

Public Opinion Poll 22

Armed Attacks, Peace Process, Elections, Unemployment

March 29-31, 1996

Armed Attacks and the Peace Process

The presence of strong opposition against armed attacks seems to reflect the presence of similarly strong support for the continuation of the peace process and a wide-spread belief that such attacks impede the progress the peace process. Only a small minority positively regards one of the results of the recent armed attacks, that is, separation. Moreover, it seems that most of the Palestinians fear that such attacks may lead to a Likud election victory. Many Palestinians think that Labor is a better peace partner. Opposition to armed attacks is reflected in a decrease in support for opposition forces. Many Palestinians blame these opposition forces for the difficulties encountered after the attacks, despite the fact that the majority blames Israel first.

However, there is a slight increase in support for such attacks reflecting perhaps the desire of most Palestinians to see a *mutual* end to violence.

Security Measures and Internal Conflict

The poll results indicate that opposition to the measures taken by the PNA may reflect the worried mood of the Palestinian street which fears that such measures may lead to internal conflict. This opposition is also reflected in decreased support for the PNA and for Fateh. Some blame the PNA for the current difficulties.

Elections

The results confirm the findings reported by the Central Election Commission and the [CPRS exit poll](#) regarding the high level of turn out especially in the Gaza Strip and the low level of participation in Jerusalem. It seems that the reports of possible irregularities in the elections led to a rise in the percentage of those who are dissatisfied with the election process. The results confirm our previous conclusion that most of the opposition supporters participated in the elections and that political reasons were not the main factor behind non-participation.

Unemployment

The results of the poll show that the unemployment rate in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 49%, a 20% increase since December 1995. The rates are 60% for the Gaza Strip and 44% for the West Bank. As in previous cases, the unemployment rate almost doubles as a result of an Israeli imposition of closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Elections for the Legislative Council

Three questions measured opinions on the elections: satisfaction with the elections results, participation in the elections, and reasons for non-participation. The results indicate that slightly over half of the respondents (53%) are satisfied with the election results for the president of the authority and for the members of the legislative council. About 24% are partially satisfied. As Table 2 shows, satisfaction is associated with education, occupation, position on negotiations and armed attacks, political affiliation and whether the respondent participated in the elections. The more educated tend to be least satisfied: Farmers and waged laborers (usually less educated) are more satisfied, while students (more educated) are least satisfied. Those who participated in elections tend to view them more positively than those who did not. Similarly, those who support negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis and those who oppose armed attacks against Israelis tend to look positively at elections results. It follows then that those who identify themselves with the "pro-peace camp" are more satisfied than those who identify themselves with the opposition. The undecided remain in the middle of the two camps. Generally, the findings of this poll indicate a strong relationship between participation in the elections, support for negotiations, opposition to armed attacks, and support for the "pro-peace camp".

Table # (2)
Satisfaction with elections by selected variables

Education	Elementary	64.2%
	Bachelor	33.7%
Occupation	Student	37.5%
	Waged Laborer	63.9%
	Farmers	59.4%
Participation in elections	Participant	58.3%
	Non-participant	36.6%
Position on negotiations	Support	61.5%
	Oppose	24.5%
Position on armed attacks	Support	32.7%
	Oppose	61.3%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	67.0%
	Opposition camp	27.6%
	Undecided	41.3%

The results of this poll confirm the findings reported by the Central Election Commission and the CPRS exit poll, regarding the high level of turn out especially in the Gaza Strip (Gaza North at 96%), and the low level of participation in Jerusalem (38%). They also confirm our previous conclusion (see our exit poll analysis) that most of opposition supporters participated in the elections. Participation in the cities was slightly higher than in villages; women's participation was slightly less than men's; and older people had a higher turn out rate than younger ones. As summarized in Table 3, the figures for participation and non-participation for each of these categories of respondents were similar. Note, the findings also indicate that supporters of

negotiations, non-violence and the "pro-peace camp" were more likely to participate in elections than their counterparts.

