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مركز العالم العربي للبحوث والتنمية  
Arab World For Research & Development

## Results of an Opinion Poll

*Evaluation of government performance*

*Peace process*

*PLC and presidential elections*

*Local elections and priorities*

**Publication Date: 10 March 2010**

**Field work: 25-27 February 2010**

**Sample Size: 1,200 Palestinians in the West Bank & Gaza**

**Margin of error:  $\pm 3$  %**

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- With support from the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

**The Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) carried out a national opinion poll in the West Bank and Gaza during the period of 25-27 February, 2010. The poll questioned Palestinians on the following issues: Evaluation of government performance, Peace Process, PLC and Presidential Elections, Local elections and priorities. AWRAD interviewed a representative sample of 1,200 Palestinians of all socio-economic backgrounds.**

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **A vast majority (82 percent) support an immediate PLC election.**
- **Two thirds of Palestinians support the position of Fayyad Government to hold local election in July.**
- **37 percent in the West bank and 27 percent in Gaza feel that corruption is on the increase.**
- **57 percent of Gazans view negatively the performance of the Haniyeh Government in improving the economy.**
- **51 percent of Gazans negatively evaluate the performance of the Haniyeh Government in respecting personal and civil freedoms; while 38 percent of West Bank respondents feel the same way about the Fayyad Government.**
- **Gazans are much more critical of the Haniyeh Government than West Bank respondents; while the Fayyad Government receives lower evaluation in the West Bank than in Gaza.**
- **73 percent support the appointment of a woman (Dr. Laila Ghannam) as Governor.**
- **Only 8 percent feel that Mr. Obama is serious about establishing a Palestinian state.**
- **A PLO list will win over an Islamist one in an upcoming PLC election.**
- **Abbas, Fayyad, and Mustafa Barghouti win over Haniyeh in an upcoming presidential election.**
- **Independents will play a decisive role in local and national elections.**

## **Analysis of Results**

### **1. Evaluation of Government: Fayyad's Government is More Positively Viewed in Gaza than the Haniyeh Government**

#### **1.1 Economic Conditions**

- About 57 percent of the Gaza respondents negatively evaluate the performance of the Haniyeh Government in improving economic living conditions. In contrast, 25 percent of Gaza respondents feel the same way about the Fayyad Government (a gap of 32 points in favor of Fayyad).
- In comparison, 32 percent of West Bank respondents positively evaluate the performance of the Fayyad Government, while only 16 percent of them feel the same way about Haniyeh Government.
- It is interesting to note the evaluation of the Fayyad Government is higher in Gaza (46 percent) than it is in the West Bank (32 percent). While, the negative evaluation of Haniyeh is higher in Gaza (57 percent) than in the West Bank (38 percent).

#### **1.2 Security**

- On the issue of security, 38 percent of the total sample evaluates the performance of the Fayyad Government positively, compared with 26 percent for the Haniyeh Government.
- Among Gaza respondents, 32 percent perceive the performance of Fayyad in bringing more security into the West Bank negatively, while 38 percent perceive the performance of the Haniyeh Government in bringing security to Gaza negatively.
- Among West Bank respondents, 37 percent perceive the performance of the Fayyad Government in the field of security positively, compared with 18 percent who view the performance of the Haniyeh Government in Gaza positively.

#### **1.3 Corruption**

- It is interesting to note that there is more concern about corruption in the West Bank than in Gaza. About 37 percent of the respondents in the West Bank feel that corruption in their area is more compared with 2 years ago, while 27 percent of Gaza respondents feel that corruption had increased in their region.
- In contrast, 44 percent in Gaza and 31 percent in the West Bank feel that corruption has declined in their region.

#### **1.4 Personal and Civil Freedoms**

- In both regions, the poll shows that Palestinians are concerned with the respect of personal and civil freedoms. About 22 percent in both regions

positively evaluate the performance of their government in respecting freedoms (23 percent in the West Bank and 20 percent in Gaza).

