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Center - JMCC**

**Public Opinion Poll Unit**

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Poll no. 57 February, 2006

**Poll results on Palestinian Attitudes towards the results of the  
PLC elections held on January 25, 2006**

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**Significant Opinion results**

- When asked if a Hamas led government should continue with the political negotiations since the PA is committed to the option of political negotiations with Israel, a majority of Palestinians (66.3%) approved while (29.6%) called for stopping the negotiations with Israel.
- With regards to the structure of the next government to be formed, a majority (58.1%) prefers a national unity government. A ratio of (24.1%) wants a Hamas government and (13.8%) prefers a technocrat government.
- When asked why they chose Hamas, the highest ratio (43.0%) of Palestinians who voted for Hamas said they did vote for Hamas with the hope of ending the corruption and a ratio of (18.8%) voted for Hamas for religious reasons. Only (11.8%) voted for Hamas because of its political agenda.
- With regards to concerns that Hamas might enforce social restrictions on the Palestinians, a majority (69.7%) said they are not worried in general while (29.6%) said they are either very worried or somewhat worried.
- With regards to the Palestinian figure trusted most by the Palestinian public, Mahmoud Abbas “Abu Mazin” remains the top figure with a ratio of (12.8%) compared with (15.5%) last December and (24.8%) in May 2005. Ismail Hanieh got the second ranking with a ratio of (10.7%) and Khaled Mash'al came in third place with (8.5%). Marwan Barghouthi came in fourth place with a ratio of (5.8%).
- When asked about the Palestinian political or religious faction they trust most, a ratio of (38.7%) of Palestinians said they trust Hamas Movement compared with (18.5%) last December while a ratio of (30.6%) of Palestinians said they trust Fatah compared with (38.9%) last December.
- When asked if the PLC elections happen another time today, a ratio of (41.4%) said they would give their votes to the Change and Reform List (Hamas) while (31%) said they would vote for Fatah List.

### **Positions regarding the results of the PLC elections:**

An overwhelming majority (94%) believes that the election process conducted on January 25, 2006 was either fair or somewhat fair. The ratio of Palestinians who believed that the PLC elections in 1996 was fair was (72.6%).

A considerable majority of Palestinians (73.9%) didn't expect Hamas overwhelming majority on the PLC elections.

The poll results showed an equal division between those who think that the election results met their expectations and those who believe otherwise. A ratio of (49.6%) of Palestinians said the election results met or somewhat met their expectations while a ratio of (49%) said the results did not meet their expectations.

A considerable majority of Palestinians (73.9%) didn't expect Hamas' overwhelming majority in the PLC elections.

When asked to what extent the elected members of the PLC represent their viewpoints, A majority of the Palestinians (68%) said the elected members represent their viewpoint while (29.6%) said the elected members don't represent their viewpoint.

Regarding optimism about the performance of the elected council in the future, a significant majority (77.9%) of Palestinians are either very optimistic or somewhat optimistic while only (21%) said they are pessimistic regarding the elected council performance in the future.

When asked why they voted for Hamas, the highest ratio of Palestinians (43%) of those who voted for Hamas said they did so with the hope to end the corruption while (10.7%) said they did so with the hope to see better living conditions. A ratio of (18.8%) said they did so for religious factors while only (11.8%) said they did so because of Hamas political program. Within the same lines, when Palestinians in general were asked why most people voted for Hamas, the highest ratio (44%) said most people voted for Hamas with the hope to end corruption while (18.9%) said people hope to see better living conditions and a ratio of (13.3%) said people voted for Hamas for religious factors.

When asked if they expect the elected council members to comply with their elections programs and platforms, a majority of Palestinians (77.9%) said the elected members would comply or somewhat comply with their elections programs compared with (60.1%) who said the same in the 1996 PLC elections. A ratio of (20.3%) said they don't expect them to abide by their programs.

When asked about their expectations regarding the performance of the next PLC, a considerable majority (77.3%) said they expect the next PLC to perform in a very good or good way while only (16.6%) said they expect its performance to be either bad or very bad. As for the performance of the outgoing PLC, a ratio of (71.8%) said its performance was either bad or very bad while (26.6%) said it was either good or very good.

