

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue & Democracy  
MIFTAH



## Media Monitoring Unit

### First Journalist Survey

April 2007

## *Perception of Palestinian Journalists of the Performance of the Palestinian Media in the Coverage of the Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*

- Al-Ayyam newspaper and Ma'an news agency receive highest grades for performance of their duties.
- Editors in-Chief decide on the form and content of the coverage.
- Preference for obtaining information from Palestinian and Israeli sources.
- The Media Monitoring Unit at the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue & Democracy 'MIFTAH' conducted an opinion survey on January 26-March 12, 2007 for Palestinian journalists on the performance of the Palestinian media. The survey included a sample of 102 journalists.
- The media channels that were covered by the survey were: Palestine Television (PBC), Al-Ayyam, Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah and Al-Quds newspapers, Ma'an and Wafa news agencies, in addition to local media institutions and independent journalists.

### Survey Summary

On a 1 (most negative)-10 (most positive) scale:

- Palestinian journalists rated the extent to which the media is performing its task in covering the Palestinian–Israeli conflict at 6.35. Among the three local newspapers, Al-Ayyam received the highest grade (6.67), while Ma'an received a higher grade of satisfaction (6.89) than Wafa (6.13).
- The degree of satisfaction of journalists with the coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the media channels in which they work was rated at 6.84 points.
- Although journalists consider local media to be biased in favor of the Palestinian story (6.94), they prefer the media to be critical and objective (7.90).
- Journalists considered that editors in chief decide on the form and content of the media coverage, giving them 7.89 points.
- Despite the low rating given by journalists to the credibility of different sources of news, the Presidency of the PNA received the highest grade, 5.97.

- On covering the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, journalists prefer to get information from Palestinian and Israeli sources (7.28).
- Palestinian journalists consider the coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to reflect the position of the Presidency (6.83) more than that of the Government (5.45).
- Journalists believe that the Palestinian society needs to obtain more information about the issue of Jerusalem (8.28), although they feel that the people need to get more information on the practices of the Israeli Army (8.15).
- 77% of journalists expressed their belief that the presence of a reference including Israeli media persons with whom they would communicate, may help the media coverage of the conflict, while 79% believe that the presence of a Palestinian media reference may enhance the objectivity of the Israeli media coverage of the conflict.
- As for the means to develop and help improve the media coverage of the conflict, the most frequently mentioned were:
  - 1- Establishing independent television and radio stations, as well as an independent news agency.
  - 2- Protecting journalists in conflict and wars.
  - 3- Conducting training at the international level and journalist exchange visits with international media institutions.
- Proposed topics for expert training were:
  - 1- Modern media techniques;
  - 2- Electronic journalism;
  - 3- Languages;
  - 4- Investigative reporting.

Below are the survey questionnaire and the final findings.

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### Journalist Survey

**Please answer the following questions by 1, 2...10, whereby 1 is the most negative evaluation and 10 is the most positive evaluation.**

1-In your opinion, to what extent does the Palestinian media generally perform its duty towards the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?-----6.35

2-In your opinion, to what extent does each of the following media channel perform its duty towards the coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

- a. PBC-----5.66
- b. Al-Ayyam newspaper----6.67
- c. Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah newspaper----6.29
- d. Al-Quds newspaper-----6.38
- e. Ma'an News Agency----6.89
- f. Wafa News Agency----6.13

3- To what extent are you satisfied with the performance of the media channel at which you work toward the coverage of the conflict?---6.84

4- Is the media coverage:

- a. More biased towards the Palestinian story?----6.94
- b. Critical and objective?-----5.32

5- Do you prefer to have a coverage that is:

- a. More biased in favor of the Palestinian story?----5.28
- b. Critical and objective?-----7.90

6- What is the impact of each of the following factors on the coverage of the conflict:

- a. The desire to strengthen and enhance Palestinian steadfastness----7.29
- b. he desire for the media to play the role of protector and guard of democracy?  
5.82
- c. The desire to maintain good relations with the Authorities-----5.73
- d. Fear of assaults -----5.18
- e. Competition over news-----6.45
- f. Lack of freedom of mobility of Palestinian journalists-----7.13

7-To what extent does each of the following decide on the form and content of coverage?

- a. Reporters-----5.92
- b. Editors-----6.79
- c. Editors in chief -----7.89
- d. Nature of the event----7.28
- e. Other-----4.11

8- To what extent is each of the following sources credible?

- a. Presidency (of the PNA)-----5.97
- b. Palestinian Government-----4.71
- c. Israeli occupation army-----3.82
- d. Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs---3.49
- e. Israeli Prime Ministry's Office—3.76
- f. f-The White House-----3.64
- g. The League of Arab States---- 4.21
- h. Fateh Spokesperson-----4.78
- i. Hamas Spokesperson-----4.09
- j. PLO-----4.97
- k. Palestinian civil society organizations—5.59

9- In case an incident occurs (such as clashes between armed Palestinian factions and Israeli occupation army), to what extent does the Palestinian media rely on each of the following sources?