Table # (3)
Participation in the Elections by selected variables

Area of residence	Nablus	73.1%
	Ramallah	67.5%
	Jerusalem	38.2%
	Gaza North	95.6%
Place of residence	City	79.5%
	Village	71.9%
Gender	Male	80.7%
	Female	74.5%
Age	18-22	72.6%
	51 and above	79.0%
Position on negotiations	Support	81.5%
	Oppose	66.7%
Position on armed attacks	Support	68.7%
	Oppose	80.4%
Political affiliation	Pro Peace camp	86.3%
	Opposition camp	59.1%
	Undecided	69.8%

It seems that the non-participation in the elections was not motivated by opposition to the peace process. Most respondents gave other reasons for non-participation such as being busy or not finding transportation. However, if one considers answers, such as "did not find good candidates" or "I have doubted the fairness of the elections", as having political implications then the conclusion might be that more people boycotted the elections for unexpressed political reasons. Moreover, over 40% had "other" reasons for non-participation; some of those "other" reasons may indeed have political implications. Furthermore, since there is a strong relationship between non-participation and opposition, it is warranted to assume that more people did not go to the polls due to political motivation than the results indicate. (See table # 4).

Table # (4)
Non-participation in elections because of opposition to peace process by selected variables:

Age	18-22	12.2%
	43-50	4.9%
Education	Elementary	5.5%
	Bachelor	35.3%
Occupation	Students	31.6%

	Housewives	7.7%
	Employees	22.7%
Position on the peace process	Support	3.4%
	Oppose	29.7%
Position on armed attacks	Support	23.2%
	Oppose	6.5%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	7.5%
	Opposition camp	29.5%
	Undecided	13.5%



Support for Negotiations

The results indicate that support for the continuation of negotiations (at 78%) is higher than previously found, despite the Israeli measures taken in the aftermath of the armed attacks. One must remember that negotiations are now about permanent status issues and not transitional arrangements. Permanent status talks are probably considered a Palestinian demand which the Israelis may try to avoid. Indeed, the Israelis suspended the peace talks in the aftermath of the recent attacks and there was concern that Israel may try to postpone the starting of the permanent status talk until after the Israeli elections.

As Table 5 shows, however, previously found trends remain valid. For example, Gaza North is more supportive of negotiations than Hebron. People with bachelor degrees tend to be less supportive than people with elementary education. Also participation in elections, opposition to armed attacks, and support for the "pro-peace" camp are positively related to support for continued negotiations. Also note, even among sympathizers of the opposition factions, a majority support the continuation of the peace talks. As with other issues, the undecided remain in the middle between the two camps with some 71% support for the talks.

Table # (5)

Support for the continuity of negotiations by selected variables:

	Hebron	71.4%
	Gaza North	86.6%
Education	Elementary	86.0%
	Bachelor	67.0%
Occupation	Student	69.0%
	Unemployed	80.0%
	Retired	92.3%
Participation ielections	Participant	81.5%
	Non-participant	66.7%
Position on armed attacks	Support	57.3%
	Oppose	85.5%

Political Affiliation	Pro Peace camp	88.3%
	Opposition camp	55.4%
	Undecided	70.9%

The results indicate that despite deep concern about PNA security measures (see below), there has been almost no change in level of support or opposition to the PNA. While 24% increased their support, 23% decreased it. An additional 44% said they support the PNA and that there has been no change in their position. Only 9% said their has been no change in their opposition stance. Altogether, some 33% voiced opposition to the PNA. As expected, Table 6 shows support for PNA in students is higher than support for PNA in farmers. Also participation in elections, opposition to armed attacks, and support for negotiations and the "pro-peace" camp are associated positively with support for the PNA.

Table # (6)
Support for the PNA by selected variables:

Education	Elementary	76.2%
	Bachelor	53.5%
Occupation	Students	50%
	Employees	64%
	Farmers	72%
Participation in elections	Participant	72.2%
	Non-participant	41.1%
Position on negotiations	Support	78.2%
	Oppose	24%
Position on armed attacks	Support	42.1%
	Oppose	76.3%
Political Affiliation	Pro Peace camp	79.3%
	Opposition camp	36.3%
	Undecided	60.5%

Israel Elections: Labor or Likud

Many Palestinians (43%) think that there is no difference between Labor and Likud in regard to achieving Palestinian goals. In Gaza, however, most respondents believe Labor is better. Only 5% of all respondents believe Likud is better. A large minority of 40% think Labor is better. The more educated is the less likely to see Labor in better light. As expected, there is a positive relationship between participation in elections, opposition to armed attacks, and support for negotiations and the "pro-peace" camp and the belief that Labor is better than Likud (see Table 7).

