4
I am with both of them	59.5	50.6	74.8
I don't know	7.3	9.7	3.0
No answer	2.3	2.9	1.3

Q9. Some believe that the Intifada is the best path to achieve our national goals and end the occupation; others believe that the negotiations are the best way to do so. There are some who believe that the continuation of the Intifada and the negotiations together is the method to achieve Palestinian national goals, so in your perspective what is the best way to achieve our national goals?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Only the Intifada	31.9	29.6	35.7
Only negotiations	11.3	14.0	6.6
Intifada and negotiations together	52.0	49.7	55.9
I don't know	3.6	4.9	1.4
No answer	1.2	1.8	0.4

Q10. In your opinion, what should be the end result of the current Intifada, is it improving the negotiation conditions for Palestinians, ending occupation based on UN Resolution 242 and the establishment of the Palestinian state or liberating all of historic Palestine?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Improve negotiation conditions for Palestinians	5.8	7.5	3.2
Ending occupation on basis of UN Resolution 242 and establishing the Palestinian state	48.4	46.9	50.9
Liberating all of historic Palestine	43.0	41.8	45.0
Other	0.6	0.9	0.0
I don't know	1.6	2.4	0.2
No answer	0.6	0.5	0.7

Q11. After two years of the Intifada, are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic towards achieving its objective (the one that you chose in the previous question):

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Very optimistic	6.9	6.6	7.3
Optimistic	45.9	41.0	54.3
Pessimistic	28.6	28.7	28.4
Very Pessimistic	15.8	19.9	8.6
No answer	2.8	3.8	1.4

Q12. Some believe that the "Two - State Formula" is the best solution for the Israeli - Palestinian conflict while others believe that the historical Palestine cannot be divided into two states and therefore the best solution would be a "Bi-National State" in all of Palestine where Palestinians and Israelis enjoy equal rights, which of these two solutions would you prefer?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
"Two - State Formula" is the best solution for the Israeli - Palestinian	44.0	47.2	38.6
The best solution would be a "Bi-National State" in all of Palestine	28.9	28.6	29.5
A Palestinian State*	8.3	4.5	14.8
An Islamic Palestinian State*	2.1	2.5	1.4
There is no solution	12.6	12.4	13.0
Other	1.0	0.9	1.1
I don't know	2.3	3.0	0.9
No answer	0.8	0.9	0.7

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

Q13. Do you support the resumption of the military operations against Israeli targets as a suitable response within the current political conditions, or do you reject it and find it harmful to Palestinian national interests?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
A suitable response within the current political conditions	69.5	63.8	79.3
I reject it and find it harmful to Palestinian national interests	23.2	26.1	18.2
Others	0.9	1.3	0.2
I don't know	5.4	7.5	1.8
No answer	1.0	1.3	0.5

Q14. Are you with the resumption of the military operations only inside Israel, only inside the occupied territories or inside Israel and the occupied territories?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Inside Israel only	20.5	20.8	20.0
Inside the occupied territories only	12.2	14.4	8.4
Inside Israel and the occupied territories	46.1	38.5	59.3
I am not with the resumption of the military operations	16.3	19.6	10.7
No answer	4.9	6.7	1.6

Q15. What is your feeling towards suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians, do you support it or oppose it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	35.1	29.2	45.2
Somewhat support	29.2	28.3	30.7
Strongly oppose	18.3	18.4	18.2
Somewhat oppose	9.4	12.6	3.9
I don't know/No opinion	5.9	8.8	0.9
No answer	2.1	2.7	1.1

Q16. Do you strongly or somewhat, support or strongly, or somewhat, oppose stopping all kind of operations inside Israel?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	12.3	14.9	8.0
Somewhat support	18.2	18.4	17.7
Strongly oppose	28.7	26.6	32.3

Somewhat oppose	32.4	28.3	39.3
I don't know/No opinion	6.8	9.5	2.3
No answer	1.6	2.3	0.4

Q17. Do you strongly or somewhat, support or strongly, or somewhat, oppose conducting presidential elections in January 2003?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	30.8	31.5	29.5
Somewhat support	34.4	29.5	42.7
Strongly oppose	15.9	17.0	14.1
Somewhat oppose	9.6	10.5	8.0
I don't know/No opinion	7.3	9.0	4.5
No answer	2.0	2.5	1.2