- Gazans are, however, more dissatisfied with the performance of their government in this regard, where 51 percent negatively evaluate its performance in respecting freedoms, compared with 38 percent in the West Bank who negatively evaluates the performance of the Fayyad government.

### **1.5 Response to the Gaza floods**

About 41 percent evaluate negatively the response of the Haniyeh Government to the aftermath of the recent floods in Gaza, while 25 percent evaluate its response positively.

### **1.6 Appointment of a Woman Governor**

The President of the Palestinian Authority appointed Dr. Laila Ghannam as Governor of the Ramallah Governorate, the first of its kind in Palestinian history. About 73 percent of the respondents are supportive of this appointment, while 24 percent are in opposition.

## **2. Peace Process**

The most recent trip by US Envoy George Mitchell did not bring about optimism among Palestinians. In addition, the original enthusiasm about the elected President of the United States had immensely declined.

### **2.1 Mitchell's Recent Trip and Mr. Obama**

- Only 14 percent of Palestinians believe that the recent visit by Mr. Mitchell will bring about progress in the peace process. In contrast, 79 percent disagree with that notion.
- The current poll show that only 8 percent will confirm that Mr. Obama is serious about his desire to establish a Palestinian state, while 21 percent believe that (to some extent). In contrast, two thirds of the respondents believe that he is not serious. This is compared with 41 percent who felt that he was not serious after his Cairo speech in June 2009 (an increase of 26 points in negative evaluation).
- While 18 percent believe that Mr. Obama is capable of establishing a Palestinian State, and 16 percent believe that to some extent, about 63 percent believe that he is not capable.
- In general, only 16 percent are optimistic that a sovereign Palestinian state will be established under the presidency of Obama. In contrast, 73 percent are not optimistic.

## **2.2 Negotiations and Coexistence**

- The vast majority (87 percent) supports the position of the Palestinian Authority not to hold direct negotiations before a total freeze over settlement expansion. Only 10 percent support that negotiations be continued even under the current conditions.
- The majority of respondents (82 percent) feel that coexistence between Palestinians and Israeli's is impossible under the current circumstances. This percentage declines to 52 percent if a Palestinian state is established side by side with Israel.

## **3. Presidential Elections**

The current poll confirms recent trends in Palestinian public opinion:

- The role of the independents and the undecided will be decisive in determining the outcome of a future election, where under some scenarios their percentage reaches to over 40 percent.
- The outcome of a presidential election will depend on the number of candidates, their affiliation and the nature of coalitions that will take place. If only two candidates ran, any PLO supported candidate will win over an Islamist candidate. If three candidates ran, one supported by the PLO, one supported by Islamic groups and one Independent, it will be a highly competitive race depending on who the Independent candidate is and what his support base is.
- For the first time a poll shows that an Independent candidate will come in second place after a Fateh candidate, where the Islamist candidate is close in third place.

**The current poll shows the following interesting results:**

### **3.1 Fateh, Islamic and Independent candidates**

A hypothetical Fateh candidate receives 37 percent of the support among the public, followed by an Independent candidate who receives 25 percent and an Islamist candidate who receives about 18 percent of the public support. In this case, about 20 percent are undecided or will not vote.

### **3.2 Three-way Races**

#### **Abbas, Haniyeh and Mustafa Barghouti**

In a three-way popularity contest between Abbas, Haniyeh and Mustafa Barghouti, Abbas receives 32 percent, Haniyeh 21 percent and Barghouti 22 percent. About one quarter will not vote or are undecided. If this scenario holds in a future election, AWRAD predicts the following results: Abbas (40 percent), Haniyeh (30 percent) and Barghouti (30 percent).

### **Marwan Barghouti, Haniyeh and Fayyad**

In a three-way popularity contest between Marwan, Haniyeh and Fayyad, Marwan receives 44 percent, Haniyeh 20 percent and Fayyad 14 percent. About 22 percent will not vote or are undecided. If this scenario holds in a future election, AWRAD predicts the following results: Marwan (53 percent), Haniyeh (28 percent) and Fayyad (19 percent).

