



**Results of an Opinion Poll
West Bank and Gaza Strip
(Press Release)**

*The Uprising
President Abbas' Speech at the U.N.
Living Conditions
Palestinian Leadership
Popularity of Political Factions
Elections*

**Released: November 5, 2015
Fieldwork: 21-23 October, 2015
Sample Size: 1,200 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip
Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$**

Quality Research ... Matters

Introduction

On October 21 – 23, AWRAD conducted a poll of 1,200 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The poll was carried out in the aftermath of President Mahmoud Abbas' September 30th address to the U.N. General Assembly in which he declared - on the same day the Palestinian flag was officially raised at the U.N. - that the Palestinian Authority was no longer bound by mutual agreements with Israel and demanded international protection. Both Abbas' speech and the survey occurred against a backdrop of increased tensions between Palestinians and Israelis in Jerusalem and across the Palestinian territories, stemming from a series of incidents, centered around the holy sites in the Old City, which resulted in protests and casualties.

All socioeconomic groups are represented in the poll; for more details on the sample please refer to www.awrad.org. The margin of error for the poll is (\pm) 3 percent. The survey was carried out by a research team under the supervision of Dr. Nader Said-Foqahaa.

Highlights

- 56 percent of Palestinians are optimistic about the future.
- 64 percent of West Bank respondents say the security situation in their region has deteriorated.
- Two thirds of respondents believe that it is unlikely President Abbas will terminate provisions of the Oslo Accords.
- 53 percent continues to support a two-state solution.
- Popular support for a new Intifada has risen from 26 percent in July 2015 to 63 percent.
- A third of respondents believe that ending security cooperation with Israel is the top priority for Palestinian leadership.
- A majority (83 percent) supports the immediate conduct of legislative and presidential elections.
- If legislative elections took place today, 40 percent are undecided or will not vote.
- In a hypothetical presidential election, Abbas and Haniyeh are statistically even.

Optimism, pessimism: West Bank versus Gaza

While violence has led some observers to declare that a "Third Intifada" or uprising is underway, 49 percent of respondents, overall, say that things in Palestine are heading in the right direction, compared to 35 percent in July 2015. In the West Bank, the percentage reaches 59 percent. In Gaza, however, 66 percent say things are moving in the *wrong* direction. The increase in the overall positive evaluation of current trends is matched by opinions about future prospects, with 56 percent of Palestinians optimistic about the future. However, in Gaza (49 percent), optimism is slightly lower when compared to the West Bank (60 percent).

The improvement in public attitudes towards the present and future is likely due to two factors: 1) a belief that positive changes may result from the current crisis; and 2) a sense that

the community must remain positive in response to current challenges. Similar sentiments in response to crisis were last observed during the Gaza conflict in 2014.

Living conditions continue to deteriorate, especially in Gaza

In contrast to the positive indicators cited above, 54 percent of respondents report that their family's economic conditions have worsened over the past year, while 38 percent say they have stayed the same. In Gaza, 61 percent say their family's condition has worsened, 12 points higher than in the West Bank.

Similarly, 57 percent believe the security situation in their region has deteriorated, with the highest agreement in the West Bank (64 percent), the location for most of the recent clashes and security incidents.

Mixed response to President Abbas' UN appearance

While two thirds of respondents declare that they listened (fully or partially) to the speech delivered by President Abbas before the U.N. General Assembly on September 30, opinions of the speech and its implications are mixed. Specifically, 32 percent have a positive opinion of the speech; 39 percent consider it fair; and 28 percent negative. Of note, only 25 percent believe that the speech will advance the prospect of statehood; 45 percent say that the speech will have no impact; and 23 percent that it will impede it.

Additionally, two thirds of respondents believe that it is unlikely that President Abbas will terminate aspects of the Oslo Accords signed in 1993 such as security coordination or economic cooperation with Israel, or even dissolve the Palestinian Authority (PA) itself; despite 64 percent supporting the annulment of the Accords.

Majority supports a two-state solution

While 54 percent believe that Palestinians and Israelis are further from peace than when the Oslo Accords were signed 22 years ago, 53 percent continues to support a two-state solution, with support equal among West Bank and Gaza respondents. Nevertheless, support for Hamas' recognition of Israel at the present time remains low even if it were to lead to improved living conditions in Gaza. Only 25 percent would support such a move, with opposition to recognition higher in the West Bank (74 percent) than in Gaza (60 percent).

