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Poll no. 52 – December, 2004

**Poll Result On Palestinian Attitudes Towards  
The Palestinian Political Issues**

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**Significant Opinion results**

- When Palestinians were asked to choose among the ten presidential candidates which one they are going to vote for, real contest was limited between Fatah candidate Mahmoud Abbas who received 31.9% of the votes while Marwan Bargouthi, running as independent, received 26.4% of the votes. Moreover, Abu Mazen and Marwan got almost the same results in Gaza with Abbas getting 31.1 percent and Marwan receiving 30.2 percent. The ratio differed in the West Bank though with Abbas getting 32.4 percent and Marwan settling with 24.1 percent of the votes.
- A majority of Palestinians opposes military operations against Israeli targets as a suitable response under the current political conditions.
- The poll shows a significant increase in the popularity of Fatah Movement with Hamas' popularity showing considerable decline.
- A majority of Palestinians supports the two state solution.
- A majority of Palestinians feels optimistic regarding the future in general.
- A majority of Palestinians expect the national unity to continue after the departure of President Arafat.
- Most Palestinians believe there will be a change in the political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after the demise of President Arafat.

**Peace Process:**

A majority of Palestinians, 59.3 percent, feel optimistic or very optimistic regarding the future in general compared with 45.3 percent last June. Meanwhile, 40.2% said they were pessimistic or very pessimistic compared with 54.5 percent last June.

Most Palestinians, 47.3 percent, believe that the peace process is going through difficult circumstances with an uncertain future. A ratio of 24.8% believe that the peace process is dead and negotiations cannot be resumed while 25.8% believe that the peace process is still alive and that negotiations can be resumed.

When asked what is the favored solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, 56.7 percent said a two state solution compared with 44.5 percent last June. Of those interviewed, 23.7 percent said a bi-national state in historic Palestine is the preferred solution compared with 26.5 percent last June. Meanwhile, 8.6

percent said the preferred solution is one Palestinian state compared with 11.1 percent last June. A ratio of 3.2% said they prefer an Islamic state compared with 2.3 last June. A ratio of 4.8% said there is no solution compared with 13.6 percent last June.

A majority, 51.8 percent, opposes military operations against Israeli targets and considers them harmful to Palestinian national interests compared with 26.9 percent last June. Meanwhile, 41.1 percent believe that continuation of military operations against Israeli targets are a suitable response during the current political situation compared with 65.4 percent last June.

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

In JMCC open ended trend question about the Palestinian figure they trust most, Mahmoud Abbas got the highest level of support, 21.9 percent. Marwan Barghouti ranked second with 15.0 percent compared with 6.3 percent last June while the highest percentage, 26.3 percent, said they trust no one compared with 39.0 percent last November.

In JMCC open ended trend question with regard to Palestinian factions, Fateh was considered the most trusted faction, 40.0 percent, compared with 26.4 percent last June. It should be noted that Fatah Movement achieved this high level of trust as far back as November 97.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas was chosen by 18.6 percent compared with 23.0 percent last November and 21.7 percent last June.

Of those interviewed, 4.3 percent said they trust Islamic Jihad Movement. There are 22.5 percent of Palestinians who do not trust any faction compared with 28.2 percent last June.

### **Political situation after the departure of President Arafat:**

In an open ended question When asked about the Palestinian figure they trust most to lead the Palestinian people after the departure of President Arafat, the highest percentage, 27 percent, said they trust Mahmoud Abbas. Marwan Barghouti came in second place with 20.1 percent support. And of those interviewed, 25.8 percent of the Palestinians said they trust nobody.

On the issue of national unity after the departure of President Arafat, 59.8 percent of the Palestinians expect the continuation of national unity while 34.5 percent said they expect a split and internal chaos.

Concerning the impact of the departure of President Arafat on the resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, 34.3 percent of Palestinians said the departure of President Arafat wont affect the prospects of resuming the peace process while 32.8 percent said there will be better chances for resuming the peace process. A ratio of 28.3 percent said the death of President Arafat will negatively affect the chances to resume the peace process.

Concerning the impact of President Arafat's departure on chances of Palestinians achieving their goals in ending occupation, establishing the state and achieving the right of return, the highest ratio of Palestinians, 37 percent, were pessimistic while 35.1 percent of Palestinians said the death of President Arafat will have no impact on chances of achieving the Palestinian national goals. A ratio of 23.2 percent said this will increase their chances to achieve their national goals.

