



Public Opinion Poll # 29

**Living Conditions
Evaluation of Leaders
Palestinian Elections & Political Support**

26 December 2006

Press Release

Dates of fieldwork: 20-21/12/2006

Sample size: 1200 Palestinians (West Bank and Gaza Strip)

Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$

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- * **For the sample distribution, please refer to Annex (2), and for the full methodology refer to our website (<http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp>).**
- * **Financial Support by the International Republican Institute (IRI).**

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Part One: Main Results

- 77% of respondents declared that they don't feel that Palestinian society is going in the right direction.
- 51% of respondents described that the economic situation of their households as bad or very bad.
- 54% of respondents blame both Fateh and Hamas for the failure of forming a National Unity Government.
- 50% of respondents blame both Fateh and Hamas for the clashes and the military confrontations between them. 22% of the respondents in Gaza blame Hamas, while 13% blame Fateh.
- 48% of the respondents believe that the way out of the current crisis is in forming a National Unity Government on the basis of the National Reconciliation Document (The Prisoners' Document).
- An even split among respondents in regard to Abbas's call for early elections (47% support while 46% oppose).
- 65% of respondents stated that they will participate in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections if conducted.
- 31% of respondents assessed the performance of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas as Good.
- 41% of respondents assessed the performance of Prime Minister Ismael Haniyyeh as good.
- If a presidential election took place, Abbas would win over Haniyyeh and Mashal; Marwan Barghouthi would also win over the two Hamas candidates.
- In case the parliamentary elections were conducted today, Fateh list would obtain 43% of the vote, Hamas list would obtain 29%, and a unified list for the left and the independents would obtain 15%.

Part Two: Analysis of Results:

First: Living Conditions

- 51% of respondents described the economic situation of their households as (bad) or (very bad), while 17% described the economic situation of their households as (good) or (very good). 33% described it as fair.
- 58% of the respondents in Gaza described the economic situation of their households as (bad) or (very bad).
- 42% of respondents stated that they are optimistic about the future, while 23% of respondents stated that their feeling is between optimism and pessimism. 35% of respondents stated that they are pessimistic about the future.
- At the same time, 77% of respondents think that the Palestinian society is not going in the right direction. This is compared with 62% last September.

Second: Assessment of Palestinian leadership

- 31% of respondents assessed the performance of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas as good, while 30% as fair and 39% as weak.
- 41% of respondents assessed the performance of Prime Minister Ismael Haniyyeh as good, while 29% as fair and 30% as weak.

Third: Attitudes towards the current crisis: A majority places blame on both Fateh and Hamas for the current crisis; A National Unity Government is perceived as the way out.

- When asking the respondents about the suggestions to go beyond the current crisis, 48% of respondents see the solution in forming a National Unity Government on the basis of the National Reconciliation Document. In comparison, 25% see the solution in conducting a new Presidential and parliamentary election. 15% support maintaining the current government, while 10% of respondents support a one year transitional government of technocrats.
- 54% of respondents blame both Fateh and Hamas for the failure of reaching a National Unity Government. In addition, 22% blame Fateh and 17% blame Hamas.
- 50% of respondents blame both Fateh and Hamas the killings, clashes and assassinations. 16% blame Hamas and 15% Fateh. In Gaza, 22% blame Hamas while 13% blame Fateh.

Fourth: Palestinian elections: A continuous decline in the popularity of Hamas; Fateh's popularity is consistent. Respondents are divided in regard to the Palestinian President call for early Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

- Respondents were divided in regard to the call of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to conduct early elections; 47% of respondents support the call, while 46% oppose it.
- However, 64% of respondents state that they will participate in the Presidential elections in case it was conducted.

Presidential Elections: Different Scenarios

1. First Scenario: Competition between 12 Palestinian personalities

When asking the respondents who expressed their willingness to participate in presidential elections, the results were as follows:

- In total, 4 Fateh personalities received 43% of the vote, while 4 Hamas personalities received 28%. 9% voted for independent and leftists personalities.
- The results for the different personalities were as follows: Ismael Haniyyeh (Hamas) received 24%, Mahmoud Abbas and Marwan Barghouthi (Fateh) received 18% each, Mohammad Dahlan (Fateh) received 7%, Mustafa Barghouthi (Mubadara) received 5%, Khalid Mashal (Hamas) received 3%, Saeb Arekat (Fateh) and Ahmad Sadaat (PFLP) received 2% each. The rest of the candidates don't get significant percentages.
- 17% of respondents stated that they are (undecided)

2. In case of a two-way Presidential race, the results were as follows:

Second Scenario: Abbas wins over Mashal (18 points difference)

Mahmoud Abbas	%50
Khalid Mashal	%32
Undecided	%18

Third Scenario: Abbas wins over Haniyyeh (8 points difference)

Mahmoud Abbas	%47
Ismael Haniyyeh	%39
Undecided	%14

Fourth Scenario: Marwan Barghouthi wins over Ismael Haniyyeh (15 points difference)

Marwan Barghouthi	%51
Ismael Haniyyeh	%36
Undecided	%13

Parliamentary Elections: Fateh (43%), Hamas (31%), Others (15%)

- 66% of respondents stated that they will participate in Parliamentary elections in case they took place now.

