

# Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

## Public Opinion Poll NO (4)

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### **Palestinian Elections and the Declaration of Principles,**

December 12, 1993

The need to comprehend and assimilate Palestinian attitudes, perception, and priorities is more urgent than ever at this critical and intricate stage of Palestinian history. A serious lack of adequate, credible scientific data has rendered it difficult for academics and policy makers to accurately determine Palestinian concerns and preferences in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres and subsequently translate them to sound national policy.

With such ideas in mind, the Board of Trustees of CPRS has opted for the establishment of a Survey and Polls Unit (SPU) dedicated to conducting and survey research on pertinent political and social questions. SPU has, so far, conducted four polls. The first poll has focused on Palestinian attitudes towards the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles (DOP) signed in September 13, 1993. The second and third polls have concentrated on the elections of a Palestinian Legislative Council, as mentioned in the Palestinian-Israeli (DOP).

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#### Introduction

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The following are the results of a public opinion poll that has been conducted in the West Bank and Gaza on the 12th of December, 1993. A random sample was of 1137 Palestinians. over the age of 18 were interviewed. Efforts were made to represent all residential areas (i.e., city, town, village and refugee camp). Age and sex were also considered.

The interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis in West Bank major towns (Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, Tulkarm, Qalqilya and Jenin). Researchers were unable to conduct interviews in Hebron because of the imposed curfew on the city. In Gaza, interviews were conducted in the following areas: Al-Shati', Khan Yunis, Rafah (town and refugee camp), Al-breig refugee camp, Beit Lahia village, Al-Zaytoun, Al-Shuja'iyah, Al-rimal, Qararah village and Jabalya village.

Fifty four well-trained field workers were instructed to visit areas that attract all of the society's groups and strata. These areas included, among others, bus/car stations that lead to village and refugee camps, main markets, city centers. hospital entrances, ..etc.

682 questionnaire were received from the West Bank, and 455 were received from Gaza. The margin of error for this study is plus or minus 3%, with a confidence level of 95%.

CPRS plants to continue its study of Palestinian political attitudes. It will conduct a monthly poll on elections, political agreements, political affiliation, and other important topics.

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## Methodology

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CPRS researchers are constantly trying to refine and improve the validity of the research methodology and the reliability of the collected data. For these purposes, more female data collectors were hired to ensure the representation of women in the sample. They were instructed to visit public institutions that attract women.

Furthermore, the majority of our data collectors participated in an intensive workshop where the goals of the poll were discussed. They were also lectured on survey methods, scientific research, field work, and sampling. A specialized two-day workshop took place in Gaza on 7-8 December, 1993, to discuss field work and propose solutions to possible problems.

Data collectors worked in groups supervised by qualified researchers made random visits to interviews to stations and discussed the research process with data collectors. All interviews took place on the same day. Data collectors were assigned a limited number of interviews (an average of 30) to allow for careful and intensive interviewing.

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## Limitations

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A poll, such as this one, may have a number of limitations. Errors may have resulted as a consequence of surveying only a random sample, and not the complete population. Errors may also have resulted from non-response which is estimated at 10%. Women comprised the majority of non-respondents. Others refused to respond because they believed that their opinions were irrelevant and were not taken into account when making decisions. A number of non-respondents explained their position as a statement against Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

The reader must also be reminded that 28.9% of those who responded identified themselves as "independents" or "others". Some of them said that they "gave up" on Palestinian politics. Others have "negative" views of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, but did not identify themselves as part of the opposition groups.

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## Sample Distribution

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(Expressed as a % of the total sample)

<b>Geographical Distribution</b>		<b>Area of Residence</b>
60% West Bank "including Jerusalem"		48.1% Town
40% Gaza Strip		28.7% Village
		23.2% Refugee Camps
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Place of interview</b>	<b>Age</b>
61% Males	11.4% Nablus	53% 18-28
39% Females	09.3% Jenin	27% 29-39
<b>Occupation</b>	10.6% Tulkarm	12% 40-50
08.5% Laborers	02.8% Jericho	08% Over than 50

