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Public Opinion Poll Number 79 – March – 2013

Conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center

**Overwhelming majority calls for reconciliation even if met with U.S.-Israeli sanctions
In Gaza, people blame Hamas and in the West Bank they blame Fatah for the disrupted
reconciliation**

**Majority of respondents embraces the idea of reforming the PLO
Setback in percentage of support for the Oslo Accords; Setback in Hamas' popularity;
Drop in support for military action**

National Reconciliation

The public opinion poll conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC) showed that the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians (90.3%) believe that Hamas and Fatah should pursue national reconciliation even if this leads to the United States and Israel imposing sanctions on the Palestinian people. A clear majority of 87.5% of the respondents also embraces the idea of reforming the PLO with the aim to include all relevant Palestinian political parties. Meanwhile, a majority of 59.5% says both Fatah and Hamas are acting in their own interests instead of the national interest by not working towards achieving reconciliation.

As for the party more responsible for the persisting division and the failure to reach reconciliation, 28.6% of respondents put the responsibility on Hamas while 19.8% put it on Fatah and 22.3% blame both sides. It is worth mentioning that a higher percentage of people in the Gaza Strip blame Hamas for the continuation of the division than those in the West Bank (32.8% as opposed to 26.2% respectively) while a higher percentage of those in the West Bank blame Fatah for the continuation of the division more than Hamas (20.4% as opposed to 18.6%). With regard to the overall support, the popularity of Hamas dropped sharply from 28.2% in December 2012 shortly after the Gaza war to 20.6% in this poll. This result is closer to the support the movement usually received in past polls. In April 2008, for example support was at 19.3%.

Broad support for non-violent resistance

83.8% of respondents support non-violent means of resistance and 78.9% think such efforts should be intensified. While most Palestinians (36.8%) still believe that peaceful negotiations are the best method to achieve an end to the occupation and a Palestinian State, non-violent resistance amounting to a peaceful popular intifada now ranks second with 30.4% support (compared to 21.9% in December 2012), while only 25.4% favoring armed resistance. A clear majority of 60.2% considers military operations to harm the Palestinian national interests. The percentage of those who support military operations against Israeli targets dropped from 50.9% in December 2012 to 31.1% in this poll. Support for firing locally-made rockets from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli regions has dropped sharply: While it was at 74.0% in December 2012 shortly after the Gaza war, it now stands at 38.4%.

20 years since signing the Oslo Accords

The poll showed that 20 years after the signing of the Oslo Accords, Palestinian public opinion is divided over this agreement, whereby 44.6% of respondents say it would have been better for Palestinian national interests if the accords were never signed. 44.4% of respondents said signing the accords was better for the Palestinian people. Moreover, the poll showed a setback in the level of support from the people towards the Oslo Accords; the percentage of those who said they supported them dropped from 68.1% in December, 1997 to 43.4% in the current poll. Only one quarter (24.6%) of the Palestinian public opinion believes the Oslo Accords served the Palestinian national interests while one third (33.6%) thinks they have harmed them and another third (34.9%) considers them to have made no difference. Public opinion is especially critical of the security coordination between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel. Only a third (33.8%) believes it to benefit the Palestinians while a majority of 55.4% wants to see it terminated even if this would lead to an increase of incursions by the Israeli army into Area A of the West Bank.

Visit of US President Obama and resumption of peace negotiations

As for the visit of US President Barack Obama, the majority of those polled (59.3%) sees the visit as more beneficial to Israel as opposed to only 2.1% who say it was more beneficial to the Palestinians; 25.2% consider the visit to have had no impact. A two-thirds majority thinks the Palestinian leadership should only return to negotiations if Israel agrees to a halt of settlement expansion. Only 5.2% believe negotiations should be resumed without preconditions and only 27.6% of the respondents view direct negotiations under the sponsorship of the U.S. as the most helpful approach to achieve an independent Palestinian State whereas 49.5% favor an international peace conference.

Financial crisis of the PNA

The majority of respondents (48.9%) blames Israel for the PNA's financial crisis as opposed to 14.9% who hold the PNA responsible; 34.2% hold both the PNA and Israel responsible for the crisis. In regards to the recent strikes by PNA employees, teachers and health workers, the majority of those polled (59.5%) show their support for these strikes, saying they were right as opposed to 37.1% who view the strikes as harmful and exaggerated. Despite the financial crisis, an overwhelming majority of 71.7% thinks the PNA must be maintained instead of dissolving it.