Scenario 1: All respondents

- In case new parliamentary elections took place (today, with the same electoral lists of the last parliamentary elections, and in consideration of all respondents regardless of willingness to participate), the results were as follows: Fateh receives 34% of votes, same as its results of last September. Hamas receives 24%. The results of the different opinion polls indicate significant decline in the percentage of Hamas voters; the percentage was 50% last April, 37% in June, and 31% in September. The decline in the popularity of Hamas didn't imply any increase in the popularity of other parties. Besides, the election results will greatly depend on how the (undecided) will vote and the nature of voters who vote on elections day. Moreover, this analysis applies only to the (proportional national lists) and not on the level of districts.
- In the same context, the other parties get approximately 8%.
- The percentage of respondents who said that they will not participate in elections reaches 21%, and the (undecided) comprise about 12%.

Scenario 2: Only those who will participate in the election

- If we however calculate the vote on the basis of those who declared that they will vote, Fateh receives 43% of votes and thus maintaining the percentage it obtained in last elections, while Hamas receives 31% (13 points less than last January). The other electoral lists receive 11%.
- The (undecided) comprise 16%.

Scenario 3: A Three – way race

- In case three electoral lists compete for the parliamentary elections, the results didn't differ that much but for a unified list from the leftists and the independents; Fateh still receives 43%, Hamas receives 29%, while a unified list of leftists and independents receives 15%.
- The percentage of those who didn't decide to whom to vote reaches 12%.

Annex 1

Results of Opinion Poll # 29

Living Conditions Evaluation of President and Prime Minister The Current Events Elections

Date of Field Work: 21-22/12/2006

Date of Publication: 26/12/2006

Sample size: 1200 Palestinians (West Bank and Gaza Strip)

Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$

Section One : Living Conditions			
	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
<i>1. How do you describe the current economic situation of your family?</i>			

1) Very good	2.7	2.8	2.5
2) Good	13.9	15.1	11.6
3) Fair	32.6	35.2	27.8
4) Bad	28.6	27.7	30.4
5) Very Bad	22.2	19.2	27.8

2. Are you optimistic or pessimistic?

1) Optimistic	42.1	36.3	53.0
2) In between	22.7	25.2	17.8
3) Pessimistic	34.6	38.2	27.7
4) I don't know	0.7	0.3	1.5

3. Do you believe that Palestinian society is heading in the right direction?

1) Yes	16.7	13.5	22.7
2) No	77.2	78.9	74.0
3) I don't know	6.1	7.6	3.3

Section Two : Evaluation of President and Prime Minister

4. How do you evaluate the performance of President Mahmoud Abbas?

1) Good	30.7	27.7	36.5
2) Average	30.0	31.3	27.6
3) Poor	39.3	41.1	35.9

5. How do you evaluate the performance of Prime Minister Ismael Hanneya?

1) Good	41.4	37.5	48.5
2) Average	28.8	29.1	28.1
3) Poor	29.9	33.3	23.4

Section Three : The Current Events

6. Who do you believe is responsible for the failure to reach a unity government?

1) Hamas	16.5	16.3	16.9
2) Fateh	22.4	22.9	21.6
3) Both	53.7	52.4	56.2
4) Don't know	7.3	8.4	5.2

7. Who do you believe is responsible for the violent confrontations and assassinations in the Palestinian Territories?

1) Hamas	16.0	12.8	22.2
2) Fateh	14.6	15.4	13.0
3) Both	49.5	53.1	42.7
4) Others	15.0	13.1	18.4
5) Don't know	4.9	5.6	3.6