Table # (7)
Labor is better for Palestinians by selected variables:

Education	Elementary	45.8%
	Bachelor	31.7%
Participation in elections	Participant	42.1%
	Non-participant	32.5%
Position on negotiations	Support	45.4%
	Opposing	21.7%
Position on armed attacks	Support	28.7%
	Oppose	45.2%
Political Affiliation	Pro Peace camp	48.3%
	Opposition camp	29.8%
	Undecided	30.0%



Support for armed attacks

Support for armed attacks against Israelis increased slightly in March after a steady decline over the past two years. Some 21% support and 70% oppose the suicide attacks carried out by Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the few weeks preceding this poll. In Gaza opposition to armed attacks against Israelis is even higher. Table 8 shows that support for armed attacks in people with bachelor degree than people with elementary education. Support for armed attacks against Israelis is more likely to be lower among unemployed, the participants in elections, the support of negotiations and the pro-peace camp.

Table # (8)

Support for armed attacks by selected variables:

Place of Residence	Nablus	26.1%
	Ramallah	19.3%
	Hebron	24.8%
	Bethlehem	14.7%
	Gaza City	17.6%
Education	Elementary	15.0%
	Bachelor	28.0%
Occupation	Students	28.6%
	Unemployed	15.1%
Participation in elections	Participant	18.7%
	Non-participant	29.2%
Position on negotiations	Support	15.3%
	Oppose	47.5%
Political affiliation	Pro Peace camp	15.0%
	Opposition camp	48.9%
	Undecided	18.9%

Views on PNA Security Measures

A majority (59%) support the measures taken by the PNA to prevent further armed attacks against Israelis. But nearly one-third of Palestinians are opposed to them. As shown in Table 9, opposition to the measures is stronger among students, holders of a B.A. degree, non-participants in elections, and those opposed to the negotiations and supportive of armed attacks.

Table # (9)

Opposition for measures taken by PNA by selected variables:

Place of Residence	Tulkarm	42.0%
	Bethlehem	22.1%
	Jerusalem	33.7%
	Gaza City	28.8%
	Gaza South	27.5%
Education	Elementary	27.2%
	Bachelor	41.6%
Occupation	Student	42.9%
	Unemployed	28.3%
Participation in elections	Participant	27.7%
	Non-participant	46.6%
Position on negotiations	Support	24.8%
	Oppose	61.3%
Position on armed attacks	Support	61.7%
	Oppose	23.0%
Political Affiliation	Pro Peace camp	23.3%
	Opposition camp	62.2%
	Undecided	32.8%

Armed attacks and peace process

Almost three-quarters of Palestinians believe that armed attacks may impede the peace process. This finding explains the large percentage of opposition to armed attacks despite Palestinian anger and frustration over Israeli policy in the aftermath of the suicide bombs. Since most Palestinians support the continuation of the peace talks and a similar number believe that violence may lead to an end such negotiations, it is reasonable to expect that most would oppose violence. In other words, to most Palestinians, negotiations are still seen as an alternative to violence as a means to achieving Palestinian goals. Table 10 shows that participation in election, position on negotiation and armed attacks, and political affiliation also associated to attitudes regarding the relationship between armed attacks and viability of negotiation with Israel.

Table # (10)**Belief that armed attacks do not obstruct the peace process by selected variables:**

Education	Elementary	16.3%
	Bachelor	21.0%
Participation in elections	Participant	17.4%
	Non-participant	24.7%
Position on negotiations	Support	15.6%
	Oppose	34.3%
Position on armed attacks	Support	36.5%
	Oppose	13.0%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	15.4%
	Opposition camp	33.1%
	Undecided	18.9%

**Concerns about PNA security measures**

Approximately three-quarters of Palestinians are either very worried or somewhat worried that measures taken by the PNA to prevent further attacks against Israelis may lead to internal Palestinian conflict. As Table 11 indicates, the concern is particularly high among women, people over 40 years- old and waged laborers. Also, those who oppose negotiations and support armed attacks are more likely to be very worried about the possibility of internal conflict.

Table # (11)**The "very worried" that PNA measures may lead to internal conflict by selected variables:**

Area of Residence	Tulkarm	50.8%
	Ramallah	48.7%
	Hebron	50.8%
	Gaza City	47.6%
	Gaza South	41.2%
Gender	Male	37.6%
	Female	52.1%
Age	18-22	39.9%
	43-50	51.2%
Occupation	Student	48.2%
	Waged Laborers	39.5%
	Craftsmen	43.6%
Participation in elections	Participant	45.5%
	Non-participant	45.2%

Position on negotiations	Support	43.3%
	Oppose	54.9%
Position on armed attacks	Support	53.4%
	Oppose	43.0%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	42.6%
	Opposition camp	53.6%
	Undecided	47.0%

Blaming Israel

Most Palestinians tend to blame Israel for the difficult conditions imposed on them in the aftermath of the suicide attacks. Almost 31%, however, places the blame on Hamas, while only 11% blame the PNA. In Gaza, Hamas is blamed more than it is blamed in the West Bank. Table 12 shows that blame for Israel in Ramallah and Bethlehem is higher than blame for Israel in Gaza North and Gaza middle. Conversely, blame for Hamas in Gaza North and Gaza middle is higher than that in Ramallah.

