

PRESS RELEASE

Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll, December 2012

Given the outcome of the Israeli operation in Gaza

and the UN recognition of a Palestinian state, Palestinians move towards Hamas' over Abbas's way, whereas Israelis stand steadfast in their evaluations and preferences.

These are the results of the most recent poll conducted jointly by the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Ramallah. This joint survey was conducted with the support of the Ford Foundation Cairo office and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Ramallah and Jerusalem.

Given the UN recognition of a Palestinian state and the outcome of the war between Hamas and Israel, which is seen by over 80% as a victory of Hamas, 60% of Palestinians prefer Hamas' way over Abbas's way (28%) to end the Israeli occupation and build a Palestinian state. Correspondingly, there is an increase of 11 percentage points in the choice of armed attack as the best option to force Israel to withdraw from the territories and a 7 point decline in the choice of peaceful non-violent resistance compared to a year ago. There is a 7 and 8 percentage point increase in vote intention for Hamas and Haniyeh in legislative and presidential elections, and Haniyeh wins a presidential election if it were to take place now.

Israeli views of the conflict with the Palestinians are quite sturdy. Their opinions with regard to Israeli options vis a vis the Hamas regime and the shelling from Gaza are the same now, following operation "Pillar of Defence", as they were following operation "Cast Lead" in 2009. The most popular strategy (40%) is for Israel to carry out ad-hoc operations against the shelling and get out. A majority of 54% believes that Israel can overthrow the Hamas regime, yet a similar majority of 55% supports the cease-fire with Hamas. And 65% of Israelis consider it impossible to reach these days a final status settlement with the Palestinians, as do the Palestinians (63%).

The Palestinian sample size was 1267 adults interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip in 127 randomly selected locations between December 15 and 17, 2012. The margin of error is 3%. The Israeli sample includes 600 adult Israelis interviewed by phone in Hebrew, Arabic or Russian between December 9 and 13, 2012. The margin of error is 4.5%. The poll was planned and supervised by Prof. Yaacov Shamir, the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace and the Department of Communication and Journalism at the Hebrew University, and Prof. Khalil Shikaki, Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR).

For further details on the Palestinian survey contact PSR director, Prof. Khalil Shikaki or Walid Ladadweh, at tel. 02-2964933 or email pcpsr@pcpsr.org. On the Israeli survey, contact Prof Yaacov Shamir at tel. 03-6419429 or email jshamir@mscc.huji.ac.il.

MAIN FINDINGS

(A) Reactions to the Israeli operation in Gaza and the recognition by the UN of the Palestinian state as a non-member state

- 81% of the Palestinians think that Hamas came out the winner from the latest round of conflict between Israel and Hamas. Israelis are divided in their assessment: most – 42% - think that neither side came out the winner, 26% think Israel won, 20% think Hamas won and 10% say that both sides won.
- In their assessment of whom the cease fire agreement between Hamas and Israel serves better, the two publics coincide. The modal category is that it serves better are the interests of the Palestinians (41% of the Palestinians and 42% of Israelis). A close 39% and 36% respectively say that both sides benefit. Only a minority on both sides think that Israel benefits more (16% of Palestinians and 13% of Israelis).
- 55% of Israelis support the cease fire with Hamas; 41% oppose it.
- When we ask Israelis how Israel should respond if the shelling of Israeli communities from Gaza resumes, 40 % think that Israel should carry out ad-hoc operations against the shelling and get out; 25% suggest that Israel should reoccupy the Gaza Strip and stay there; 28% believe that Israel should use primarily diplomatic rather than military steps. Following the Israeli "Cast Lead operation in Gaza in 2009, the corresponding figures were quite similar: 38%, 30%, and 28%.
- 41% of the Israelis believe that Israel cannot overthrow the Hamas regime in Gaza while 54% believe it can – very similar results to those obtained in March 2009, following operation Cast Lead, when 43% of the Israelis believed that Israel cannot overthrow the Hamas regime in Gaza while 55% believed it can.
- 43% of Palestinians expect that given the outcome of the latest round of violence between Israel and Hamas, Israel will not wage a ground offensive against the Strip in the near future, whereas 52% think that it will.
- When Palestinians are asked, given the outcome of the war between Hamas and Israel and the UN recognition of a Palestinian state, whose way is the best to end the Israeli occupation and build a Palestinian state: Hamas' way or Abbas's way, 60% say Hamas' way and 28% Abbas' way.
- Correspondingly, Hamas gains in strength among the Palestinian public. If new presidential elections were held in the PA, Haniyeh would win with 48% of the vote of those participating, to Abbas's 45%. Three months ago, Abbas received the support of 51% and Haniyeh 40%. The percentage of vote for Haniyeh is the highest since Hamas' electoral victory in 2006. In legislative elections, 35% of those who would participate say they would vote for Hamas and 36% for Fateh,. These results indicate a sharp increase in Hamas' popularity compared to our September results when it stood at 28%; Fateh's popularity remained almost unchanged during the same period.