When asked about the government structure they would like to see after the PLC elections, a majority of Palestinians (58.1%) said they prefer a national unity government while a ratio of (24.1%) said they want a Hamas government and (13.8%) said they prefer a technocrat government.

With regards to whether a government headed by Hamas should go on with the agreement that the PLO and the PA signed with Israel (Oslo Agreement), a slight majority

(51.7%) said such a government should go on with this agreement while a ratio of (42%) said Hamas doesn't have to go on with this agreement. Within the same lines, when asked if a Hamas led government should continue with the political negotiations that the PA is committed to, a notable majority (66.3%) said a Hamas led government should continue with the political negotiations. A ratio of (29.6%) said a Hamas led government must stop the political negotiations.

When asked if they see a contradiction between Hamas responsibilities over the Palestinian government and its role in resisting Israel, a majority of Palestinians (52.3%) does not believe that such a contradiction exists while a considerable ratio of (44.6%) believe the contradiction exists.

With regards to the concerns that Hamas might enforce social restrictions on the Palestinians, only (29.6%) said they are very worried or somewhat worried that Hamas might enforce social restrictions on the Palestinian people. A majority of (69.7%) said they are somewhat not worried nor not worried at all that Hamas might enforce social restrictions.

Following Hamas victory in the PLC elections, and when asked whether Hamas should halt its operations against Israeli targets inside Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against civilians and military troops, a majority of Palestinians (51.7%) said Hamas should halt its operations while (39.1%) said Hamas has to continue with its operations. Within the same lines, a majority of Palestinians (51.5%) oppose military operations against Israeli targets and find them harmful to the Palestinian national interests while a ratio of (43.8%) think such operations are suitable within the current political conditions which is a considerable decline from (65.4%) in June 2004.

When asked about their feelings towards suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians, a ratio of (56.2%) still either strongly support or somewhat support such operations compared with (49.7%) in May 2005 and (75.6%) in April 2003. however, there has been a steady rise in ratio of those who oppose such operations from (29.3%) in April 2003 to (38.0%) in May 2005 and to (40.7%) this month.

### **Trust in Figures and Factions:**

In JMCC open ended trend question about the Palestinian figure they trust most, Mahmoud Abbas remained the figure getting the highest level of support (12.8%) compared with (15.5%) last December and (24.8%) in May 2005 and (26.2%) in December 2004. Esmail Hanieh came in second place with a (10.7%) level of support while Khaled Mash'al came in third place with (8.5%) and Marwan Barghouthi came in fourth rank with (5.8%) compared with (7.8%) last December. Mahmoud Zahhar came in fifth place with (5.1%). The ratio of those who don't trust any figure decreased from (31.1%) to (21.6%).

The Poll results show a major rise in Hamas popularity among Palestinians from (18.5%) last December to (38.7%) this month. It should be noted that this ratio is the highest ever since 1994. The second highest (22.6%) was in October 2003.

Fatah became second in force in terms of popularity among Palestinians from (38.9%) last December to (30.6%) this month.

### **The peace process:**

There seems to be a major rise in level of optimism among the Palestinians with regards to the future in general. A considerable majority of the Palestinians (79.8%) are either optimistic or somewhat optimistic compared with (68%) in December 2005 and (61.3%) in May 2005.

Hamas' victory in the PLC elections didn't seem to change the conviction of the majority of Palestinians on the need for the two state solution. A majority of Palestinians still (57.9%) supports the two state solution as the favored solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict compared with (55.1%) last December while a ratio of (22.3%) believe a bi-national state on all of historic Palestine is the preferred solution. A ratio of (10.5%) say one Palestine state is the favored solution.

With regards to future of the peace process and the possibility of resuming the political negotiations, a majority of Palestinians (52.1%) believes that the peace process is passing through difficult times with an unclear future compared with (47.3%) last December 2005. The ratio of those who believe that the peace process is still alive and that there is a possibility of resuming negotiations remained steady (25.1%) this month compared with (25.7%) last December. There has been a slight decrease in ratio of Palestinians who believe the peace process is dead from (24.8%) last December to (19.4%) this month.