- a. Israeli sources-----5.29
- b. Palestinian sources-----7.05
- c. Foreign media-----5.64
- d. Palestinian and Israeli sources---6.28

10- If clashes erupt between Palestinian factions (for example between Fateh and Hamas), to what extent does the Palestinian media rely on each of the following sources?

- a. Fateh spokesperson-----5.76
- b. Hamas spokesperson-----4.80
- c. Palestinian Government---4.85
- d. The Presidency of the PNA----6.11

11- If an incident occurs (for example, clashes between Palestinian factions and the Israeli occupation Army), should the media:

- a. obtain information from Israeli sources only?—2.97
- b. obtain information from Palestinian sources only?---3.99
- c. obtain information from Israeli sources and give the opportunity to Palestinian sources to comment?-----3.81
- d. obtain information from Palestinian sources and give the opportunity to Israeli sources to comment?-----5.08
- e. obtain information from Palestinian and Israeli sources?----7.28
- f. obtain information from foreign sources? ----5.39

12- To what extent must the media highlight news on internal differences, particularly sensitive material that has been leaked to the media?-----6.54

13- To what extent does media coverage of the conflict reflect the position of the Presidency?-----6.83

14-To what extent does media coverage of the conflict reflect the Palestinian Government's position?-----5.45

15- How do you evaluate the Palestinian coverage of the following issues?

- a. Israeli internal politics-----4.01
- b. The Wall-----5.41
- c. Jerusalem-----5.33
- d. Launching Qassam rockets-----5.32
- e. Internal Palestinian dialogue-----7.32
- f. Israeli Army practices-----7.39
- g. President of the PNA-----7.75
- h. Palestinian Prime Minister-----6.37
- i. The Government-----5.96
- j. PLC-----5.73
- k. Parliamentary blocs/Palestinian factions---5.26

16-In your opinion, in which of the following areas should the Palestinian society obtain more information?

- a. Internal Palestinian politics----- 6.21
- b. The Wall-----8.14
- c. Jerusalem-----8.28
- d. Launching Qassam rockets-----5.26
- e. Internal Palestinian dialogue-----7.02
- f. Israeli occupation army practices-----8.15
- g. President of the PNA----- 6.42
- h. Palestinian Prime Minister-----6.05
- i. The Palestinian Government-----5.87
- j. PLC-----6.70
- k. Parliamentary blocs/Palestinian factions---5.94

17- In your opinion, in which of the following areas does the Palestinian society have a desire to be more informed?

- a. Israeli internal politics-----5.23
- b. The Wall-----7.15
- c. Jerusalem-----7.51
- d. Launching Qassam rockets---4.57
- e. Palestinian internal dialogue ---7.15
- f. Israeli occupation army practices—8.12
- g. President of the PNA---5.55
- h. Palestinian Prime Minister---5.31
- i. The Government-----5.31
- j. PLC-----5.40
- k. Parliamentary Blocs/Palestinian factions---5.00

18- In your opinion, to what extent does the Palestinian media coverage of the conflict have an impact on the following:

- a. The position of the Palestinian people-----6.36
- b. The **conduct** of the Palestinian Government---5.05
- c. The **conduct** of the Palestinian Presidency-----5.37
- d. The behavior of the Palestinian factions-----5.14
- e. The development of the conflict in general---5.69
- f. The behavior of the Israeli side-----4.39
- g. The behavior of the PLC-----4.96

19-In a state of war/conflict, to what extent do you think the media should publish interviews with leaders from the other party/side of the conflict?-----6.23

20- In your work, to what extent are you exposed to non-media publications (books, research, etc) on the conflict? -----6.18

21- Are you proficient in Hebrew? -----41%----- (Yes/No)

22- If the answer is yes, rate it (1-10)-----7.15

23- Do you have relations with Israeli media persons whom you can approach when you need any information on the other side?----39%--- (Yes/No)

24- Do any Israeli media persons approach you to get information before it is published in Israeli media?-----40%--- (Yes/No)

25- Do you believe that the presence of a reference that includes Israeli media persons and means of communicating with them, may help in the media coverage of the conflict? (Yes/No)-----77%

26- - Do you believe that the presence of a reference that includes Palestinian media persons and means for communicating with them, may help make the Israeli media coverage of the conflict more objective? (Yes/No)-----79%

27- To what extent do you believe that conducting workshops for journalists may contribute to improving the media coverage of the conflict?-----7.33

28- Propose any other possible means to develop and help improve media coverage of the conflict.

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29-Propose areas that need expert training.

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