### **3.3 Two-way Races**

#### **Abbas vs. Haniyeh**

In a popularity race, Abbas receives 43 percent support, and Haniyeh receives 26 percent. About 31 percent are undecided or will not vote. **In a two-way race for elections, AWRAD predicts that Abbas will receive 59 percent and Haniyeh 41 percent.**

#### **Mustafa vs. Abbas**

In a popularity race, Mustafa Barghouti and Mahmoud Abbas receive equal support (34 percent each). About 32 percent are undecided or will not vote. **In a two-way race for elections, AWRAD predicts a tight race between both candidates.**

#### **Abbas vs. Fayyad**

In a popularity race, Abbas receives 38 percent support, and Fayyad receives 17 percent. About 45 percent are undecided or will not vote. **In a two-way race for elections, and depending on how the large group of undecided vote, AWRAD predicts that Abbas will receive 66 percent and Fayyad 34 percent.**

### **3.4 Race among 11 Candidates**

On the assumption that Abbas and Marwan do not run for a presidential election, the poll shows the following results:

Fayyad receives the highest support with 22 percent, followed by Haniyeh at 19 percent and Mustafa at 16 percent. The highest scoring Fateh candidate is Dahlan at 9 percent. Aziz Duwaik of Hamas comes in fifth place with about 5 percent, followed by Saeb Erekat at about 3 percent and Ahmad Sadat of the PFLP at about 2 percent. Naser Qudwi, Mahmoud Zahhar, Naser Eldin Shaer, and Ahmad Qurei all receive less than 2 percent.

## **4. Palestinian Legislative Council Elections (PLC)**

In a popularity contest between all Palestinian factions, the poll shows the following results:

- Fateh receives 44 percent of the popular support, followed by Hamas at 20 percent. The PFLP and Mubadara receive about 4 percent support. All other nationalist groups receive about 5 percent and other Islamists groups receive about 2 percent. About 20 percent are undecided or will not vote.
- If only three lists ran, one led by Fateh, one led by Hamas and one of independents, Fateh would receive 44 percent, Hamas 21 percent and a list of Independents would receive 20 percent. Taking into consideration those who are undecided, **AWRAD predicts that Fateh would receive 47 percent, Hamas 30 percent, and Independents 23 percent.**
- If a PLO coalition led by Fateh is established, it would receive 49 percent support, compared with 23 percent for an Islamic-leaning list led by Hamas. Taking into consideration those who are undecided and Independents, **AWRAD predicts that a PLO list would receive 65 percent, compared with 35 percent for Hamas.**

## 5. Local Elections

The Government of Mr. Salam Fayyad called for the conduct of local elections by July 2010. Hamas rejected such a call.

- About two thirds of the respondents support the position of the Fayyad Government and call for an election in July; only 21 percent support the position of Hamas. A higher percentage of respondents in Gaza (70 percent) support the position of the Fayyad government, compared with 61 percent in the West Bank.
- The most important priority for Palestinians is job creation and poverty alleviation. About 49 percent see that as their first priority at the local level, while 76 percent see it as their first priority at the national level. The improvement of health services is their second priority, followed by security and fighting crime.



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## **Results of an Opinion Poll**