When asked about the best path to achieve the Palestinian national goals, the highest ratio of Palestinians (40.3%) said they prefer using both negotiations and armed struggle while those who believe in negotiations only came in second place with (38.8%). A ratio of (17.9%) of Palestinians believe that armed struggle alone would achieve the Palestinian national goals.

## Methodology

A random sample of 1,200 people over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2006. 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** 760 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Jenin:** Jenin, Tubas, Jenin RC, Kufr Rai', Maithalun, Zababdeh, Arrabeh. **Nablus:** Nablus, Til, Ein Beit Elma RC, Rujeib, Kufr Qalil, Kifl Haris, Yasouf, Talfit, Qabalan. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, Nur Shams RC, Bal'aa, Anabta, Qalqilia, Hableh. **Hebron:** Hebron, Dura, Al-Fawwar RC, al-Samou', Tarqoumia, Bani N'iem, Al-Shouyoukh, Beit Kahel. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, al-Ubeidiyeh, Nahalin, Husan, al-Dheisheh RC. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Ramallah, al-Bireh, Kufr Ne'meh, al-Jalazone RC, Aboud, Khirbet Abu Faleh. **Jerusalem:** al- Issaria, Abu Dees, Kufr Aqab, Qalandia RC, Beit Hannina, Sh'ufat, Old City, Wadi Al Joz, al-Issawia, Ras al Amoud, Jabal Al Mukaber. **Jericho:** Jericho, Ein al Sultan RC.

In the **Gaza Strip:** 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Shati RC, Al-Shuja'ia, Attufah, al-Durj, Sheikh Radwan, al-Nasser, al-Rimal al-Shamali, al-Rimal al-Janoubi, Sabra, al-Zeitoun. **Khan Younis:** Absan Al-Saghira, Khan Younis, Bani Suheila, Abasan Al Kabira, Khan Younis RC, **Rafah:** Rafah, Tal al-Sultan RC, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al- Balah, Nusseirat RC, Al Magazi RC.

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

### Sample Distribution

<p>51.7% of the respondents were from West Bank, 11.7% from Jerusalem, 36.6% from the Gaza Strip.</p> <p>35.0% said they live in villages, 13.8% in refugee camps, and 51.2% in towns/cities.</p> <p>49.3% were male, 50.7% were female. 66.8 % were married, 25.1%, single, 4.3% widowed, 1.6% divorced, 2.2% no answer.</p> <p>The average age of the respondents was 34 years.</p>
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### Occupation of Respondents

<p>Students 12.4%</p> <p>laborers 11.0%,</p> <p>Farmers/fishermen 1.7%</p> <p>Craftsmen 1.6%</p> <p>Businessmen/private business 8.4%</p> <p>Employees e.g. secretaries/municipal employees/teachers/nurses 19.0%</p>	<p>Professionals - e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers 1.4%</p> <p>Housewives 35.2%</p> <p>Unemployed 7.9%</p> <p>Retired 1.1%,</p> <p>No answer 0.3%.</p>
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**Results:**

**Q1. In General, What is the extent of your optimism towards the Palestinian Future? Would you say you are optimistic, somewhat optimistic, or pessimistic?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Optimistic	41.2	40.0	43.2
Somewhat Optimistic	38.6	39.7	36.6
Pessimistic	19.6	20.0	18.9
No answer	0.6	0.3	1.3

**Q2. To what extent would you say the elections process was free and fair?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Fair	77.6	81.2	71.4
Somewhat fair	16.4	13.3	21.8
Wasn't fair	4.1	3.9	4.3
No answer	1.9	1.6	2.5

**Q3. Did the elections results meet your expectations?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Met my expectations	20.3	17.0	26.1
Somewhat met my expectations	29.3	27.9	31.8
Did not meet my expectations	49.0	53.7	40.9
No answer	1.4	1.4	1.2

**Q4. Did you expect Hamas overwhelming majority's in the PLC's elections?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Yes	24.6	18.8	34.5
No	73.9	79.7	63.9
No answer	1.5	1.5	1.6

**Q5. Given the elections results, to what extent you say that the elected members represent your point of view?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Represent my point of view	29.1	27.0	32.7
Represent my point of view to a certain extent	38.9	38.2	40.2
Do not represent my point of view	29.6	32.4	24.8
No answer	2.4	2.4	2.3

