

Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

Palestinian Public Opinion Poll No (46)

27-31 January 2000

The Peace Process, the "Petition of the Twenty," PLC and PA performance, Status of Democracy and Corruption, Elections for the President and Vice President, and Political Affiliation

1. The Peace Process

- **71% support the current peace process and 25% oppose it**
- **44% support armed attacks against Israelis and 49% oppose them**
- **Level of confidence in Barak's government continues to drop reaching 13%, and 77% do not trust it**
- **Only 33% believe that it is possible to reach a mutually acceptable permanent settlement to all issues of final status negotiations and 59% do not believe that it is possible**
- **46% expect, and 28% do not expect, the current peace process to lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the near future**
- **49% support the establishment of a Palestinian state in September 2000 even without an agreement with Israel and 38% prefer to wait until a mutual Israeli-Palestinian agreement is reached**
- **53% describe their economic conditions as worse than they were before the peace process and 9% describe them as better**
- **Optimism about the future remains high at 63% and pessimism at 31%**

The overall picture emerging from the values of the peace indicators measured in this poll shows a growing discontent with the peace process among Palestinians. Despite the fact that the percentage of support for the current peace process remains unchanged as in the February 2000 poll (71%), the results show an increase in the percentage of support for armed attacks against Israelis from 39% to 44% during the same period. Confidence in Barak's government continues its slow decrease reaching 13% in this poll. Confidence in Barak's government peaked in July 1999 reaching 29%.

The results also show a decline in the percentage of those who believe that the current peace process will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the near future from 50% in December 1999 to 46% in this poll. The percentage of those who describe their economic condition today as being worse than it was before the start of the peace process also rose from 51% to 53%, and the percentage of those who describe their conditions as being better than before declined from 13% to 9% during the same period. A slight increase has also been

recorded in the percentage of those who do not believe that it is possible to reach a mutually acceptable solution to issues of final status negotiations reaching 59% in this poll.

Despite the change in the peace indicators during the past few months, the level of optimism regarding Palestinian future remains high at 63%. Also, the percentage of those who support the establishment of a Palestinian state in September 2000 even without an agreement with Israel remains unchanged at 49%.

2. Bir Zeit University Incident:

- **30% supported demonstration and stone throwing by Bir Zeit University students at the French Prime Minister while 38% supported the demonstration and opposed the stone throwing, and 14% opposed both the demonstration and the stone throwing**
- **66% opposed the PA step of arresting Bir Zeit University students accused of throwing stones at the French Prime Minister while 14% supported it**
- **30% view, and 47% do not view, France as a friend of the Palestinian people**

The results show a wide spread support for Bir Zeit University students who were arrested by the Palestinian security services in the aftermath of demonstrations and stone throwing at the French Prime Minister Jospin during his visit to the university. These demonstrations and the stone throwing reflected students' anger at Jospin's characterization of Hizbullah attacks against Israelis as acts of terrorism. Nonetheless, only 30% supported, while 52% opposed, the stone throwing, and 38% supported the demonstrations alone.

Support for the demonstrations and stone throwing increases in Rafah (41%) and Hebron (39%) and decreases in Jabalia and Khanyounis (25% each) and Bethlehem (26%). Support also increases among men (34%) compared to women (26%); among holders of BA degree (35%) compared to those with elementary education (28%); among the unemployed (39%) and students (36%) compared to employees (25%) and housewives (26%); and among supporters of Hamas (44%) and the PFLP (39%) compared to supporters of Fateh (26%).

The results also show that two thirds of the Palestinians opposed the step taken by the Palestinian Authority in arresting Bir Zeit University students who were accused of participating in the stone throwing. The level of opposition to the PA step increases in the West Bank (69%) compared to the Gaza Strip (62%); in Rafah (86%), Ramallah (77%) Jerusalem (78%) and Hebron (70%) compared to Jabalia (50%) and Khanyounis (52%). It also increases among men (68%) compared to women (64%); among residents of refugee camps (71%) compared to residents of cities and towns (65%); among holders of BA degree (72%) compared to illiterates (55%); among students (79%) compared to housewives (59%); among those with the highest income (66%) compared to those with the lowest income (61%); and among supporters of Hamas and the PFLP (72% each) compared to supporters of Fateh (61%).

