



## Press Release

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### New Revelations on the Opinions of Youth, Women and Educated Palestinians

- **Youth and the Educated Palestinians are Becoming Less Supportive of Hamas and More Supportive of Fateh**
- **Women are still more Supportive of Hamas**

Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) had conducted an opinion poll dated 16-18 January 2008 after and during the latest Gaza attacks. A representative sample, of 3200 Palestinians, was interviewed in all West Bank and Gaza districts. The main results were published on January the 23<sup>rd</sup> showing a decline in the support for Fateh and a slight increase in the support for Hamas. One must note that the latest attacks on Gaza influenced Palestinian views on most issues. Other important factors in this poll were gender, age and education that are clearly correlated with political attitudes.

During the last decade, various polls had shown that women, youth and educated Palestinians comprised the main bulk of support for Hamas. This poll shows major shifts, where these groups do not seem to be as supportive of the movement as traditionally believed. The opposite is true for Fateh that seems to have made gains among young and educated respondents, but still lagging behind among women.

Following are examples of marked shifts in attitudes across age, education and gender.

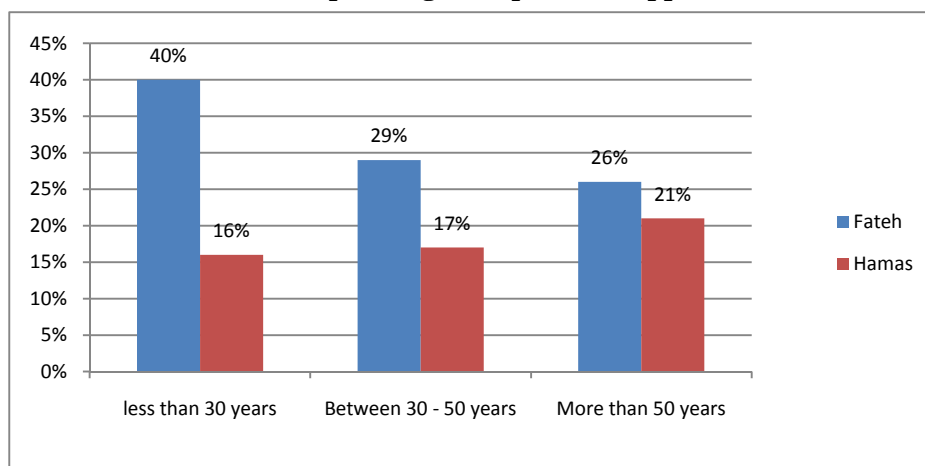
#### **Age and Attitudes: Marked Shifts**

Attitudes towards various political issues are correlated with age. For example:

- Younger respondents are more opposed to the division of Jerusalem between Palestinians and Israelis with exchange of authority over some neighborhoods, where 70% of the age group (30 or less) opposed such a scenario while only 51% of the age group 50 plus opposed.
- Younger respondents were less inclined to follow-up news on the visit by President Bush compared with older respondents, where 28% of the youth said that they had heard or read the speech delivered by President Bush after his meeting with President Abbas, compared with 41% of older respondents.

- In contrast, younger people are more optimistic than older respondents, regarding President Bush's seriousness about his desire to establish a Palestinian state, where 22% of the youth said that he was serious compared with 16% among older respondents.
- Younger respondents were more critical of Hanneyeh's cabinet than older respondents. About 43% of the youth said the performance of his government is weak, compared with 32% among older respondents. The opposite applies to the Fayyad cabinet.
- Marking a major shift on the political affiliation of young people, this poll reveals that younger people are less supportive of Hamas than older people, where 16% of the youth declared support for Hamas, while 21% of the older respondents did the same.
- The opposite is true for Fateh, where about 39% of the youth said they support the movement, compared with 26% among older respondents.
- Younger people are more willing to vote for Marwan Bargouthi than older respondents. In a race against Hanneyeh, 51% of the youth said that they support him, compared with 35% of the older.