10.5% Craftsmen	10.0% Ramallah	<b>Education</b>
09.0% Housewives	06.8% Bethlehem	03.0% No education
28.4% Employees	09.0% Jerusalem	18.3% Up to 9 years
05.8% Unemployed	----- Hebron	42.7% 10-13 years
11.1% Merchants	20.8% Gaza/North	18.7% Two-years college
15.9% Students	06.7% Gaza/Middle	25.6% Bachelors
01.4% Farmers	12.7% Gaza/South	01.7% Masters & PHDs
18.4% Specialists	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Refugee Status</b>
01.0% Retired	42.0% Single	50.0% Refugee
	57.0% Married	50.0% Non-refugee
	01.0% Divorced & Widowed	

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### Remarks

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The findings of this poll must be placed in their proper context especially in relation to time. The poll took place on the 12th of December, the date before the start of the agreed upon Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. News of a likely delay in the application of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement caused a great deal of frustration among Palestinians. The credibility of the Israeli government has further declined. Palestinians are becoming more doubtful about their ability to achieve their rights under the present political circumstances. At the time of the poll, emotions were running high, as a result of the widespread violence and settlers provocations in the area. People were also becoming impatient and frustrated with the "no-change" situation on the ground.

The findings of the poll can be summarized as following:

Fist, support for the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles (DOP) has declined sharply.

The poll shows that Palestinians are divided when it comes to their stand towards the Palestinian-Israeli DOP. 41.5% said that they approve of the DOP (23.4% decline from our poll in September); 38.1% do not approve of the DOP (10.2% increase from our poll in September). A larger percentage of Palestinians indicated that they are "not sure" about the DOP (20.4% in this poll, as opposed to 6.6% in the September poll). Support for DOP has declined in all political groups including Fateh. While support for Fateh did not decline, only 75.6% of Fateh supporters declared that they approve of the DOP (compared with 91.3% in the September poll). 17.3% of Fateh supporters are "not sure" about the DOP (compared with 2.5% in the September poll). The largest decline in support, however, is among "independents", "Others", and Hizb Al-Sha'b. We also notice that in the age group 18 to 28, those who opposed the DOP (40.3%) are more than those who support it (38.9%). There is a correlation between educational attainment and attitudes towards the DOP. Those with the least and the most education are more supportive of the agreement than those who have collage or university degree.

Second, Palestinians support general elections as the best means to choose the members of the Palestinian Interim Council (PIC).

The majority of Palestinians (71.6%) insist that general political elections is the best means to choose the members of the PIC. 65.9% declared their intention to participate in general elections. As compared with previous polls, less Palestinians (12.5%, compared with 15.4% in the October poll) want the PLO to appoint the members of the PIC (see enclosed chart).

Third, Palestinians are hopeful that Palestinian police and security forces will treat all Palestinians equally.

The poll shows that Palestinians are both hopeful of Palestinian police and security forces. Fear of anarchy and political and social turmoil prompted many Palestinians (50.8%) to indicate that police will treat all Palestinians equally. This has also resulted in many Palestinians (31.2%) to express their fear that Palestinian police may be used as an oppressive tool against the opposition.

Fourth, minimum support for a Palestinian-Israeli-Jordanian confederation.

The poll shows that Palestinians first choice is an independent Palestinian entity (52.5%). Their second choice is a confederation with Jordan (26.7%). In this respect, we notice a wide difference between the West Bank and Gaza, with 35.4% of West Bank respondents preferring a confederation with Jordan, and only 13.8% of Gazans preferring such a confederation. This may be due to the historical ties between the West Bank and Jordan. we also notice that support for a confederation with Jordan increases with age. 20.6% of the age group 18-28 support such a confederation and 43.2% of those over 50 support it. The most support for a confederation with Jordan can be found among independents, Fateh, and Feda supporters. Fewer Palestinians (7.1%) indicated their support for a Palestinian-Israeli-Jordanian confederation.

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## Results

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### 1. There months after the signing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles "Gaza-Jericho First", how do you evaluate the agreement?

	West Bank & Gaza	West Bank	Gaza
a) I approve of it	41.5%	41.0%	42.4%
b) I don't approve of it	38.1%	37.8%	38.5%
c) I am not sure	20.4%	21.2%	19.1%

### 2. In your opinion, what is the best way to choose members of the "Palestinian Council" of the Palestinian interim Self-Government Authority?

a) Appointment By PLO leadership	12.5%	13.5%	11.1%
b) Appointment by political groups	08.6%	05.6%	12.9%
c) Political elections	71.6%	75.7%	65.5%
d) Others	07.3%	05.2%	10.5%

### 3. Will you participate in the elections for the "Palestinian Council" of the Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority?