Finally, the results show an unexpectedly high level of belief (47%) that France is not a friend of the Palestinian People, while the percentage of those who believe that it is a friend does not exceed 30%. It is possible that this result may only reflect a Palestinian response to the statement made by Jospin and does not reflect the normal evaluation of the status of

France as seen by the Palestinians especially in light of the declared French support for Palestinian rights. The belief that France is a friend increases in the Gaza Strip (33%) compared to the West Bank (28%); in Ramallah (46%) and Khanyounis (43%) compared to Jabalia (20%) and Hebron (24%); among men (35%) compared to women (24%); among residents of cities and towns (31%) compared to residents of refugee camps (23%); among holders of BA degree (36%) compared to illiterates (23%); among professionals (57%) and students (42%) compared to housewives (21%) and craftsmen (23%); among those with the highest income (53%) compared to those with the lowest income (27%); and among supporters of Fateh (42%) compared to supporters of Hamas (15%).

3. Domestic Conditions: Perception of Corruption and Democracy:

- **71% believe that corruption exists in PA institutions**
- **66% of those who believe in the existence of corruption believe that it will increase or remain the same in the future**
- **Positive evaluation of Palestinian democracy drops to 22%**
- **65% believe that people can not criticize the PA without fear**

The results show negative trends in all indicators of domestic conditions. The percentage of those who believe that corruption exists in PA institutions increased from 60% in the last poll in February 2000 to 71% in this poll. The percentage of those who believe that corruption will increase or remain the same increased from 64% to 66% during the same period. The percentage of the positive evaluation of Palestinian democracy decreased from 28% in February to 22% in this poll. Finally, the percentage of those who believe that people can not criticize the PA without fear increased from 62% to 65% during the same period.

These results, and those in the next section, are the worst to be recorded since 1996. They reflect the frustrating conditions of the Palestinians since the Petition of the Twenty including the events of the past few weeks such as the Bir Zeit university incident, the teachers' strike, and the events at al Deheisha refugee camp in the aftermath of the Pope's visit.

4. Elections for the President and vice-President and Political Affiliation:

- **In elections for the presidency, Arafat's popularity drops to 39% for the first time since 1994, while Haider Abdul Shafi receives 12% and Ahmad Yasin 14%**
- **In elections for the vice-presidency among four candidates, Abdul Shafi receives the largest percentage (37%) followed by Faisal al Hussein (23%), Ahmad Qurie' (13%), and Mahmud Abbas (12%)**
- **Fateh receives the support of 35%, Hamas 13%, PFLP 3%, Islamic Jihad 4%, and the non-affiliated 39%**

The results show a significant decline in the popularity of Yasir Arafat from 47% last February to 39% in this poll. The current percentage is the worst since we began asking about Arafat's popularity in 1994. The lowest percentage recorded in the past was 43%. The

popularity of Haidar Abdul Shafi remained unchanged at 12% while that of Ahmad Yasin increased from 10% last February to 14% in this poll.

Arafat's popularity increases in the Gaza Strip (41%) compared to the West Bank (37%); in Nablus (47%) and Khanyounis (46%) compared to Hebron (28%) and Jerusalem (32%); among residents of villages and towns (41%) compared to residents of refugee camps (33%); among illiterates (40%) compared to holders of BA degree (30%); among workers and farmers (40%) and housewives (41%) compared to students (30%) and merchants (31%); and among supporters of Fateh (74%) compared to supporters of Hamas (12%).

In a competition for the office of the vice president among eight candidates, Haidar Abdul Shafi received the largest percentage of votes (17%) followed by Faisal al Hussein and Sa'eb Eriqat (8% each), Mahmud Abbas and Farouq al Qaddumi (5% each), Hanan Ashrawi and Ahmad Qurie' (4% each), and Nabil Sha'ath (2%). In a competition among four candidates only, Abdul Shafi receives 37% of the votes followed by al Hussein (23%), Ahmad Qurie' (13%) and Mahmud Abbas (12%). These results are similar to those obtained last February.

Fateh's popularity continued to drop reaching 35% in this poll while Hamas' increased from 10% last February to 13% in this poll.

**Results of Public Opinion Poll # 46
27-31 January 2000**

	Total %	West Bank%	Gaza Strip%
Unemployment	23.0	21.0	26.0
	Total %	West Bank%	Gaza Strip%
1. Do you support or oppose the current peace process between Palestinians and Israelis?			
1) Support	73.3	72.7	74.3
2) Oppose	22.6	23.7	20.9
3) No Opinion	4.1	3.6	4.8
2. During the past few weeks, peace negotiations were conducted between Israel and Syria. Do you see their impact as:			
1) Hurting the Palestinian track	28.0	24.0	34.7
2) Helping the Palestinian track	21.9	24.1	18.4
3) Having no impact	26.9	27.6	25.7
4) Others (specify_____)	1.7	2.1	1.2
5) No Opinion /Don't Know	21.5	22.2	20.0
3. Do you trust the intentions of the Barak's government toward the peace process with the Palestinians?			
1) Yes	15.9	15.9	15.8
2) No	74.9	74.3	75.9
3) No Opinion	9.2	9.8	8.3
4. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of :			
4-1 the Palestinian Legislative Council			
1) Very Good	8.3	8.0	8.7