Methodology:

A random sample of **1179** people over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 27th and 31st of March 2013. 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 130 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the West Bank **749** people were surveyed from the following areas:

Hebron: Bani Na'im, Hebron, Taffuh, Sa'ir, Dura, Beit Kahil, Yatta, Khursa, Ar-Rihiya, Al-Fawwar refugee camp. **Jenin:** Kafr Ra'i, Ya'bad, Jenin, al-Yamoun, Kufeir, Tayba, Fahma, Jenin refugee camp. **Tubas:** Tubas, Tayaseer, **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Silwad, Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Sinjil, Surda, Qibya, Al-Tira, Beit Ur-al-Fawqa, al-Jalazoun refugee camp. **Jericho:** Al-'Auja, Al- Jiftlik. **Jerusalem :** Al-Ram, Al-Dahyeh, Biddo, Beit Ikssa, Beit Hanina, Shu'fat, Old City, Al-'Esaweyeh, Ras Al-Amoud, Qalandia refugee camp. **Bethlehem:**Al-'U'beidiya, Beit Fajjar, Bethlehem, Tuqu', Battir, Ad-Duheisha refugee camp .**Nablus:** Azmut, Nablus, Aqraba, Awarta, Burqa, Audala, Ein Bait al Ma' refugee camp. **Salfit :** Salfit, Kifl Haris **Tulkarem:** Bal'a, Attil, Beit Lid, Tulkarem, Far'un, Nazlat Issa. **Qalqilya:**Qalqilya, Azzun, Azzun 'Atma.

In the Gaza Strip **430** people were surveyed from the following areas:

Gaza: al-Rimal a-Shamali, a-Rimal a-Janoubi, a-Zeitoun, a-Shuja'ia, a-Tufah, a-Daraj, a-Naser, a-Sheikh Radwan, a-sheikh Ajleen, Tal al-Hawa, al-Mughraga, Shati Refugee Camp . **Khan Younis:** Khan Younis, Absan al-Kabira, Abasan al-Saghira, al-Qarara, Khuza', Khan Younis Refugee Camp . **Rafah:** Rafah, Shouket a-Soufi, Rafah Refugee Camp. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia Refugee Camp, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir al-Balah, Buri, -Zawaydeh, Nussirat, al-Maghazi Refugee Camp, Bureij Refugee Camp, Deir al-Balah RefugeeCamp.

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

Sample Distribution

% 53.3 of the respondents were from the West Bank, 10.2 % from Jerusalem, 36.5 % from the Gaza Strip.

16.9 % said they live in villages 8.9 % in refugee camps, and 74.2 % in towns/cities.

50.9 % were male, 49.1 % were female.

70.1% were married, 24.4 % , single, 3.6 % widowed, 1.2 % divorced, 0.7 % no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 36 years.

Occupation of Respondents

- Students 12.7 %
- Laborers 11.1 %
- Housewives 35.1 %
- Farmers/fishermen 1.6 %
- Craftsmen 1.1 %
- Businessmen/private business 9.6%
- Public Sector Employees. 11.8%
- Private Sector Employees 6.4 %
- Professionals (e.g. doctors/lawyers/pharmacists/engineers) 0.7 %
- Unemployed 7.3 %
- Retired 2.3%,
- No answer 0.3%.

Results:

Q1. In general, to what extent do you feel optimistic regarding the Palestinian future? Would you say that you are optimistic, cautiously optimistic, or pessimistic?

	Total n= 1179	West Bank n= 749	Gaza n= 430
Optimistic	28.8	28.8	28.6
Caustiously optimistic	40.7	38.3	44.9
Pessimistic	29.6	31.9	25.6
No answer	0.9	1.0	0.9

Q2. 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 where Palestinians and Israelis enjoy equal representation and rights. Which of these solutions do you prefer?

	Total n= 1179	West Bank n= 749	Gaza n= 430
Two-state solution : a Palestinian and an Israeli	52.4	53.7	50.2
Bi-national state on all of historic Palestine	23.4	26.6	17.9
Palestinian State *	10.8	7.1	17.2
Islamic State *	2.0	2.5	1.2
Others	0.8	0.7	0.9
No solution	9.2	8.4	10.5
Don't know \ No answer	1.4	1.0	2.1

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

Q3. How optimistic or Pessimistic are you towards reaching a peaceful settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict? Would you say that you are very optimistic, optimistic, pessimistic, or very pessimistic?