### **(TABLES)**

**Publication Date: 10 March 2010**

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	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>Section One: Evaluation of government performance</b>			
<b>1. How do you evaluate the performance of Fayyad's government in improving the economy and living conditions?</b>			
Positive	37.3	32.0	46.1
Average	32.8	37.6	24.8
Negative	25.9	26.5	24.8
Don't know/not sure	4.1	4.0	4.2
<b>2. How do you evaluate the performance of Haniyeh's government in improving economic living conditions?</b>			
Positive	16.9	16.3	18.0
Average	26.9	28.2	24.8
Negative	44.9	37.7	56.8
Don't know/not sure	11.3	17.8	0.4
<b>3. How do you evaluate the performance of Fayyad's government in improving the security situation in the West Bank?</b>			
Positive	37.5	36.5	39.2
Average	29.5	34.5	21.3
Negative	27.8	25.3	31.9
Don't know/not sure	5.2	3.7	7.5
<b>4. How do you evaluate the performance of Haniyeh's government in improving the security situation in Gaza?</b>			
Positive	25.7	18.2	38.1
Average	25.4	26.5	23.5
Negative	37.0	36.8	37.5
Don't know/not sure	11.9	18.6	0.9
<b>5. How do you evaluate the response of the Haniyeh government to the floods in North Gaza?</b>			
Good	20.2	17.4	24.8
Medium	26.7	26.5	27.1
Weak	33.2	28.5	41.0
Don't know/not sure	19.9	27.7	7.1
<b>6. In general, do you feel that there is more corruption or less corruption in your region (WB or Gaza) compared to two years ago?</b>			
More	33.1	36.8	27.1
The same	28.4	29.5	26.6
Less	35.9	30.9	44.3
Don't know	2.5	2.8	2.0

	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>7. How do you evaluate the respect of the government toward personal and civil freedoms in your region (WB or Gaza)?</b>			
Good	22.3	23.4	20.4
Medium	33.8	37.7	27.3
Weak	43.0	38.2	51.0
Don't know/not sure	0.9	0.7	1.3
<b>8. For the first time, a Palestinian woman (Dr. Laila Ghannam) was appointed as the governor for the Ramallah Governorate; do you support or oppose such an appointment?</b>			
Support	72.8	74.5	70.1
Oppose	24.2	22.9	26.4
Don't know/not sure	3.0	2.7	3.5
<b>Section Two: Peace Process</b>			
<b>9. George Mitchell, the US Envoy for the Middle East peace process, recently visited the region. Do you believe that this visit will bring about any progress in the peace process?</b>			
Yes	13.7	11.0	18.2
No	79.0	80.5	76.5
Don't know	7.3	8.6	5.3
<b>10. In general, do you believe that President Obama is serious about his desire to establish a Palestinian state?</b>			
Yes	7.7	6.8	9.1
To some extent	21.2	21.1	21.3
No	66.8	66.6	67.2
Don't know	4.3	5.5	2.4
<b>11. In general, do you believe that President Obama is capable of establishing a Palestinian state?</b>			
Yes	17.6	17.2	18.2
To some extent	15.9	16.0	15.7
No	62.5	61.9	63.4
Don't know	4.0	4.8	2.7
<b>12. Are you optimistic that a sovereign Palestinian state will be established under the presidency of Mr. Obama?</b>			
Yes	15.9	15.0	17.5
No	72.8	74.3	70.3
Don't know	11.3	10.7	12.2

	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>13. The PLO-PNA demands a freeze over settlement activities before engaging in any negotiations with Israel, do you support or oppose this position?</b>			
Support	87.0	86.6	87.6
Oppose	9.9	9.9	10.0
Don't know	3.1	3.5	2.4
<b>14. Do you feel that coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis is possible under the current circumstances?</b>			
Yes	15.7	15.4	16.2
No	81.7	81.6	81.8
Don't know	2.7	3.1	2.0
<b>15. If an independent sovereign Palestinian state within the 1967 borders was established side by side with Israel, do you feel that coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis is possible?</b>			
Yes	44.5	41.7	49.0
No	52.0	53.7	49.0
Don't know	3.6	4.5	2.0
<b>Section 3: PLC and Presidential Elections</b>			
<b>16. The term of the PLC ended last month (January 2010), do you support the conduct of a new election for the PLC immediately?</b>			
Yes	85.3	84.6	86.5
No	11.2	10.7	12.0
Don't know	3.5	4.7	1.6
<b>17. In an upcoming presidential election, who would you vote for?</b>			
A Fateh candidate	38.6	36.1	42.8
A Hamas candidate	17.4	17.5	17.3
An Independent candidate	24.9	23.4	27.5
Don't know	7.0	9.8	2.4
Will not vote	12.0	13.2	10.0
<b>18. In an upcoming presidential election, which of the following potential candidates would you vote for?</b>			
Mahmoud Abbas	32.1	28.2	38.6
Ismail Haniyeh	20.6	20.5	20.8
Mustafa Bargouthi	22.3	20.1	25.9
Don't know	10.3	14.8	2.7
Will not vote	14.8	16.4	12.0