**Graph 1: Age and political support**



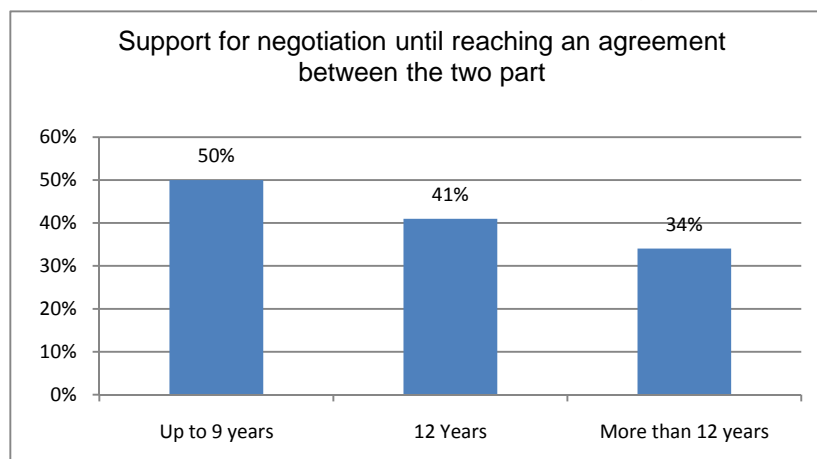
### **Education Gaps: A Critical Educated Elite, Still Consistent Support for Fateh**

The data of this poll show that educated Palestinians are, on average, more critical than less educated Palestinians. They are, however, more critical of Hanneyeh and Hamas more than Fayyad and Fateh.

- 72% of the more educated (with more than 12 years of education) do not believe that negotiations will result in a Palestinian state according to the Annapolis declaration. This is compared with 54% among the least educated (9 years of education or less).
- Over 31% of the educated support armed attacks against Israeli military and settlers in the West Bank, compared with 23% among the less educated.

- In contrast, 50% of the least educated believe that negotiations are the best means to end occupation, compared with 34% of the most educated.
- Over 51% of the less educated support steps taken by President Abbas towards ending the occupation, compared with 40% among the more educated.
- The more educated are also critical of the Hanneyeh's cabinet, where 46% of them said that its performance is weak, compared with 33% among the less educated.
- Support for Hamas also declines with education, where 19% of the less educated support Hamas and 15% of the more educated share the same sentiments.
- As for Fateh, support is consistent across educational levels.
- Support for Marwan Bargouthi increases with education, so is support for Fayyad.

**Graph 2: Education and support for negotiation**



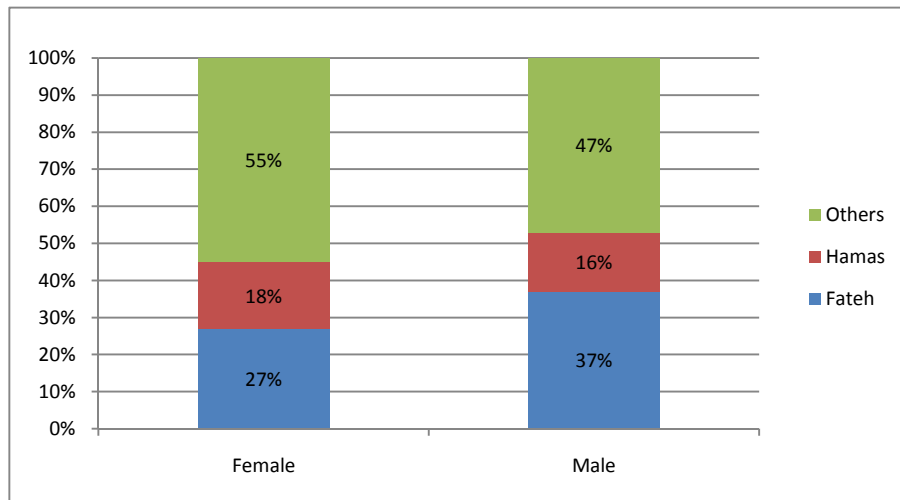
### **A Gender Gap Continues: Less Women Supporting Hamas; No Signs of Reconciliation between Women and Fateh**

Previous polling had shown that fewer women, than men, support the peace process, and more women, than men, support Hamas. The current poll shows a continuation in the gender gap for most political issues, but a declining gap on support for Hamas. Women are, however, still more reluctant to support Fateh.

- Around 31% of men fully support the outcome of Annapolis and the continuation of negotiations. This view is shared by 23% of the female respondents.
- Again, 39% of men support the division of Jerusalem and exchange of sovereignty, compared with 25% of women.
- 51% of men support steps taken by Abbas to end the occupation, compared with 41% among women.

- 28% of women believe that Hamas has a real alternative to end the occupation, compared with 23% of men.
- In terms of support for Hamas, the gender gap is declining with only 18% of the women stating that they will vote for the movement, compared with 16% among men.
- When it comes to Fateh, the gender gap continues where 27% of the women and 37% of the men declared that they might vote for Fateh in a PLC election.

**Graph 3: Gender and political support**



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