2) Good	33.6	34.1	32.7
3) Fair	28.3	29.0	27.3
4) Bad	12.1	10.2	15.2
5) Very Bad	8.8	8.0	10.1
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	8.9	10.7	6.0

4-2 Palestinian Government (The Cabinet)

1) Very Good	8.7	9.1	8.1
2) Good	35.5	36.1	34.5
3) Fair	25.5	24.6	27.1
4) Bad	13.7	12.7	15.6
5) Very Bad	6.2	5.8	6.9
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	10.4	11.7	7.8

4-3 Judicial Authority and Palestinian Courts

1) Very Good	9.2	8.3	10.7
2) Good	32.5	32.7	32.1
3) Fair	22.0	19.7	25.9
4) Bad	13.4	13.5	13.3
5) Very Bad	6.7	6.9	6.3
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	16.2	18.9	11.7

4-4 Police and Security forces

1) Very Good	15.1	12.5	19.4
2) Good	40.4	40.8	39.8
3) Fair	19.2	17.8	21.6
4) Bad	11.7	12.3	10.7
5) Very Bad	6.2	7.2	4.4

6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	7.4	9.4	4.1
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4-5 Institution of Presidency

1) Very Good	14.2	11.7	18.4
2) Good	39.8	42.6	35.2
3) Fair	15.4	12.9	19.4
4) Bad	7.9	8.2	7.5
5) Very Bad	4.3	4.1	4.7
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	18.4	20.5	14.8

4-6 Opposition groups and factions

1) Very Good	6.4	7.4	4.7
2) Good	26.3	27.9	23.7
3) Fair	25.4	22.2	30.8
4) Bad	16.7	16.6	16.8
5) Very Bad	4.6	3.8	5.9
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	20.6	22.1	18.1

4-7 Your district representatives at the PLC

1) Very Good	7.7	7.9	7.3
2) Good	34.1	38.3	27.1
3) Fair	21.2	19.2	24.5
4) Bad	15.4	11.4	22.1
5) Very Bad	7.4	6.1	9.7
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	14.2	17.1	9.3

Total %	West Bank%	Gaza Strip%
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5. If you want to evaluate the status of democracy and human rights under the Palestinian Authority, you would say it is:

1) Very Good	6.1	6.3	5.7
2) Good	24.9	24.6	25.5
3) Fair	29.2	29.4	28.7
4) Bad	19.8	20.1	19.4
5) Very Bad	13.0	11.6	15.4
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	7.0	8.0	5.3

6. And what about the status of democracy and human rights in other countries:

6-1 America

1) Very Good	34.4	31.0	40.0
2) Good	26.3	26.0	26.7
3) Fair	6.4	6.0	7.1
4) Bad	6.8	8.5	3.8
5) Very Bad	2.2	2.2	2.2
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	24.0	26.3	20.2

6-2 Israel

1) Very Good	39.6	36.0	45.7
2) Good	30.0	31.6	27.3
3) Fair	7.1	6.7	7.9
4) Bad	6.2	6.9	4.8
5) Very Bad	1.6	1.3	2.0
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	15.5	17.4	12.3

6-3 Jordan

1) Very Good	8.2	6.3	11.3
2) Good	25.7	24.0	28.7
3) Fair	24.9	23.0	28.1

4) Bad	17.2	19.3	13.5
5) Very Bad	5.5	6.4	3.8
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	18.5	20.9	14.5

6-4 Egypt

1) Very Good	8.4	5.5	13.3
2) Good	22.9	20.0	27.9
3) Fair	20.3	17.6	24.8
4) Bad	17.2	18.7	14.7
5) Very Bad	5.4	4.9	6.3
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	25.7	33.3	12.9

6-5 France

1) Very Good	26.4	21.4	34.7
2) Good	24.6	23.6	26.3
3) Fair	3.6	2.8	5.1
4) Bad	2.4	2.7	2.0
5) Very Bad	0.8	0.5	1.4
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	42.1	49.0	30.5

7. In your opinion, can people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip criticize the Palestinian Authority without fear?