Palestinians were split on the issue whether they expect a change in political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after President Arafat's departure, of those interviewed, 49.3 percent said the new leadership will change its political positions while 47.6 percent of the Palestinians said they expect the same positions with no changes.

## Methodology

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 were interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 4 and 5 December 2004. 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, Misliya, Silat al-Harthieh, Kafr Ra'I, Tubas, Jenin RC. **Nablus:** Nablus, Kufr-Qalil, Beit-Iba, Azmout, Farkha, Askar RC. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, 'Ateel, Qalqilya, Nur Shams RC, Anabta, Jayyous. **Hebron:** Hebron, Taffuh, Mu'iin al-Karmel, Halhul, Bani N'eim, al-Thahirieh, Dura, al Aroub RC. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Bateer, al-Khader, Za'tara, al-Duheisheh RC. **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** al-Bireh, Ramallah, Beit Liqya, al-Jalazon RC, Kufr al-Deik, Kufr Ne'meh. **Jerusalem:** Old City, al-Dahieh, Bir Nabala, Beit Hanina, Beit Hanina Tahta, Qalandia RC, al-Ram, al-Isawieh, Silwan, Wadi al Joz.

In the **Gaza Strip:** 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Shati RC, al Zaytoun, Sabra, al-Durj, a-Shuja'ia, al-Rimal north, al-Rimal South, Sheikh Radwan, al-nasser, al-Tuffah. **Khan Younis:** al-Khuza', Khan Younis, Bani Suheila, Khan Younis RC, al-Qararah. **Rafah:** Rafah, Tal al- Sultan RC, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al-Balah, al-Maghazi RC, al-Bureij RC, al-Nusseirat RC.

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

### Sample Distribution

53.3% of the respondents were from West Bank, 10.0% from Jerusalem, 36.7% from the Gaza Strip.

32.5% said they live in villages, 14.1% in refugee camps, 53.4% in towns/cities.

49.6% were male, 50.4% were female.  
69.0% were married, 20.8%, single, 3.3% widowed, 2.1% divorced, 4.8% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 34 years.

### Occupation of Respondents

Students 12.2%  
laborers 11.6%,  
Farmers/fishermen 3.7%  
Craftsmen 2.1%  
Businessmen/private  
business 7.5%  
Employees e.g.  
secretaries/municipal  
employees/teachers/nurses  
17.0%

Professionals - e.g.  
doctors/lawyers/  
pharmacists/engineers  
1.8%  
Housewives 35.8%,  
Unemployed 6.8%  
Retired 1.4%,  
No answer 0.1%.

**Results:**

**Q1. In general how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel towards 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	7.3	6.2	9.3
Optimistic	52.0	48.4	58.2
Pessimistic	23.3	23.3	23.4
Very Pessimistic	16.9	21.8	8.4
No answer	0.5	0.3	0.7

**Q. 2 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 who believes that the peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
The peace process is dead and there is no chance of resuming the negotiations	24.8	25.4	23.9
The peace process is passing through difficult conditions with an unclear future	47.3	47.4	47.0
The peace process is still alive and there is a possibility of resuming negotiations	25.8	24.1	28.9
Others	0.3	0.4	0.0
Don't know\ Don't know	1.8	2.7	0.2

**Q.3 Some believe that a two-state formula is the favored solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict, while others believe that historic Palestine cannot be divided and thus the favored solution is a bi-national state on all of Palestine wherein Palestinians and Israelis enjoy equal representation and rights. Which of these solutions do you prefer?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Two-state solution: an Israeli and a Palestinian	56.7	58.6	53.4
Bi-national state on all of historic Palestine	23.7	24.2	22.7
One Palestinian state	8.6	5.3	14.3
Islamic state	3.2	3.3	3.0
Others	0.3	0.1	0.5
There are no solution	4.8	5.3	4.1
Do not know\ No answer	2.7	3.2	2.0

**Q.4 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?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
A suitable response within the current political conditions	41.1	42.1	39.3
I reject it and find it harmful to Palestinian national interests	51.8	51.2	53
Others	0.4	0.5	0.2
I don't know	4.8	4.9	4.5
No answer	1.9	1.3	3.0