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
8. Which of the following proposals is most appropriate to resolve the current crisis?			
1) A one-year transitional government comprised of professionals	9.9	8.7	12.1
2) A new presidential and legislative election	25.1	26.5	22.4
3) A government composed of all political parties based on the (National Reconciliation Document)	47.8	45.3	52.5
4) Keep the government as is	14.9	16.2	12.4
5) Others	2.4	3.4	0.7
9. In his address (16/12/2006), President Mahmoud Abbas called for presidential and legislative elections as a means to go beyond the current situation, do you support or oppose his call?			
1) Support	47.1	47.8	45.8
2) Oppose	46.0	44.0	49.6
3) No opinion	6.9	8.2	4.5
10. If presidential elections took place in the coming future, would you participate?			
1) Yes	63.7	62.0	66.9
2) No	28.9	30.3	26.3
3) Undecided	7.4	7.7	6.7
11. If presidential elections took place in the coming future, which one of the following personalities would you vote for?			
1) Bassam Al Salhi	0.5	0.2	1.0
2) Khaled Meshal	3.2	3.6	2.5
3) Saeb Ireakat	2.3	2.3	2.3
4) Marwan Brghouthy	17.9	20.4	13.5
5) Ismael Hanneya	24.2	21.3	29.1
6) Mustafa Barghouthy	5.2	4.8	5.8
7) Mohammed Dahlan	6.9	4.0	11.8
8) Mahmoud Azzahar	0.7	0.8	0.5
9) Hanan Ashrawi	1.6	1.5	1.8
10) Mahmoud Al Ramahi	0.1	0.1	0.0
11) Ahmad Sadat	2.1	2.0	2.3
12) Mahmoud Abbas	18.0	18.2	17.6
13) Undecided	17.4	20.7	11.8
12. If only the following candidates ran for presidential elections, who would you vote for?			
1) Mahmoud Abbas	49.8	46.4	55.9

2) Khaled Meshal	31.8	32.2	31.3
3) Undecided	18.4	21.4	12.8

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
13. If only the following candidates ran for presidential elections, who would you vote for?			
1) Mahmoud Abbas	47.2	45.2	50.7
2) Ismael Hanneya	39.3	38.8	40.3
3) Undecided	13.5	16.0	9.1
14. If only the following candidates ran for presidential elections, who would you vote for?			
1) Marwan Barghouthy	51.3	50.7	52.3
2) Ismael Hanneya	36.1	35.4	37.4
3) Undecided	12.6	14.0	10.3
15. If legislative elections took place in the coming future, would you participate?			
1) Yes	65.8	64.2	68.8
2) No	24.8	25.4	23.6
3) Undecided	9.4	10.4	7.6

16. If a new legislative election was carried out today, which bloc would you vote for?			
1) Al Badil	1.0	0.7	1.3
2) Independent Palestine	4.1	5.3	2.1
3) Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa	2.4	2.5	2.2
4) Martyr Abu al Abbas	0.2	0.3	0.0
5) Freedom and Social Justice	0.7	0.7	0.6
6) Change and Reform (Hamas)	30.6	29.3	32.8
7) National Coalition for Justice and Democracy	0.0	0.1	0.0
8) The Third Way	1.0	0.6	1.6
9) Freedom and Independence	0.3	0.4	0.2
10) Social Justice	0.9	1.2	0.3
11) Fateh	43.3	41.6	46.3
12) Undecided	15.6	17.3	12.5
17. If only the following lists ran for elections, which one would you vote for?			
1) Fateh	43.3	42.3	45.2
2) Hamas	29.4	29.6	29.2
3) A united list composed of PFLP, DFLP, PPP, Mubadara, Nidal and other independence	15.1	14.3	16.5
4) Undecided	12.1	13.8	9.2

Annex (2) : Sample distribution :

Region		Type of locality		Refugee Status	
West Bank	65.6	City	56.7	Refugee	43.8
Gaza Strip	34.4	Village- town	28.9	Non-refugee	56.2
Governorate		Camp	14.4	Education	
Jenin	7.1	Gender		Illiterate	7.9
Tubas	1.1	Male	50.4	Preparatory	15.5
Tulkarm	3.8	Female	49.6	Elementary	24.3
Nablus	10.2	Marital status		Secondary	32.2
Qalqilya	3.0	Single	23.1	Diploma	7.1
Salfit	1.0	Married	72.8	B.A. or more	13.1
Jericho	2.9	Others	4.2	Place of Residence prior to 1994	
Ramallah	10.2	Age			
Jerusalem	8.3	18-22	19.9		
Bethlehem	4.1	23-27	16.5	West Bank & Gaza	91.1
Hebron	13.8	28-32	14.0	Abroad	8.9
North Gaza	6.1	33-37	11.8	Monthly Income (NIS)*	
Gaza City	11.8	38-42	9.8		No Income
Deir al-Balah	4.7	43-47	7.9	Less than 700	22.1
Khan Younis	8.2	48-52	5.6	700-1000	21.3
Rafah	3.8	> 52	14.5	1001-1700	18.2
Religiosity		Employment status		1701-2500	14.7
Government Sector	34.8	Working	34.8	2501-3000	7.0
Private Sector	59.0	Not Working	65.2	More than 3000	8.8
Non- Government Sector	6.2				
1 \$ = 4.2 NIS					