1) Yes	30.3	31.1	29.1
2) No	63.3	62.6	64.4
3) Do not know	6.4	6.3	6.5

8. Generally, how do you evaluate the performance of the Palestinian non governmental organizations (NGO's):

1) Very Good	13.9	15.9	10.7
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2) Good	42.1	43.4	40.0
3) Fair	21.3	21.8	20.4
4) Bad	6.0	4.6	8.3
5) Very Bad	2.1	1.6	2.8
6) Don't Know/ No Opinion	14.6	12.7	17.8

9. Do you think that there is corruption in Palestinian NGO's?

1) Yes	40.6	44.8	33.8
2) No	32.8	30.1	37.2
3) Don't Know/ No Opinion	26.6	25.1	29.0

10. If separate elections for a Vice President of the Palestinian Authority were held today, and the following names were nominated as candidates, whom would you choose?

1) Ahmad Qurai' (Abu Ala')	5.9	6.3	5.3
2) Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin)	7.6	7.7	7.5
3) Farouq Kaddomi (Abu Lutuf)	4.2	4.3	4.0
4) Nabil Sha'ath	2.1	1.0	3.8
5) Sa'eb Erikat	8.1	8.5	7.5
6) Hanan Ashrawi	6.4	7.4	4.6
7) Faisal Hussein	10.0	11.7	7.3
8) Haidar Abdul Shafi	15.4	9.9	24.4
9) Other (Specify_____)	0.9	1.0	0.8
10) No one	23.5	24.5	21.8
11) I will not participate in the elections	11.8	13.2	9.5
12) No Opinion /Don't Know	4.1	4.5	3.4

13. Does the situation in the Palestinian areas in the West Bank and Gaza force you to seek permanent emigration?

1) Yes	25.8	23.8	28.8
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2) No	72.5	74.2	69.9
3) I don't know	1.7	2.1	1.2

14. Some people say that these days it is not possible to find a job without *wasta* (personal connections and nepotism). But others say that jobs are given based only on qualifications. Based on experience(s) you personally knew about, you say:

1) Jobs are obtained by <i>wasta</i> to a large extent	63.7	56.6	74.7
2) Jobs are obtained by <i>wasta</i> sometimes	22.3	24.3	19.3
3) Jobs are not obtained by <i>wasta</i>	7.5	10.8	2.2
4) I have no experience	6.5	8.3	3.9

15. Do you think that there is corruption in Palestinian NGO's?

1) Yes	33.0	33.7	31.9
2) No	36.4	32.0	43.1
3) Not Sure	30.6	34.3	24.9

16. If separate elections for a Vice President of the Palestinian Authority were held today, whom would you choose?

1) Ahmad Qurai' (Abu Ala')	4.8	5.9	3.0
2) Mahmoud Abbas	5.1	4.2	6.4
3) Farouq Kaddomi	3.8	4.0	3.5
4) Nabil Sha'ath	2.5	1.6	3.9
5) Sa'eb Erikat	6.7	6.1	7.8
6) Hanan Ashrawi	4.6	5.8	2.8
7) Faisal Hussein	5.7	7.1	3.5
8) Haidar Abdul Shafi	15.4	9.8	24.2
9) Others	0.3	0.4	0.0
10) Non of the above	29.3	30.0	28.2
11) Will not participate in the elections	16.7	20.0	11.6

12) No Opinion/Don't Know	5.2	5.2	5.2
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17. If separate elections for a Vice President of the Palestinian Authority were held today, and the following names were nominated as candidates, whom would you choose?

1) Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin)	14.4	13.5	15.6
2) Faisal Husseini	19.5	25.6	11.1
3) Haidar Abdul Shafi	38.1	28.5	51.5
4) Ahmad Qurai' (Abu Ala')	13.6	15.9	10.4
5) Other (Specify_____)	9.7	11.4	7.3
6) No Opinion /Don't Know	4.7	5.1	4.1

18-1 In your opinion, which field is the most important? (select one only)

1) Water	15.8	16.7	14.4
2) Health	19.7	17.4	23.2
3) Education	26.2	26.5	25.8
4) Sewage treatment	5.4	3.0	9.1
5) Democracy & Human Rights	6.0	6.9	4.8
6) Institution Building	5.6	6.4	4.2
7) Roads	2.2	2.0	2.5
8) Security and Police	1.5	1.2	2.0
9) Agriculture	4.4	5.9	2.0
10) Housing	4.0	3.0	5.5
11) Women	1.5	1.9	0.9
12) Others	2.3	2.7	1.7
13) No Opinion/Don't Know	5.5	6.4	4.0

18-2 In your opinion, which field is the least important? (select one only)