**Q. 5 Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most ?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin)	21.9	21.4	22.7
Marwan al-Barghouthi	15.0	13.2	18.2
Mustafa al-Barghouthi	4.9	5.0	4.8
Mahmoud al-Zahhar	3.9	4.2	3.4
Yasser Arafat	2.6	1.6	4.3
Isma'eel Hanieh	2.1	1.6	3.0
Haidar Abdul Shafi	1.8	1.4	2.3
Farouq al-Qaddoumi	1.3	1.7	0.7
Saeb Erekat	1.2	1.4	0.7
Hanan Ashrawi	1.1	1.4	0.5
Khaled Mesh'al	1.0	1.2	0.7
Others	11.3	9.1	15.0
I don't trust anybody	26.3	29.7	20.5
No answer	5.6	7.1	3.2

\* The question was open-ended

**Q. 6 Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Fateh	40.0	38.4	42.7
Hamas	18.6	16.3	22.5
Islamic Jihad	4.3	4.2	4.5
PPP	1.8	2.4	0.7
PFLP	1.7	1.4	2.0
AL-Aqsa brigades	0.8	0.5	1.1
Democratic front	0.5	0.4	0.7
FIDA	0.4	0.5	0.2
Other Islamic Factions	0.8	0.8	0.9
Others	3.2	3.3	3.0
I don't trust any Faction	22.5	25.3	17.7
No answer	5.4	6.5	4.0

\* The questions was open-ended

**Q. 7 Which is the Palestinian figure you trust most to lead the Palestinian people after the departure of President Arafat?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin)	27.0	25.7	29.3
Marwan al-Barghouthi	20.1	17.4	24.8
Mustafa al-Barghouthi	6.5	6.6	6.4
Mahmoud al-Zahhar	2.1	1.8	2.5
Farouq al-Qaddoumi	1.3	2.0	0.2
Khaled Mish'al	1.0	0.9	1.1
Others	8.8	7.4	11.1
I don't trust anybody	25.8	28.4	21.4
No answer	7.4	9.8	3.2

\* The questions was open-ended

**Q. 8 So far, there are ten candidates for the PNA president's post, who will you vote for?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	31.9	32.4	31.1
Marwan Barghouthi	26.4	24.1	30.2
Mustafa Barghouthi	8.8	9.2	8.4
Abdul Satar Qassem	1.7	2.2	0.7
Bassam al Salhi	1.3	1.8	0.5
Taysir Khaled	0.9	0.9	0.9
Abdul karim Shbeir	0.8	0.1	1.8
Sheikh Sayed Barakeh	0.8	0.5	1.4
Hasan Khreisheh	0.3	0.3	0.5
Abdul Halim Ashqar	0.1	0.1	0.0
None of the above	26.7	28.0	24.3
Don't know /No answer	0.3	0.4	0.2

\* Names were mentioned in different order from one questionnaire to another

**Q. 9 What would happen to the national unity after the death of President Arafat; do you expect it to continue or do you expect splits and internal chaos to reign?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Continuation of national unity	59.8	55.8	66.6
Split and internal chaos	34.5	37.5	29.3
No answer	5.7	6.7	4.1

**Q. 10 What is the impact of the departure of President Arafat on the resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process? Do you think the peace process would move forward or backward or that the death of President Arafat would have no impact at all on the peace process?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Increase the opportunities towards the resumption of the peace process	32.8	32.2	33.9
Diminishing chances to resume the peace process	28.3	29.6	26.1
No impact at all on the peace process	34.3	32.2	37.7
No answer	4.6	6.0	2.3

**Q. 11 What is the impact of the departure of President Arafat on the chances of the Palestinian people to achieve their goals on ending the occupation and the establishment of the state and the return of the refugees? Do you think the chances will increase, decrease, or remain the same?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N=1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
Increase in chances to achieve the goals of the Palestinian people	23.2	22.5	24.3
Diminishing chances towards achieving the goals of the Palestinian people	37.0	38.4	34.5
Departure of President Arafat will have no impact on the chances to achieve the goals of the Palestinian people	35.1	33.2	38.4
No answer	4.7	5.9	2.8

**Q. 12 Do you expect a change in the political positions of the new Palestinian leadership after the departure of President Arafat or do you expect the new leadership to keep the same positions?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N=760</b>	<b>N=440</b>
I expect a change	49.3	44.2	58.0
I do not expect a change	47.6	52.0	40.0
No answer	3.1	3.8	2.0