Q18. Do you strongly, or somewhat, support or strongly, or somewhat, oppose conducting Legislative Council elections in January 2003?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Strongly support	38.6	40.4	35.5
Somewhat support	34.6	30.2	42.3
Strongly oppose	12.0	12.6	10.9
Somewhat oppose	6.4	5.9	7.3
I don't know/No opinion	6.8	9.0	3.0
No answer	1.6	1.9	1.0

Q19. If free democratic elections are held under these conditions, do you expect the Palestinian people to re-elect President Yasser Arafat?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Yes	60.6	60.2	61.4
No	28.6	26.4	32.5
No answer	10.8	13.4	6.1

Q20. In your opinion, do you think that there is a need for a Prime Minister position in the Palestinian National Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440

There is a need	42.5	44.3	39.3
There is no need	41.7	37.2	49.5
I don't know	12.9	14.9	9.5
No answer	2.9	3.6	1.7

Q21. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian National Authority? Very good, good, bad or very bad?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Very good	4.4	5.4	2.7
Good	38.9	37.9	40.7
Bad	33.4	30.6	38.4
Very bad	18.6	18.8	18.2
No answer	4.7	7.3	0.0

Q22. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the Legislative Council? Good, in between, or bad?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Good	9.7	9.9	9.3
In between	37.7	36.5	39.8
Bad	47.8	46.2	50.5
No answer	4.8	7.4	0.4

Q23. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the manner Yasser Arafat manages his position as a Palestinian Authority President? Very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Very satisfied	16.3	15.5	17.5
Somewhat satisfied	34.6	37.2	30.2
Very dissatisfied	14.9	11.5	20.9
Somewhat dissatisfied	27.4	26.9	28.4
No answer	6.8	8.9	3.0

Q24. There is a debate among international circles as to whether the Palestinian president is in control of the internal Palestinian situation, or whether he is in control up to a certain degree or whether he is not in control up to a certain degree, or whether he is not in control at all, what is your opinion?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The president Yasser Arafat is in control of the internal Palestinian situation	12.8	12.1	14.1

The president Yasser Arafat is in control up to a certain degree	39.4	37.0	43.6
The president Yasser Arafat is not in control up to a certain degree	27.2	28.3	25.2
The president Yasser Arafat is not in control at all	18.0	19.5	15.5
No answer			

Q25. Do you think that the Palestinian leadership is willing to carry out serious/ actual reforms?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	46.0	43.2	50.9
No	40.7	38.7	44.1
I don't know	12.1	16.3	4.8
No answer	1.2	1.8	0.2

Q26. Under the current situation, in you opinion, is the Palestinian leadership able to undertake serious reforms and internal changes?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	23.9	20.2	30.2
No	64.2	64.8	63.2
I don't know	10.7	13.3	6.1
No answer	1.2	1.7	0.5

Q27. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Yasser Arafat	27.6	24.1	33.6
Ahmed Yassin	10.3	9.0	12.7
Marwan Bargouti	3.3	2.5	4.5
Sa'eb Erekat	2.9	2.9	2.7
Haider Abdul Shafi	2.9	2.0	4.5
Abdul Aziz Al rantisi	2.8	3.4	1.8
Ahmad Sa'dat	2.7	2.6	2.7
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	1.5	2.2	0.2
Abdullah Al Shami	1.3	1.3	1.4
Mahmoud Al Zahhar	1.3	1.6	0.9
Others	8.0	10.1	4.3
I don't trust anyone	26.7	29.4	22.0
No answer	8.7	8.9	8.7

** This question was an open ended question*

Q28. Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1199	N=759	N=440
Fateh	32.9	29.4	38.9
Hamas	20.9	19.6	23.0
PFLP	3.9	3.3	5.0
Islamic Jihad	3.2	3.4	2.7
Other Factions	3.0	3.0	3.0
I don't trust anyone	25.8	29.0	20.2
No answer	10.3	12.3	7.2

** This question was an open ended question*