1) Water	3.7	4.3	2.8
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2) Health	3.3	3.8	2.5
3) Education	3.4	4.3	1.8
4) Sewage	4.6	5.4	3.5
5) Democracy & Human Rights	6.8	5.9	8.2
6) Institution Building	7.0	6.9	7.2
7) Roads	8.0	8.1	7.8
8) Security and Police	10.8	9.5	12.9
9) Agriculture	6.4	5.9	7.2
10) Housing	6.3	7.8	4.1
11) Women	16.3	11.8	23.2
1) Others	2.2	1.9	2.8
13) No opinion /Don't Know	21.1	24.4	15.9

19. As far as you know, which country among the docommunity contributes most to the development of the Palestinian economy?

1) United States of America	11.3	11.9	10.5
2) European Union	14.4	14.9	13.5
3) Germany	4.5	5.7	2.6
4) France	5.2	4.5	6.3
5) United Kingdom	0.7	0.9	0.4
6) Japan	12.9	10.2	17.0
7) International Organization	10.0	5.5	16.9
8) Arab Countries	4.4	4.9	3.4
9) Gulf countries only	3.3	3.6	2.9
9) Others (specify_____)	1.7	2.1	1.1
10) No Opinion /Don't Know	31.7	35.7	25.4

20. In general, how would you evaluate the impact of donor's support on Palestinian conditions?

1) Very positive	6.6	5.0	9.1
2) Positive	39.2	37.1	42.3
3) In Between	29.6	29.8	29.3
4) Bad	11.4	12.1	10.3
5) Very bad	5.1	5.9	3.9
6) No Opinion/Don't know	8.1	10.1	5.2

21. If separate elections for the president of the Palestinian Authority were held today, whom would you choose?

1) Haidar Abdul Shafi	9.1	7.4	11.7
2) Yaser Arafat	46.8	42.4	53.6
3) Ahmad Yassin	9.7	11.5	6.8
4) Others	1.0	1.5	0.3
5) No one	19.6	19.5	19.6
6) I will not participate in the elections	12.1	15.2	7.3
7) No Opinion / Don't Know	1.7	2.5	0.7

22. Concerning armed attacks against Israeli targets, you....

1) Support it	39.4	39.7	38.8
2) Oppose it	52.6	50.5	55.8
3) No Opinion /Don't Know	8.0	9.8	5.3

23. Which of the following political parties do you support?

1) PPP	0.7	1.0	0.3
2) PFLP	3.9	3.6	4.3
3) Fateh	36.2	35.1	38.0
4) Hamas	10.2	9.3	11.6
5) DFLP	0.8	1.1	0.4

6) Islamic Jihad	3.4	3.5	3.3
7) Fida	0.4	0.2	0.8
8) Independent Islamists	2.8	2.8	2.9
9) Independent Nationalists	4.3	4.0	4.9
10) None of the above	35.2	36.7	32.9
11) Others	1.9	2.7	0.7

24. Do you have?

Telephone at home

1) Yes	51.6	54.5	47.2
2) No	48.4	45.5	52.8

Mobile phone at home

1) Yes	39.5	49.5	24.1
2) No	60.5	50.5	75.9

Computer at home

1) Yes	12.9	13.4	12.2
2) No	87.1	86.6	87.8

Subscription to the Internet at home

1) Yes	6.2	6.5	5.3
2) No	93.8	93.5	94.7

Subscription to the Internet at work

1) Yes	5.2	6.2	3.8
2) No	94.8	93.8	96.2

Satellite Dish at home

1) Yes	44.3	40.2	50.8
2) No	55.7	59.8	49.2

25. Which Satellite TV station you watch most?

1) AL-Jazeera	46.6	45.8	47.6
2) MBC	16.5	20.9	11.3
3) LBC	4.7	6.7	2.5
4) ART	6.8	4.3	9.7
5) Future	1.1	0.6	1.6
6) Syria	1.6	2.7	0.2
7) Kuwait	0.3	0.3	0.3
8) Abu Dabi	2.3	3.1	1.4
9) Bahrain	0.2	0.4	0.0
10) Ajman	0.1	0.2	0.0
11) Sharka	1.3	1.2	1.4
12) Egypt	10.7	4.9	17.7
13) Jordan	0.3	0.6	0.0
14) Saudi Arabia	1.0	1.2	0.9
15) CNN	0.1	0.2	0.0
16) Dubai	1.4	1.8	1.0
17) EU stations	0.1	0.2	0.0
18) Palestine	0.7	0.0	1.5
19) Others	4.2	5.1	3.1