	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>19. In an upcoming presidential election, which of the following potential candidates would you vote for?</b>			
Marwan Bargouthi	44.1	41.3	48.8
Ismail Haniyeh	19.9	19.5	20.6
Salam Fayyad	14.3	13.4	16.0
Don't know	8.3	11.4	3.3
Will not vote	13.3	14.4	11.3
<b>20. If only two candidates ran for an upcoming presidential election, who would you vote for?</b>			
Mahmoud Abbas	43.1	38.6	50.6
Ismail Haniyeh	26.3	26.3	26.2
Don't know	10.1	14.4	2.9
Will not vote	20.5	20.6	20.4
<b>21. If only two candidates ran for an upcoming presidential election, who would you vote for?</b>			
Mustafa Bargouthi	34.3	30.5	40.4
Mahmoud Abbas	33.4	30.9	37.6
Don't know	9.9	14.2	2.7
Will not vote	22.5	24.4	19.3
<b>22. If only two candidates ran for an upcoming presidential election, who would you vote for?</b>			
Mahmoud Abbas	38.3	31.9	49.1
Salam Fayyad	17.0	19.3	13.3
Don't know	12.2	16.7	4.7
Will not vote	32.4	32.1	32.9
<b>23. If President Abbas steps down, out of the following Palestinian personalities who would be your preferred candidate for the presidency?</b>			
Salam Fayyad	21.6	25.0	16.0
Ismael Haniyeh	18.8	17.5	20.9
Mustafa Bargouthi	15.5	14.7	16.9
Mohamed Dahlan	8.5	1.1	20.9
Aziz Duwaik	4.5	4.4	4.7
Saeb Erekat	2.8	2.9	2.7
Naser Qudwi	1.7	2.5	0.2
Mahmoud Zahar	1.6	1.7	1.3
Naser Eldin Shaer	1.6	1.7	1.3
Ahmad Qurei	0.6	0.8	0.2
Ahmad Sadat	2.3	2.3	2.2
Others	8.5	10.3	5.6
Will not vote	11.9	14.9	7.1

	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>24. If PLC elections took place today, which one of the following factions would you vote for?</b>			
Fateh	44.4	42.3	48.0
Hamas	20.4	19.8	21.3
PFLP	4.3	4.0	4.7
Al Moubadara Al Felestineya	3.7	3.7	3.6
Third Way	2.1	2.3	1.8
Islamic Jihad	1.2	1.1	1.3
PPP	1.2	1.5	0.7
DFLP	0.6	0.7	0.4
Hizb Tahreer	0.5	0.7	0.2
Nidal	0.3	0.4	
Fida	0.2	0.1	0.2
Other	1.8	1.9	1.8
I have not decided yet	9.0	10.6	6.4
Will not vote	10.4	11.0	9.6
<b>25. If only the following lists ran for PLC elections, which one would you vote for?</b>			
A Hamas-led list	20.7	20.5	21.1
A Fateh-led list	43.9	42.7	45.8
A list of Independents	20.4	18.6	23.3
Not sure	5.2	7.2	1.8
I will not vote	9.9	11.0	8.0
<b>26. If only the following two lists ran for PLC elections, which one would you vote for?</b>			
An Islamic-leaning list led by Hamas	23.0	22.1	24.4
A PLO-leaning list led by Fateh	49.1	47.7	51.6
Not sure	11.6	15.1	5.8
I will not vote	16.3	15.1	18.2
<b>Section 4: Local elections and priorities</b>			
<b>27. Are you registered to participate in future elections?</b>			
Yes	69.9	66.7	75.3
No	26.1	28.2	22.7
Don't remember	3.9	5.1	2.0
<b>28. If no, do you plan to register?</b>			
Yes	63.0	57.3	75.7
No	37.0	42.7	24.3