**Q6. Are you optimistic about the performance of the elected council in the future?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Very Optimistic	30.9	29.6	33.2
Somewhat Optimistic	47.0	46.8	47.3
Pessimistic	21.0	22.2	18.9
No answer	1.1	1.4	0.6

**Q7. Do you think that the elected council members will comply with their elections programs and platforms?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Will comply	32.2	28.9	37.7
Will comply to a certain extent	45.7	49.3	39.3
Will not comply	20.3	20.1	20.5
No answer	1.8	1.7	2.5

**Q 8. In general, how do you evaluate the performance of the previous PLC?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Very good	2.0	1.3	3.2
Good	24.6	26.8	20.7
Bad	39.1	38.7	39.8
Very bad	32.7	31.6	34.5
No answer	1.6	1.6	1.8

**Q 9. What do you expect with regards to the performance of the next PLC?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Very good	25.8	22.4	31.6
Good	51.5	53.9	47.3
Bad	14.3	15.0	13.2
Very bad	2.3	2.6	1.8
No answer	6.1	6.1	6.1

**Q 10. What is the government structure you hope to see after the PLC elections?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
National Coalition	58.1	59.6	55.5
Hamas Government	24.1	24.5	23.4
Technocrat Government	13.8	12.4	16.1
No answer	4.0	3.4	5.0

**Q11. The PLO and the PA signed an agreement with Israel, (Oslo Agreement) do you think that the new government headed by Hamas should go on with this agreement?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Hamas has to go on with this agreement	51.7	56.4	43.6
Hamas doesn't have to go with this agreement	42.0	36.8	50.9
No answer	6.3	6.8	5.5

**Q12. The PA is committed to the option of political negotiations with Israel. Do you believe that the new government headed by Hamas has to continue with the political negotiations, stop the political negotiations and should adopt other options?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
To continue with the political negotiations	66.3	68.0	63.2
Stop the political negotiations	29.6	27.1	33.9
No answer	4.1	4.9	2.9

**Q13. Do you see a contradiction between Hamas responsibility over the Palestinian government and its role in resisting Israel?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
I see a contradiction	44.6	45.1	43.6
I don't see a contradiction	52.3	51.4	53.6
No answer	3.1	3.5	2.8

**Q14. How concerned are you from Hamas enforcing social restrictions on the Palestinians?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Very worried	8.3	10.0	5.2
Somewhat worried	21.3	20.3	23.0
Somewhat not worried	29.3	29.7	28.6
Not worried at all	40.4	39.5	42.0
No answer	0.7	0.5	1.2

**Q15. Some believe that the negotiations are the best path to achieve our national goals, whereas others believe that the armed struggle is the best way to do so. Which option is the closest to your opinion?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Through Negotiations	38.8	43.3	31.1
Through armed struggle	17.9	18.0	17.7
Through negotiations and armed struggle	40.3	35.0	49.5
Don't know	2.3	2.8	1.4
No answer	0.7	0.9	0.3

**Q 16. 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 times with unclear future, and a third group believes that the peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations.**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
The peace process is dead and there is no chance of resuming the negotiations	19.4	20.1	18.2
The peace process is passing through difficult times with an unclear future	52.1	50.7	54.5
The peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations	25.1	25.1	25.0
Others	0.8	0.9	0.7
Don't know \ no answer	2.6	3.2	1.6

**Q17. 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= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
Two-state solution: an Israeli and a Palestinian	57.9	59.2	55.7
Bi-national state on all of historic Palestine	22.3	24.2	19.1
One Palestinian state *	10.5	7.2	16.1
Islamic state *	2.7	2.8	2.5
No solution	3.9	3.9	3.9
Don't know	1.6	1.3	2.0
No answer	1.1	1.4	0.7

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

**Q18. How do you feel towards suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians? Do you support them, or oppose them?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
Strongly support	22.4	19.7	27.0
Somewhat support	33.8	31.4	38.0
Somewhat oppose	24.3	24.7	23.4
Strongly oppose	16.4	20.4	9.5
No answer	3.1	3.8	2.1