Table # (12)

Blame for the closure by selected areas of residence

		PNA to be blamed	Hamas to be blamed	Israel to be blamed
Area of Residence	Nablus	11.8%	28.6%	55.5%
	Jenin	9.9%	33.7%	51.5%
	Ramallah	8.0%	23.2%	61.6%
	Bethlehem	4.4%	26.5%	60.3%
	Jerusalem	16.2%	29.3%	53.5%
	Gaza North	10.5%	45.6%	35.3%
	Gaza Middle	11.9%	39.5%	35.7%

Table 13 indicates that there is higher levels of blame for Hamas among the unemployed as one might expect. Students, non-participants in elections, and those opposed to negotiations and supportive of armed attacks are least likely to blame Hamas. It is interesting to notice that the undecided are closer to the pro-peace camp than to the "pro-peace" camp.

Table # (13)

Blaming Hamas by selected variables:

Occupation	Student	20.0%
	Unemployed	36.6%
Participation in elections	Participant	33.0%

	Non-participant	22.1%
Position on negotiations	Support	35.5%
	Oppose	12.7%
Position on armed attacks	Support	12.1%
	Oppose	38.5%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	39.8%
	Opposition camp	14.0%
	Undecided	21.4%



Mutual end to violence

Almost 90% of the Palestinians support a call for a mutual end to violence between the two sides. Only a mere 7% is opposed to such a step. As expected, support for mutual non-violence is highest among those who participated in the elections and those who support negotiations and oppose armed attacks. Nonetheless, as can be seen in Table 14, there is an overwhelming majority in support for mutual non-violence even among supporters of armed attacks.

Table # (14)

Support for mutual end to violence by selected variables

Participation in elections	Participant	91.6%
	Non-participant	80.5%
Position on negotiation	Support	93.3%
	Oppose	73.5%
Position on armed attacks	Support	78.1%
	Oppose	93.9%
Political affiliation	Pro peace camp	93.8%
	Opposition camp	80.1%
	Undecided	85.0%

"Separation"

More than two thirds of the Palestinians view "separation" as another form of collective punishment. Only 13% see in it the beginning of an Israeli acceptance of a Palestinian state. This finding is similar to the one discovered in February 1995, when the idea of "separation" was first posed by Israelis in the aftermath of the Bit-Lid suicide attack. At that time some 64% regarded it as collective punishment and 16% regarded it as the beginning of a Palestinian state.



Political affiliation

There has been a clear drop in the popularity of all political factions and parties, especially in the opposition camp: support for Hamas dropped to 6%, PFLP to 2%, and Fateh to 48%. The proportion of undecided went up to 30% compared to 18% in December, 1995. (See figure 1). It is possible that supporters of the opposition may be reflecting disappointment over the action (i.e. suicide attacks) of opposition factions, while the supporters of the "peace camp" may be punishing Fateh for the latest actions (i.e. security measures) of the PNA.

Table # (15)
Political Affiliation

	Dec. 94	Dec. 95	March 96
Hamas	16.6%	9.7%	5.8%
Al-Sha'b	0.8%	1.8%	1.7%
PFLP	6.7%	3.8%	2.1%
Fateh	43.1%	55.3%	47.5%
Feda	0.8%	0.4%	0.2%
Islamic Jihad	2.6%	2.0%	1.0%
DFLP	1.4%	1.5%	1.1%
Islamic Independent	3.7%	3.6%	4.4%
National Independent	4.9%	3.2%	6.0%
None of the above	11.7%	13.8%	25.0%
Others	7.7%	4.8%	5.3%