	Total (WB&G) (%)	West Bank (%)	Gaza (%)
<b>29. The government led by Salam Fayyad announced that local council elections will take place during July 2010. Hamas rejects the conduct of these elections before a national reconciliation has been reached. Do you support the position of the Fayyad government or the position of Hamas?</b>			
The position of the Fayyad government	64.7	61.2	70.4
The position of Hamas	20.7	20.7	20.7
Not sure	14.6	18.0	8.9
<b>30. If local council elections took place in your community, will you vote?</b>			
Yes	77.6	74.7	82.5
No	15.0	16.0	13.3
Not sure	7.4	9.3	4.3
<b>31. At the local level, what is the most pressing priority in your opinion?</b>			
Create jobs	48.5	40.0	62.7
Public health	11.6	13.8	8.0
Fight crime and violence	9.9	9.2	10.9
Reinforce social cohesion	7.9	8.7	6.4
Development of the schools	7.8	10.2	3.8
Road repair and construction	6.1	7.6	3.6
Build parks and playgrounds	2.8	4.0	0.9
Others	4.3	5.4	2.7
Don't know	1.1	1.1	1.1
<b>32. On a national level and among internal issues, which of the following do you consider the most important priority?</b>			
Job creation and poverty alleviation	76.4	72.7	82.4
The development of health services	10.0	11.4	7.8
The development of educational services	7.7	9.9	4.0
Transportation and roads	3.4	3.9	2.7
Other	1.6	1.2	2.2
Don't know	0.9	0.9	0.9
<b>33. If the following lists ran for local council elections in your community, which one would you most probably vote for?</b>			
A list led by Fateh candidates	43.7	41.8	46.9
A list led by Hamas candidates	19.1	18.2	20.7
A list of leftist groups including PFLP, DFLP, PP, Fida etc.	3.4	3.3	3.6
A list of Independent candidates	17.1	15.7	19.6
Other	0.4	0.5	0.2
Not sure (undecided)	6.3	9.2	1.3
I will not participate	9.9	11.2	7.8

**(Sample Distribution)**  
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**Sample Size: 1200 Palestinians in the West Bank & Gaza**  
**Margin of error:  $\pm 3\%$**

Region	%	Type of locality	%	Refugee Status	%
West Bank	62.4	City	42.7	Refugee	44.8
Gaza Strip	37.6	Village- town	27.8	Non-refugee	55.2
Governorate	%	Camp	29.5	Sector	%
Jenin	7.1	Gender	%	Government	33.0
Tulkarm	4.4	Male	50.9	Private sector	49.8
Qalqilya	1.6	Female	49.1	NGOs	5.1
Nablus	8.8	Marital status	%	Other	12.1
Salfit	1.5	Single	22.3	Education	%
Tubas	1.5	Married	74.0	1 Up to 9 yrs	24.8
Ramallah	8.6	Others	3.8	2 Secondary/Tawjihi (9-12 yrs)	44.0
Jerusalem	9.8	Age	%	3 More than Tawjihi	31.2
Jericho	1.5	18-30	42.5	Occupation	%
Bethlehem	4.4	31-40	24.0	Laborers	8.8
Hebron	13.1	> 40	33.4	Employees	16.4
Jabalya	6.5	Income	%	Farmers	1.0
Gaza City	12.9	Good or More	12.6	Merchants	7.1
Deir al-Balah	5.0	Not Good, not	57.1	Professional	0.6
Khan Younis	8.3	Bad		Craftsman	3.5
Rafah	4.8	Weak	12.6	Students	10.9
				Housewives	38.8
				Not working	11.6
				Retired	1.3