**Q19. Do you support the resumption of the military operations against Israeli targets as a suitable response within the current political conditions, or do you oppose them and find them harmful to Palestinians national interests?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
Suitable response within the current political conditions	43.8	42.1	46.8
I oppose them and find them harmful to Palestinian national interests	51.5	52.5	49.8
Others	0.3	0.3	0.2
Don't know	2.8	3.4	1.6
no answer	1.6	1.7	1.6

**Q20. Hamas has executed violent operations against Israeli targets inside Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza strip against civilians and against military troops, now and after Hamas victory in the PLC elections, do you believe that Hamas should continue with such operations or that it should halt them?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
Hamas has to continue with its operations	39.1	34.6	46.8
Hamas has to stop its operations	51.7	55.8	44.5
No answer	9.2	9.6	8.7

**Q21. Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most? \***

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	N= 760	N= 440
Hamas	38.7	34.1	46.6
Fateh	30.6	30.8	30.2
PFLP	3.9	4.3	3.2
Islamic Jihad	2.4	2.0	3.2
DFLP	1.0	1.4	0.2
PPP	0.6	0.7	0.5
Fida	0.4	0.5	0.2
Al Aqsa Brigades	0.2	0.3	0.0
Other Islamic Factions	1.6	2.0	0.9
Others	1.8	2.4	0.7
I don't trust any Faction	15.1	17.6	10.7
No answer	3.7	3.9	3.6

\* This question was an open ended one

**Q22. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most? \***

	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N= 440</b>
Abu Mazen	12.8	14.2	10.5
Esmā'eel Hanieh	10.7	6.4	18.0
Khaled Masha'al	8.5	7.9	9.5
Marwan Barghouti	5.8	6.7	4.3
Mahmoud Azzahar	5.1	4.7	5.7
Mouhammad Dahlan	2.8	0.4	6.8
Ahmad Sa'adat	2.7	2.5	3.0
Abu Ammar	2.7	3.4	1.4
Mustafa Barghouti	2.0	2.4	1.4
Others	19.7	20.8	17.7
I don't trust anybody	21.6	23.7	18.0
No answer	5.6	6.9	3.7

\* This question was an open ended one

**Q23. If the elections happened another time today, which list will you vote for?**

	<b>Total N =1200</b>	<b>West Bank N =760</b>	<b>Gaza Strip N =440</b>
Alternative List ( DFLP , PPP, Fida and independents coalition	2.1	2.9	0.7
Independent Palestine list (Mustafa al-Barghouthi and the independents.	2.6	2.9	2.0
Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa List	4.0	4.1	3.9
Martyr Abu al-Abbas list	0.4	0.7	0.0
Freedom and social justice list	0.3	0.5	0.0
Change and reform list	41.4	37.1	48.9
The national coalition for democratic justice (wa'ed)	0.0	0.0	0.0
The third way list	1.8	1.8	1.8
Freedom and independence list	0.2	0.3	0.0
Palestinian justice list	0.6	0.4	0.9
Fateh list	31.0	30.3	32.3
Don't Know	4.3	5.3	2.7
Will not vote	9.2	11.4	5.2
No answer	2.1	2.3	1.6

**Q24. If you voted for Hamas , why so?\***

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=532</b>	<b>N=305</b>	<b>N=227</b>
Religious Factors	18.8	18.7	18.9
Hope to end the Corruption	43.0	39.7	47.6
Hope to live in better living conditions	10.7	12.8	7.9
For their political agenda	11.8	12.5	11.0
To stop Fateh's control over the government	7.5	9.2	5.3
Others	2.1	1.0	3.5
No answer	6.1	6.1	5.8

\*This question was asked who said that they voted for Hamas

**Q25. Regardless of whom you voted for, why do you think most People voted for them?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Religious Factors	13.3	14.3	11.6
Hope to end the Corruption	44.0	39.7	51.4
Hope to live in a better living conditions	18.9	19.2	18.4
For their political agenda	6.1	6.4	5.5
To stop Fateh's control over the government	13.5	15.7	9.8
Others	2.7	2.9	2.3
No answer	1.5	1.8	1.0