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|   | [Opinion Polls](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/opinionpolls/)Poll No. 1 **Public Opinion Poll 1:  Priorities under a Palestinian State: Integrity & Objectivity31 August - 2 September 2000****[ Analysis of Results ] [** [**Detailed Results**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll1/results.html) **] [** [**Sample Distribution**](http://home.birzeit.edu/cds/opinionpolls/poll1/sample.html) **]** **[** [**In Arabic**](http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/arabic/opinionpolls/poll1/) **]** Analysis of Results\*This is a preliminary analysis of the results. For further information, please visit our website or call. **1. Trust in institutions** * Out of 15 choices, Palestinian universities are the most trustworthy according to the respondents of this survey; 79.6% said that they find universities as "highly trustworthy" or "trustworthy." An additional 13.2% said that universities are "somewhat trustworthy." Only 4.1% find universities "untrustworthy." The second most highly trustworthy institution was the "Zakat Committee" (Islamic charity organizations). The rank order of the rest of the organizations followed as such: The Police (3), NGOs (4), women's organizations (5), security agencies (6), donor countries (7), the judiciary (8), local media (9), PNA ministries (10), Palestinian Legisaltive Council -- PLC (11), workers' unions (12), international NGOs (13), opposition political groups (14), and political groups in general (15).
* The following institutions were evaluated less positively by Gaza respondents than West Bank respondents: local media, unions, opposition groups, PNA ministries, women's organizations, PLC, the judiciary, political groups, and security agencies. In contrast, Gaza respondents viewed the following institutions more positively: The Police, International NGO's, donor countries, and Zakat Committees.

**2. Living conditions after establishment of PA:** * 3.6% of the total respondents said that their living standards have "significantly improved" since the establishment of the PNA. Another 17.5% said that their living standards have "improved." In contrast, 25.3% of the total said that their living conditioned have "worsened," and another 17.6% said that their living conditions have "significantly worsened." 34.7% of the total said that their living standards have not changed. The percentage of those who said that their standard of living has not changed was higher in the West Bank (41%) than in Gaza (24.5%). In Gaza, 48.9% said that their standard of living had "worsened" or "significantly worsened". While in the West Bank 39.3% said that this was true.
* Only 27.3% responded that they are financially able to secure "proper education" for their children, in stark contrast to the 46.4% of those that responded said that they were unable to do so. In addition, 26.3% responded that their ability to secure their children's education is "medium."
* In the field of health services, 44.3% said that they are unable to secure "proper health care" for themselves or their families. Another 25.9% said that they are moderately able to do so. Only 30.6% said that they are able to secure proper medical care.
* In regards to "freedom of expression", 40% said that their level is similar to the rest of the Arab World. 27.9% said that their current level of "freedom of expression" is better than that in the Arab World. In contrast, 26.3% said that their current level is worse.

**3. Decision - making:** Over 70% evaluated the role of the United Sates in making important decisions for the Palestinians as "significant". 63% described Israel's role as such. Less than a majority (42.6%) described the role of the PNA as "significant." Egypt's role was seen as more "significant" by only 32% and the role of Jordan as significant by only 18.3%. **4. The Declaration of the Palestinian State:** * 52.3% expressed their support for the declaration of the Palestinian State on the September 13, 2000 deadline. Support for the declaration was much higher in the West Bank than in Gaza. Among West Bank respondents, 57% supported and 35% opposed the declaration on that. In Gaza, the declaration was supported by 44% and opposed by 47.65.
* 55.7% of those polled said that they would favor a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state despite Israeli and American opposition. Only 36.9% opposed a declaration under such circumstances.
* 54.7% said that they were willing to support a unilateral declaration of state even if that lead to a military confrontation with Israel. Only 38.6% opposed a declaration under such circumstances.
* If a unilateral declaration resulted in a closure of boarders with Israel for all Palestinian workers, 48.9% still support such a declaration and 44.7% oppose it.
* The majority of Palestinians (73.7%) view the role of the United States in the latest Camp David negotiations as "biased towards Israel." Another 12.4% viewed it as "neutral"', and 30.9% viewed it as "biased towards the Palestinians."