Support for the "uprising"

Since the outbreak of recent events, there has been a notable increase in popular support for a new Intifada or uprising - from 26 percent in July 2015 to 63 percent at present. One third of respondents, however, continue to express opposition. Additionally, 62 percent of respondents believe that Palestinians are ready and equipped to begin a new Intifada, with 58 percent believing that an uprising would advance the Palestinian goal of statehood. Both of these findings are an increase from surveys conducted prior to the recent round of violence, when a majority expressed opposition to a "Third Intifada."

Regardless of the current increased support for a new uprising, only a third of respondents say they would participate in demonstrations called for by either Fatah or Hamas. This finding is consistent with polls conducted prior to the recent disturbances, but could also

reflect the common view that current events are not organized along partisan lines but are spontaneous.

Approaches to achieving statehood

In terms of how best to pursue independence, 36 percent prefer the approach advocated by the PLO and President Abbas. In contrast, 28 percent opt for the approach advocated by Hamas and Khaled Meshal. 36 percent prefer neither. Of note, a majority of respondents (54 percent) still select non-violent means, if given the choice, namely: internationalizing the struggle (14 percent); non-violent protest (14 percent); immediate return to negotiations (14 percent); and dissolving the Palestinian Authority (12 percent). However, at the present time, 45 percent express belief that resumption of armed struggle constitutes the best approach.

Top priorities for the leadership

Against the backdrop of renewed violence, respondents identify ending security cooperation with Israel as the top priority (30 percent) for President Abbas. The second priority is the formation of a national unity government (27 percent), followed by seeking international action to stop further violence and supporting the demonstrators (17 percent each). Only 9 percent believe that the top priority should be an immediate return to negotiations.

The Presidency

On repeated occasions, President Abbas has hinted about a possible retirement. When asked if the President will step down, 62 percent do not believe that he will. However, if the President were to retire, Palestinians believe that a number of leaders (from a list) are the most likely to succeed him: Rami Hamdallah, Ismail Haniyeh and Mohamad Dahlan (15 percent each), followed by Mustafa Barghouhti (12 percent), Khaled Meshal (10 percent), Saeb Erekat (7 percent) and Salam Fayyad (5 percent). In an open-ended follow up question, 18 percent choose Marwan Barghouthi.

In the event of Abbas' retirement as president of the Palestinian Authority, 77 percent believe that his replacement should be chosen through a national election. In contrast, 12 percent believe that a new president should be selected by agreement between all political parties; 4 percent by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC); and 3 percent by the PLO. Only 2 percent believe that President Abbas himself should select a successor [Note: Interest in the issue of mechanisms for succession derives from recent movements within the leadership of the PLO Executive that some observers have surmised could indicate potential succession scenarios].

If Abbas were to step down, respondents believe his successor's main priority should be national reconciliation (38 percent), followed by achieving an independent state (32 percent); these two are trailed by improving the economy (13 percent), reducing unemployment and creating jobs (9 percent) and reducing corruption (4 percent). The level of interest in economic issues (improving the economy and creating jobs, combined) is higher in Gaza (29 percent) than in the West Bank (18 percent).

Support for immediate elections

A majority (83 percent) of West Bank and Gaza respondents support the immediate conduct of legislative and presidential elections. Support for elections is greater in Gaza (94 percent) than the West Bank (77 percent).

40 percent in the West Bank are undecided or will not vote

In hypothetical legislative elections, Fatah continues to be the most popular bloc among the public, garnering 34 percent. The popularity of Fatah is greater in Gaza (43 percent) than in the West Bank (29 percent), where it has fallen to an historic low. In contrast, 23 percent declare that they would support Hamas: 26 percent in Gaza, 22 percent in the West Bank. One third of all respondents say that they are undecided or will not vote. The rate of indecision reaches 40 percent in the West Bank and 23 percent in Gaza.

In a head-to-head presidential race, President Abbas bests Ismail Haniyeh, 32 percent to 30 percent, which is within the margin of error. However, in Gaza, the spread is much greater, with Abbas receiving 41 percent, compared to Haniyeh's 29 percent.