a) Yes	65.9%	66.9%	64.4%
b) No	21.6%	19.9%	24.3%
c) Not sure	12.5%	13.2%	11.3%

**4. Do you think that Palestinian police and security forces:**

a) Will treat all Palestinians on equal basis?	50.8%	47.4%	56.1%
b) Will oppress the opposition?	31.2%	34.5%	26.1%
c) Others (Specify-----)	18.0%	18.1%	17.8%

**5. After the formation of a Palestinian entity, I prefer:**

a) a confederation with Jordan	26.7%	35.4%	13.8%
b) a confederation with Jordan and Israel.	07.1%	07.1%	07.1%
c) no confederation, maintain an independent Palestinian entity.	52.5%	45.0%	63.8%
d) not sure	06.9%	06.8%	07.1%
e) others (Specify----)	06.8%	05.7%	08.2%

**6. If elections were held today, you will vote for candidates affiliated with:**

a) Hamas	12.6%	10.9%	15.1%
b) PFLP	09.6%	06.7%	13.7%
c) Fateh	42.2%	42.0%	42.7%
d) Feda(Abed Rabo)	01.1%	01.5%	00.4%
e) DFLP(Hawatmeh)	01.0%	01.6%	00.01%
f) Hizb El-Sha'b	01.8%	02.2%	01.1%
g) Islamic Jihad	02.8%	02.5%	03.1%
h) Independents	13.8%	16.9%	09.4%
I) Others	15.1%	15.7%	14.5%

**Appendixes**

**A- Political Affiliation by attitude towards the DOP**

Three months after signing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of principles "Gaza-Jericho First", how do you evaluate the agreement?

	<b>a) Approve</b>	<b>b) Do not approve</b>	<b>c) Not sure</b>
Hamas	10.0%	75.0%	15.0%
PFLP	07.6%	88.6%	02.8%
Fateh	75.6%	07.1%	17.3%
Feda	66.7%	16.7%	16.6%
DFLP	09.1%	81.8%	09.1%
Hizb Al-sha'b	57.9%	21.1%	21.0%
Islamic Jihad	03.2%	08.6%	16.2%
independents	17.9%	41.7%	40.4%
others	22.6%	49.4%	28.0%

**B- Age by attitude towards the DOP**

	a) Approve	b) Do not approve	c) Not sure
18-28	38.9%	40.4%	20.7%
29-39	43.2%	36.4%	20.4%
40-50	46.0%	33.9%	20.2%
over 50	47.3%	35.1%	17.6%

### C- Education By attitudes towards the DOP

	a) Approve	b) Do not approve	c) Not sure
Illiterate	48.55	42.4%	09.1%
Upto 9 years	49.2%	31.3%	19.5%
Upto 12 years	42.6%	37.2%	20.2%
2-years college	36.3%	38.3%	25.4%
university Degree	36.8%	43.0%	20.2%
Master & PHDs	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%

### D- Sex by attitudes towards the DOP

	a) Approve	b) Do not approve	c) Not sure
Male	44.8%	37.0%	18.2%
Female	36.2%	40.2%	23.6

### E- Political Affiliation by Attitudes Towards the Confederation

	Confrderation with Jordan	Confederation, independent	No confederation, Independents entity	Not sure	others
Hamas	16.7%	03.6%	54.3%	15.2%	10.2%
PFLP	10.4%	04.7%	59.4%	08.5%	17.0%
Fateh	31.2%	07.5%	56.2%	04.1%	01.1%
Feda	50.0%	08.4%	33.3%	08.3%	-----
DFLP	18.2%	-----	54.5%	-----	27.3%
Hizb Al-Sha'b	26.3%	26.3%	42.1%	05.3%	-----
Islamic Jihad	19.4%	03.2%	67.7%	-----	09.7%
independents	33.8%	07.1%	47.4%	9.1%	02.6%
others	26.2%	10.1%	41.1%	06.5%	16.1%

### F- Age by attitudes towards confederation

	Confederation with Jordan	Confederation with Jordan&Israeli	No confederation, Independents	Not sure	Others
18-28	20.6%	06.6%	57.3%	08.5%	07.0%
29-39	28.7%	07.8%	50.9%	05.5%	07.1%
40-50	39.2%	09.6%	40.8%	04.8%	05.6%
over 50	43.2%	04.1%	44.6%	04.1%	04.0%