	Total n= 1179	West Bank n= 749	Gaza n= 430
Very optimistic	2.5	1.7	4.0
Optimistic	32.9	35.0	29.3
Pessimistic	39.4	36.6	44.2
Very pessimistic	23.2	24.2	21.4
Don't know \ No answer	2.0	2.5	1.1

Q4. Do you support the continuation of military operations against Israeli targets as an appropriate response under current political conditions or do you oppose them and believe they harm Palestinian national interests?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n=749	n=430
An appropriate response under current political conditions	31.1	28.8	35.1
Oppose them and believe they harm Palestinian national interests	60.2	61.4	58.1
Others	3.2	2.4	4.7
Don't know \ No answer	5.5	7.4	2.1

Q5. How do you feel about the suicide bombings operations against Israeli civilians? Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n= 430
Strongly support	14.1	10.8	19.8
Somewhat support	24.9	16.7	39.3
Somewhat oppose	29.8	30.3	28.8
Strongly oppose	26.3	36.2	9.1
No answer	4.9	6.0	3.0

Q6. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied about the way that Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) is dealing with his job as a president to the Palestinian National Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Very satisfied	20.3	20.4	20.0
Somewhat satisfied	32.7	32.3	33.3
Somewhat dissatisfied	15.0	14.7	15.6
Very dissatisfied	28.8	28.8	28.6
No answer	3.2	3.8	2.5

Q7- There is a debate on the future of the PNA whereby some people believe that dissolving the PNA is necessary now while others believe that the perpetuation of the PNA and maintaining it is a necessity. What do you think?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Dissolving the PNA is necessary	24.8	27.5	20.0
Perpetuating and maintaining the PNA is a necessity	71.7	68.0	78.1
Don't know \ No answer	3.5	4.5	1.9

Q8. Do you think that the locally-made rockets fired from Gaza strip towards Israeli regions help,harm,or don't make any difference with regards to the Palestinian goals?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Help	38.4	35.0	44.4
Harm	29.7	29.1	30.7
Don't make any difference	27.7	30.2	23.5
Other	0.9	0.9	0.9
Don't know \ No answer	3.3	4.8	0.5

Q9. Do you support or oppose the ceasefire agreement from November 2012 between Hamas and Israel?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I support the ceasefire agreement	81.5	80.4	83.5
I don't support the ceasefire agreement	14.9	15.1	14.7
Don't know \ No answer	3.6	4.5	1.8

Q10- If PLC elections were to take place today, which of the following parties would you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n=1179	n=749	n=430
Hamas	20.6	17.1	26.7
Fatah	42.6	41.7	44.2
Others	9.2	8.8	9.8
I won't vote	22.6	26.3	16.3
No answer	5.0	6.1	3.0

Q11. Should Hamas and Fatah pursue national reconciliation even if this would lead to sanctions by Israel and the US?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Yes, Hamas and Fatah should pursue national reconciliation	90.3	88.9	92.8
No, Hamas and Fatah should not pursue national reconciliation	5.2	4.4	6.5
No answer	4.5	6.7	0.7

Q12. In your opinion, which side should be more blamed for the persisting division and the failure of efforts pertinent between Fatah and Hamas?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Hamas movement	28.6	26.2	32.8
Fatah movement	19.8	20.4	18.6
Others	5.4	4.5	7.0
Fatah and Hamas	22.3	22.4	22.1
Israel	6.9	6.3	7.9
Don't know	14.3	17.6	8.6
No answer	2.7	2.6	3.0

Q13. Do you think Fatah and Hamas are pursuing national interest or rather their own interests by not reconciling?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
They are acting in favor of national interests	34.1	29.9	41.4
They are acting in their own interests	59.5	62.9	53.7
No answer	6.4	7.2	4.9

Q14. Do you support to reform the PLO in order to include all relevant parties?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I support the reform of the PLO in order to include all relevant parties	87.5	86.8	88.8
I don't support the reform of the PLO	7.7	7.5	8.1
No answer	4.8	5.7	3.1

Q15. In general, what is the best method to achieve the Palestinian people's goals of ending the occupation and establishing a state?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Peaceful negotiations	36.8	40.6	30.2
Armed resistance (armed Intifada)	25.4	20.3	34.2
Non-violent resistance (peaceful Popular Intifada)	30.4	30.6	30.2
Other	2.8	2.0	4.2
Don't know \ No answer	4.6	6.5	1.2

Q16. Do you support non-violent activities?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I support non-violent activities	83.8	85.7	80.5
I don't support non-violent activities	12.7	10.1	17.2
No answer	3.5	4.2	2.3

Q17. In your opinion, should non-violent activities be intensified?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
They should be intensified	78.9	80.0	77.0
They should not be intensified	16.4	14.4	19.8
No answer	4.7	5.6	3.2

Q18. What's your opinion of the Oslo agreement? Would you say that you strongly support, support, oppose it, or strongly oppose?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Strongly support	4.9	4.9	4.9
Support	38.5	37.0	41.2
Oppose	26.0	22.3	32.3
Strongly oppose	22.3	24.3	18.8
No answer	8.3	11.5	2.8