**5. Political transformation in Syria and Palestine** * Less than a quarter of the respondents, (24.3%) viewed the transformation that took place in Syria after the Late Hafez Assad as positive. In contrast, 43.1% viewed it negative. Another 17.7% viewed it as "somewhere between positive and negative."
* Only 16% viewed the political system in Syria as "democratic," while 46.5% viewed as "undemocratic."
* In regards to the Palestinian political system, 21.7% described it as "democratic." Another 39.8% felt it was "somewhat democratic," and 32.4% felt that it was "undemocratic."
* As for future expectations, a third of the respondents expected that a future Palestinian political system would be "more democratic." 37.6% expected that it would be the same, no change from the status-qou. In addition, 18.2% expected that a future Palestinian political system would be "worse" than that in the rest of the Arab World.
* Those polled were divided when asked if they thought that the political transformation within the Palestinian leadership would be "peaceful. 33.5% said that the transformation would be "peaceful", while 32.9% expected that it would not be peaceful. The rest were undecided on the issue.

**6. Qualities of a future president** When Palestinians were asked about what qualities do they want/expect to find in a future president of a Palestinian state, the quality listed as "most important" was a president's "ability to represent Palestinian positions on issues of contention with Israel". The second most important quality was a "commitment to Islamic values." The rest of the top six answers were as follows, in descending order of importance: the "ability to resolve economic problems", the "possession of a college degree or higher education", "skilful in international diplomacy", and the "ability to achieve democracy". The least important qualities were as follows: "possession of military - security experience", "activity in the national struggle", and "belonging to an Islamic political group." **7. A woman president** Only 38.4% of those polled said that they would accept a woman as president of a future state, 50.1% said that they would not. 9.4% were undecided. There were great variations among various social groups: older Palestinian were more willing to accept the idea than younger Palestinians; professionals were more willing than most to accept the idea; NGOs and governmental employees more than private sector employees; Palestinians with higher incomes more than lower income groups. **8. View of the future** The majority of respondents (59.1%) said that they were "very optimistic" or "optimistic" in regards to their future outlook. In contrast, 17.8% were pessimistic, and 23.1% were in somewhere in-between optimism and pessimism. **9. Feeling of security** * A majority of respondents (50%) felt "secure" about the future of coming generation. In contrast, 22.7% felt "insecure", and 24.8% had mixed feelings about the future of the upcoming generation.
* Concerning personal safety, 63.2% felt "safe". Only 18% felt "unsafe" and 17.5% felt "somewhat safe."

**10. Future goals** * The most important goals for Palestinian society to strive under an independent Palestinian state were related to civil society issues and the rule of law. Over 76.6% felt that "applying the law equally" was "very important". The second and third goal were related to improving the health and education services. The fourth goal was the "elimination of corruption" where 70.7% said it was "very important". These were followed by the: "eradication poverty", "return of refugees and absorption of them back into society", "making available a social security system", "modernizing the existing infrastructure", "achieving economic growth", and "elimination monopolies".
* When respondents were asked to pick only one choice as the most important to them for them in order for Palestinian society to strive under an independent Palestinian state, the results were only slightly different than those found in the previous question. "Applying the law equally" came first followed by the "return of refugees", "eradication of poverty", "elimination of corruption", "achieving economic growth", "reducing gap between rich and poor", "improving education", "making available a social security system", and "achieving democracy". These goals were followed by 11 other goals listed in the tables.

**11. Political Affiliation & Election of President** * Over 37% said that they would either not participate in a presidential election if was carried out now or not choose one of the three leading candidates (Arafat, Yassin, Abdelshafi). 38.5% would vote for President Yassir Arafat (36% in the West Bank and 42.5% in Gaza). Mr. Ahamd Yassin (A Hamas leader) would get 14.3% of the total vote and Haidar Abdelshafi (Leftist - liberal leanings) would get 10.1% of the total vote.
* The largest group (44.1%) of Palestinians declare no support for any of the existing political groups. This percentage has increased over the last 8 years, up from 27%. Support for Fateh (led by President Yassir Arafat) is 33.3%, while support for Hamas (the largest Islamic group) is 13.9% and for Islamic Jihad around (3.7%). The leftist groups did not receive as much support, the largest of which the PFLP (Popular Front) with 3.2% of those polled in support.

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