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Appendix

	Total West Bank	Gaza
* Unemployment rate	49.0%	60.0%
1) Are you satisfied with the results of the Palestinian elections for the president of the authority and for the members of the legislative council which took place two months ago?		
a) Yes, I am satisfied	53.4%	58.1%
b) No, I am not satisfied	18.8%	14.9%
c) I am partially satisfied	23.9%	22.5%
d) No opinion	03.8%	04.4%
2) Did you participate in the Palestinian elections which took place on January 20th ,1996?		
a) Yes	77.2%	88.6%
b) No (Go to 4)	22.8%	11.4%
3) Why did you not participate in the elections?		
a) I am opposed to the peace process.	12.9%	07.8%
b) I did not find good candidates to vote for.	10.4%	03.9%

c) I was busy with other things	27.6%	28.9%	21.6%
d) It was difficult to get transportation to the voting location.	03.6%	03.5%	03.9%
e) I have doubted the fairness of the elections.	05.0%	04.4%	07.8%
f) Others, specify	40.5%	37.4%	54.9%

4) Regarding the current peace process between the Palestinian and the Israeli sides, I:

a) Support its continuation	78.3%	76.2%	81.7%
b) Support stopping it	16.4%	18.2%	13.5%
c) No opinion	05.3%	05.6%	04.8%

5) Has your support for the Palestinian Authority increased or decreased these days?

a) My support increased	23.5%	22.8%	24.6%
b) My support decreased	23.3%	25.9%	19.1%
c) Stayed as is, I am still supportive	43.9%	40.2%	50.0%
d) Stayed as is, I am not supportive	09.2%	11.0%	06.3%

6) At the end of May, elections for the Israeli Knesset will take place. In these election the Labor Party led by Shimon Peres will compete against the Likud led by Netanyahu. In your opinion who is better in regard to achieving Palestinian goals?

a) A government led by Likud	04.9%	04.9%	05.0%
b) A government led by Labor	40.0%	38.3%	42.9%
c) No difference between the two regarding achievement of Palestinian goals.	43.1%	46.6%	37.4%
d) No opinion	11.9%	10.2%	14.7%

7) Lately, armed attacks have taken place against Israelis in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Ashkelon. Do you support such attacks?

a) yes	21.1%	23.8%	16.8%
b) No	70.1%	67.6%	74.4%
c) No opinion	08.7%	08.6%	08.8%

8) Regarding these armed attacks against Israeli targets, do you approve or oppose the Palestinian Authority taking measures to prevent them?

a) I approve	58.5%	56.0%	62.6%
b) I oppose	31.9%	34.8%	27.1%
c) No opinion	09.6%	09.2%	10.3%

9) If the Palestinian Authority did not take measures to prevent the armed attacks, do you think that the continuation of such attacks may impede the peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis?

a) Yes	74.9%	72.7%	78.6%
b) No	19.0%	21.0%	15.8%
c) No opinion	06.1%	06.3%	05.7%

10) The Palestinian Authority has taken security measures to prevent armed attacks. Are you concerned that these measures may lead to internal Palestinian conflict?

a) Yes, very worried	45.5%	47.0%	43.1%
b) Somewhat worried	28.4%	28.0%	29.0%
c) No, not worried	22.0%	20.9%	23.7%
d) No opinion	04.1%	04.1%	04.2%

11) Regarding the conditions imposed on the Palestinians after the latest armed attacks (e.g. the closure), whom do you blame most for what is happening?

a) The Palestinian Authority	11.3%	11.3%	11.2%
b) Hamas and Islamic Jihad	30.5%	26.8%	36.5%
c) Israel	50.0%	55.9%	40.3%
d) No opinion	08.3%	06.0%	12.0%

12) Regarding the call for ending violence from the two sides, the Palestinian and the Israeli, I:

a) Support it	89.2%	89.5%	88.6%
b) Oppose it	07.2%	08.0%	05.9%
c) No opinion	03.7%	02.5%	05.5%

13) I believe that the notion of separation as proposed by the Israeli government is mainly:

a) The beginning of an Israeli acceptance of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.	12.9%	14.6%	10.1%
b) Collective punishment against Palestinians.	70.8%	73.3%	66.8%
c) Not sure	16.3%	12.1%	23.1%

14) Which of the following political movements do you support:

a) PPP	01.7%	02.0%	01.3%
b) PFLP	02.1%	01.9%	02.3%
c) Fateh	47.5%	44.3%	52.6%
d) Hamas	05.8%	06.0%	05.5%
e) DFLP	01.1%	01.8%	-----
f) Islamic Jihad	01.0%	00.6%	01.7%
g) Feda	00.2%	00.1%	00.2%
h) Islamic Independent	04.4%	05.5%	02.5%
i) National Independent	06.0%	06.5%	05.1%
j) None of the above	25.0%	24.4%	25.9%
k) Others (specify _____)	05.3%	06.8%	02.9%