Q19. On the 20th anniversary of the Oslo Accords, do you think that the Oslo Accords served or harmed the Palestinian national interests or made no difference?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
The Oslo Accords served the Palestinian national interests	24.6	22.0	29.1
The Oslo Accords harmed the Palestinian national interests	33.6	32.0	36.3
The Oslo Accords made no difference	34.9	36.6	32.1
Don't know	5.1	6.9	1.9
No answer	1.8	2.5	0.6

Q20. Do you think the security cooperation with Israel benefits the Palestinians?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I think it benefits the Palestinians	33.8	34.2	33.0
I think it does not benefit the Palestinians	59.2	57.1	62.8
No answer	7.0	8.7	4.2

Q21- In your opinion, should the security cooperation with Israel be stopped even if that would lead to an increase of incursions of the Israeli army into area A?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I think the security cooperation should be stopped	55.4	52.1	61.2
I think the security cooperation should be continued	33.3	35.6	29.3
No answer	11.3	12.3	9.5

Q22. US President Obama visited Palestine and Israel for the first time since his election. Do you think this visit was:

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
More beneficial to the Palestinians	2.1	2.3	1.9
More beneficial to the Israelis	59.3	56.3	64.4
Beneficial to both sides	10.8	11.9	8.8
Had no impact	25.2	26.3	23.3
Don't know \ No answer	2.6	3.2	1.6

Q23. At this time, the Americans are seeking to resume the peace process and Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. What do you think? Do you think the Palestinian leadership should resume negotiations without conditions, should they resume negotiations on condition that Israel halt settlement expansion, or should they refuse to return to negotiations?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
The Palestinian leadership should resume negotiations without conditions.	5.2	4.9	5.6
The Palestinian leadership should resume negotiations on condition that Israel halt settlement expansion.	65.1	69.7	57.2
The Palestinian leadership should refuse to return to negotiations.	24.4	18.4	34.9
Don't know \ No answer	5.3	7.0	2.3

Q24. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Principles on arrangements for transitional self-rule, known as the Oslo Accords and on which the Palestinian Authority was established. 20 years later, do you think it would have been better if these accords were never signed? Or was signing them better than not signing?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
It would have been better if the accords were never signed.	44.6	43.0	47.4
Signing them was better than not signing them.	44.4	43.4	46.3
Don't know	9.6	11.7	5.8
No answer	1.4	1.9	0.5

Q25. The PA is going through a financial crisis that has escalated over the past few months to the point that salaries are not regularly paid to its employees. Who do you think is responsible for this crisis? Israel or the PNA?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Israel, because it does not transfer tax returns	48.9	41.4	62.1
The PA	14.9	20.2	5.8
Israel and the PA	34.2	36.3	30.5
Don't know \ No answer	2.0	2.1	1.6

Q26. Lately, PA employee strikes have been on the rise such as teachers and health workers. What do you think of this? Do you support these strikes and believe they are right or do you think they are exaggerated and harmful?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
I support these strikes and think they are right	59.5	56.5	64.7
They are exaggerated and harmful	37.1	39.5	32.8
Don't know	2.5	2.7	2.1
No answer	0.9	1.3	0.4

Q27. Which of the following do you think is most helpful in achieving the goal of establishing an independent Palestinian state?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine under the sponsorship of the United States.	27.6	30.0	23.3
An international peace conference	49.5	48.9	50.7
Others	9.1	7.1	12.8
Don't know	10.9	11.1	10.7
No answer	2.9	2.9	2.5

Q28. In general, which of the following do you believe the International Community is trying to achieve in regards to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n=430
Ending the conflict in a way that serves Israeli interests more	32.0	31.0	33.7
Ending the conflict in a way that serves Palestinian interests more.	13.7	13.1	14.7
Ending the conflict in a way that serves the interests of both parties (Palestinian and Israeli)	24.1	25.1	22.3
Managing the conflict without reaching a solution	23.1	21.6	25.6
Don't know	6.0	7.5	3.5
No answer	1.1	1.7	0.2

Q29. Which political or religious faction do you trust the most?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n= 430
Fatah	39.2	37.5	42.1
Hamas	19.1	15.8	24.9
PFLP	3.1	3.5	2.3
Islamic factions	1.1	1.5	0.5
Other Islamic factions	2.4	0.8	5.1
Others	3.3	3.9	2.3
I don't trust anyone	25.8	29.1	20.0
No answer	6.0	7.9	2.8

***This was an open-ended question no options were read to the interviewee**

Q30. Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most?*

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1179	n= 749	n= 430
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	23.9	24.6	22.8
Ismail Haniyeh	12.9	9.1	19.5
Marwan Barghouthi	6.0	5.6	6.7
Khaled Mish'al	3.9	3.9	4.0
Others	14.3	11.9	18.6
I don't trust anyone	31.7	35.6	24.9
No answer	7.3	9.3	3.5

***This was an open-ended question no options were read to the interviewee**