Results of an Opinion Poll West Bank and Gaza Strip (Tables)

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1. In general, would you say that things in Palestine are heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Right direction	59.3%	30.7%	48.6%
Wrong direction	36.7%	66.2%	47.8%
Don't know\no opinion	4.0%	3.1%	3.7%

2. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Optimistic	60.2%	49.3%	56.1%
Pessimistic	39.0%	49.6%	43.0%
Don't know	0.8%	1.1%	0.9%

3. Is your family's economic situation better or worse than it was a year ago?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Better	9.6%	6.7%	8.5%
Stayed the same	40.8%	32.2%	37.6%
Worse	49.3%	60.9%	53.7%
Don't know	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%

4. Do you feel that internal security in your region has improved or diminished during the past year?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Improved	9.2%	12.0%	10.3%
Stayed the same	26.7%	42.0%	32.4%
Diminished	63.9%	44.2%	56.5%
Don't know	0.3%	1.8%	0.8%

5. Which government would you prefer to govern in your region?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Fatah-led, Palestinian Authority	26.0%	38.2%	30.6%
Hamas-led	23.9%	24.4%	24.1%
Neither	43.3%	36.2%	40.6%
Don't Know	6.8%	1.1%	4.7%

6. In your opinion, should Hamas recognize Israel if it would lead to improved living conditions in Gaza, including the building of a new port, airport and increased access to foreign markets for Gazan goods?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	19.3%	34.4%	25.0%
No	73.9%	59.6%	68.5%
Don't Know	6.8%	6.0%	6.5%

7. Did you listen to the speech of President Mahmoud Abbas before the United Nations General Assembly?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes, in full	39.5%	22.4%	33.1%
Yes, partially	29.7%	39.1%	33.3%
No	30.8%	38.4%	33.7%

8. If (yes, in full) or (yes, partially), in general, how would you evaluate the speech?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Positive	29.3%	37.5%	32.2%
Fair	40.7%	35.7%	39.0%
Negative	28.1%	26.4%	27.5%
Don't know	1.9%	0.4%	1.4%

9. In the speech, President Mahmoud Abbas said the PA was no longer bound by the Oslo Accords. Do you believe this will advance or impede Palestinian statehood?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Advance	26.0%	23.8%	25.1%
Impede	22.2%	24.9%	23.2%
Have no effect	46.2%	42.9%	44.9%
Don't know	5.7%	8.4%	6.7%

10. Do you believe President Abbas will terminate the following provisions of the Oslo Accords?

		West Bank	Gaza	Total
Security coordination	Very unlikely	36.6%	28.0%	33.4%
	Somewhat unlikely	32.0%	32.9%	32.4%
	Somewhat likely	22.0%	29.6%	24.9%
	Very likely	4.7%	6.2%	5.3%
	Don't know	4.7%	3.3%	4.2%
Economic cooperation	Very unlikely	35.4%	29.6%	33.2%
	Somewhat unlikely	34.4%	35.6%	34.9%
	Somewhat likely	21.2%	25.3%	22.8%
	Very likely	4.7%	6.0%	5.2%
	Don't know	4.3%	3.6%	4.0%
The Palestinian Authority itself	Very unlikely	37.7%	29.8%	34.7%
	Somewhat unlikely	33.5%	36.7%	34.7%
	Somewhat likely	19.0%	24.2%	20.9%
	Very likely	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%
	Don't know	5.1%	4.4%	4.8%

11. Since the signing of the Oslo Accords (1993), do you believe that Palestinians and Israelis are closer to or further from peace?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Closer	39.7%	38.7%	39.3%
Further	53.6%	55.1%	54.2%
Don't know	6.7%	6.2%	6.5%

12. Do you support or oppose annulling the Oslo Accords?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Support	67.2%	59.6%	64.4%
Oppose	24.9%	32.7%	27.8%
Don't know	7.9%	7.8%	7.8%

13. Are you aware that the Palestinian flag was raised for the first time at the United Nations last week?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	75.4%	80.0%	77.1%
No	24.6%	20.0%	22.9%

14. Do you believe that the raising of the flag at the UN will advance the goal of an independent state?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	62.8%	65.8%	63.9%
No	32.4%	25.1%	29.7%
Don't know	4.8%	9.1%	6.4%

15. Do you support a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	53.1%	53.1%	53.1%
No	43.9%	42.7%	43.4%
Don't know	3.1%	4.2%	3.5%

16. In light of the recent events in the West Bank and Gaza, how likely or unlikely do you believe a Third Intifada is?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Very likely	52.1%	61.3%	55.6%
Somewhat likely	32.5%	29.1%	31.3%
Somewhat unlikely	10.8%	6.7%	9.3%
Very unlikely	3.3%	2.7%	3.1%
Don't know	1.2%	0.2%	0.8%

17. At this moment, do you support or oppose a Third Intifada?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Support	60.1%	68.4%	63.3%
Oppose	36.0%	28.0%	33.0%
Don't know	3.9%	3.6%	3.8%

18. Would you participate in demonstrations if called to by Hamas?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	30.8%	27.6%	29.6%
No	64.8%	69.8%	66.7%
Don't know	4.4%	2.7%	3.8%

19. Would you participate in demonstrations if called to by Fatah?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	32.5%	31.8%	32.3%
No	63.2%	64.9%	63.8%

Don't know	4.3%	3.3%	3.9%
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20. Of the following, and with respect to previous Palestinian experience, which is the approach you support most at the present time?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Internationalizing the struggle	13.5%	15.8%	14.3%
Resumption of armed struggle	41.3%	52.0%	45.3%
Nonviolent protests	15.1%	10.9%	13.5%
Immediate return to negotiations	14.4%	12.2%	13.6%
Dissolving the Palestinian Authority	13.8%	8.2%	11.7%
Other	2.0%	0.9%	1.6%

21. Do you believe that Palestinians are ready/equipped to enter into a new Intifada?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Ready/equipped	57.9%	69.3%	62.2%
Not ready/equipped	37.2%	29.1%	34.2%
Don't know	4.8%	1.6%	3.6%

22. Do you believe that a new Intifada would advance or impede the Palestinian goal of statehood?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Advance	55.3%	61.1%	57.5%
Impede	32.0%	29.6%	31.1%
Don't know	12.7%	9.3%	11.4%

23. Which political party most closely represents your point of view on national, social and economic issues?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
DFLP	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%
Hizb al Tahrir	0.9%	0.2%	0.7%
Islamic Jihad	2.9%	3.1%	3.0%
PFLP	2.4%	3.1%	2.7%
Palestinian Struggle Front	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%
Al Mubadara	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%
Hamas	19.0%	26.9%	22.0%
Fatah	28.6%	41.6%	33.5%
PPP	0.8%	0.0%	0.5%
Other	2.5%	0.9%	1.9%
I did not decide yet	39.0%	21.3%	32.4%
I will not vote	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%

24. Which of the approaches to achieving independence do you prefer?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
The approach advocated by the PLO and President Mahmoud Abbas	31.6%	44.0%	36.3%
The approach advocated by Hamas and Khaled Meshal	27.6%	28.2%	27.8%
Other	14.5%	21.8%	17.3%
Don't know	26.3%	6.0%	18.7%

25. What should President Mahmoud Abbas' top priority be in light of current events?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Seeking international action to stop further violence	17.3%	17.1%	17.3%
Immediate return to negotiations	9.7%	8.0%	9.1%
Ending security cooperation with Israel	30.5%	28.0%	29.6%
Supporting the demonstrators	16.4%	17.1%	16.7%
Forming a national unity government	26.0%	29.8%	27.4%

26. President Mahmoud Abbas has hinted at his retirement. Do you believe that he will step down as President of the PA in the near future?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	28.1%	31.6%	29.4%
No	63.8%	59.3%	62.1%
Don't know	8.1%	9.1%	8.5%

27. If President Mahmoud Abbas retires, who do you think will become the next president of the PA?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Rami Hamadallah	18.0%	9.6%	14.8%
Khaled Meshal	7.1%	14.2%	9.8%
Ismail Haniyeh	17.3%	11.3%	15.1%
Mustafa Barghouthi	11.2%	14.4%	12.4%
Hanan Ashrawi	1.5%	1.6%	1.5%
Saeb Erekat	6.4%	6.9%	6.6%
Majed Faraj	3.1%	0.2%	2.0%
Sabri Saidam	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%
Yaser Abed Rabbo	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Salam Fayyad	4.4%	5.3%	4.8%
Jebreel Rejoub	2.1%	0.9%	1.7%
Mohammad Dahlan	9.3%	24.4%	15.0%
Don't know/no opinion	17.7%	9.1%	14.5%

28. Others?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Marwan Barghouthi	27.5%	2.0%	17.6%
Don't know/no one/others	72.5%	98.0%	82.4%

29. If President Mahmoud Abbas were to step down as president of the PA, which of the following do you believe is the best means of determining a successor?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
A national presidential election	75.3%	79.6%	76.9%
Selection by the PLO	3.3%	2.4%	3.0%
Designation by President M. Abbas	2.0%	1.3%	1.8%
Selection by the PLC	3.6%	4.9%	4.1%
Selection by agreement among all political parties	14.0%	9.6%	12.3%
Don't know	1.7%	2.2%	1.9%

30. If a new president assumes office, what should be the most important priority of the new administration?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Reconciliation	35.5%	41.3%	37.7%
Achieving a state	36.7%	22.9%	31.5%
Reducing unemployment and job creation	7.7%	12.2%	9.4%
Improving the economy	10.1%	16.7%	12.6%
Improving government services	1.7%	3.6%	2.4%
Reducing corruption	4.0%	2.9%	3.6%
Expanding civil and political freedoms	2.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Boosting Palestine abroad	2.1%	0.4%	1.5%
Don't know	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%

31. Do you support the immediate conduct of legislative elections in the West Bank and Gaza?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	76.0%	93.8%	82.7%
No	20.7%	6.0%	15.2%
Don't know	3.3%	0.2%	2.2%

32. Do you support the immediate conduct of a presidential election in the West Bank and Gaza?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
Yes	76.8%	92.4%	82.7%
No	19.9%	7.1%	15.1%
Don't know	3.3%	0.4%	2.3%

33. If a hypothetical presidential election were held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
President Mahmoud Abbas	27.3%	40.9%	32.4%
Ismail Haniyeh	30.5%	28.7%	29.8%
Don't know/no opinion	13.5%	4.9%	10.3%
I will not vote	28.7%	25.6%	27.5%

34. If a hypothetical legislative election were held today, which of the following parties would you vote for?

	West Bank	Gaza	Total
DFLP	1.6%	0.9%	1.3%
Hizb al Tahrir	0.9%	0.2%	0.7%
Islamic Jihad	2.3%	2.2%	2.3%
PFLP	1.7%	4.2%	2.7%
Palestinian Struggle Front	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Al Mubadara	1.7%	0.9%	1.4%
 Hamas	21.6%	25.6%	23.1%
Fatah	28.5%	43.1%	34.0%
PPP	0.9%		0.6%
Other	1.9%	1.3%	1.7%
I did not decide yet	19.9%	12.4%	17.1%
I will not vote	18.5%	8.9%	14.9%

Sample Distribution (%)

District	%	Gender	%
Jenin	6.7	Male	50.0
Tulkarm	5.0	Female	50.0
Qalqilya	1.7	Age	%
Nablus	8.3	18-30	38.8
Salfit	1.6	31-40	25.1
Tubas	1.6	41+	36.2
Ramallah & Al Bireh	8.3	Marital Status	%
Jerusalem	10.0	Single	22.1
Jericho	1.8	Married	73.3
Bethlehem	4.8	Other	4.7
Hebron	12.8	Refugee status	%
Jabalya	7.2	Refugee	45.8
Gaza	14.6	Non-refugee	54.2
Deir Al Balah	5.3	Educational level	%
Khan Yunis	5.3	Up to 9 years	23.5
Rafah	5.3	Secondary (10-12)	42.8
Residence	%	More than 12 years	33.7
City	46.7	Occupation	%
Village	29.4	Laborer	12.2
Refugee Camp	23.9	Employee	15.4
Work Sector	%	Farmer	2.3
Government	27.7	Merchant	5.8
Private	65.9	Professional	0.6
NGOs	2.4	Craftsman	3.3
Other	3.9	Student	10.3
Income	%	Housewife	38.8
Above average	10.9	Does not work	10.0
Average	60.4	Retired	1.4
Below average	28.7		
Region	%		
West Bank	62.5		
Gaza	37.5		