- We asked Palestinians how they can force Israel to withdraw from the territories, after the UN recognized the Palestinian state, and Israelis what they think Palestinians will do. 41% of Israelis think the Palestinians will resume the Intifada including armed confrontations, while 26% think they will start non-violent resistance such as peaceful demonstrations, and 20% think they will return to negotiations with the Israeli government. Indeed, 41% of the Palestinians think that armed attacks on army and settlers can force Israel to withdraw from the territories; while 24% think peaceful non-violent resistance can force Israelis to withdraw and 30% think that negotiations with Israel can bring it to withdraw. In response to a similar question in December 2011, Palestinians were split among these three options: 31% thought peaceful non-violent resistance can force Israelis to withdraw; 30% thought that armed attacks on army and settlers and 32% thought that negotiations with Israel can bring it to withdraw.
- 32% of Israelis think that after the UN recognized the Palestinian state as a non-member state, Israel should accept the decision and start negotiations with the Palestinians about its implementation; 26% think that Israel should accept the decision but not allow any change on the ground by the Palestinians; 27% think that Israel should oppose the decision and intensify the construction in the settlements; 4% think that Israel should annex the territory, and 6% think that Israel should invade the PA and use force in order to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.
- Following the UN recognition of the Palestinian state as a non-state member and the Israeli operation in Gaza, 61% of the Israelis think that armed attacks will not stop and the two sides will not return to negotiations, whereas two thirds of Palestinians think that negotiations will resume with or without armed confrontation.

(B) Israeli military strike against Iran's nuclear facilities

· 53% of Israelis support the cooperation between the US and Israel in bombing Iran's nuclear facilities, and only 20 % support a strike by Israel alone without the cooperation of the US; 21 % oppose any strike. The corresponding figures in our previous polls in September and in June were very similar, with a slight decline in opposition to any strike: 52%, 18% and 24% in September , and 51%, 19% and 26% in June correspondingly.

· Most Palestinians do not think that Israel will carry out a military strike against Iran's nuclear facilities, if Netanyahu wins the January elections (55%; 34% think Israel will strike).

(C) Attitudes, perceptions and expectations regarding a permanent settlement

Clinton/Geneva Parameters

The Clinton parameters for a Palestinian-Israeli permanent settlement were presented by President Clinton at a meeting with Israeli and Palestinian officials twelve years ago, on December 23, 2000, following the collapse of the July 2000 Camp David summit. The Geneva Initiative, along similar lines, was made public around the end of 2003. These parameters address the most fundamental issues which underlie the

Palestinian-Israeli conflict: (1) Final borders and territorial exchange; (2) Refugees; (3) Jerusalem; (4) A demilitarized Palestinian state; (5) Security arrangements; and (6) End of conflict. We address these issues regularly since December 2003, and in the current poll we revisited these crucial issues, amidst a turbulent Middle East and the recent political and diplomatic developments in the UN, the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Authority and Israel.

- 56% of Israelis and 42% of Palestinians support a permanent settlement package along the Clinton parameters. The results indicate a significant decrease in support for the Clinton / Geneva permanent settlement package among Palestinians and a slight decline among Israelis compared to December 2011, when 58% among Israelis and 50% among Palestinians supported this package.
- Since 2003, we observed only once majority support for such a settlement on both sides: in December 2004, shortly after the death of Arafat. The level of support then was 64% among Israelis and 54% among Palestinians. In 2011 the results came close, where among Israelis there was 58% support, and among Palestinians – 50% to 49% opposition.

Below we detail support and opposition to the individual items in the Clinton / Geneva permanent status package.

(1) Final Borders and Territorial Exchange

Among Palestinians 53% support or strongly support and 45% oppose or strongly oppose an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with the exception of some settlement areas in less than 3% of the West Bank that would be swapped with an equal amount of territory from Israel in accordance with a map that was presented to the Palestinian respondents. The map was identical to that presented to respondents in December 2011, when support for this compromise, with its map, stood at 63% and opposition at 36%.

Among Israelis 46% support and 49% oppose a Palestinian state in the entirety of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip except for several large blocks of settlements in 3% of the West Bank which will be annexed to Israel. Israel will evacuate all other settlements, and the Palestinians will receive in return territory of similar size along the Gaza Strip. In December 2011, 51% of the Israelis supported this component while 44% opposed it.

(2) Refugees

Among Palestinians 41% support and 56% oppose a refugee settlement in which both sides agree that the solution will be based on UN resolutions 194 and 242. The refugees would be given five choices for permanent residency. These are: the Palestinian state and the Israeli areas transferred to the Palestinian state in the territorial exchange mentioned above; no restrictions would be imposed on refugee return to these two areas. Residency in the other three areas (in host countries, third countries, and Israel) would be subject to the decision of these states. As a base for its decision Israel will consider the average number of refugees admitted to third countries like Australia, Canada, Europe, and others. All refugees would be entitled to

compensation for their "refugeehood" and loss of property. In December 2011, 45% agreed with an identical compromise while 53% opposed it.

Among Israelis 42% support such an arrangement and 49% oppose it. In December 2011, 42% supported it and 51% opposed.

(3) Jerusalem

In the Palestinian public 29% support and 70% oppose a Jerusalem compromise in which East Jerusalem would become the capital of the Palestinian state with Arab neighborhoods coming under Palestinian sovereignty and Jewish neighborhoods coming under Israeli sovereignty. The Old City (including al Haram al Sharif) would come under Palestinian sovereignty with the exception of the Jewish Quarter and the Wailing Wall that would come under Israeli sovereignty. In December 2011, an identical compromise obtained 40% support and 59% opposition.

Among Israelis, 38 % agree and 59 % disagree to this arrangement in which the Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem including the old city and the Temple Mount will come under Palestinian sovereignty, the Jewish neighborhoods including the Jewish quarter and the Wailing Wall will come under Israeli sovereignty, East Jerusalem will become the capital of the Palestinian state and West Jerusalem the capital of Israel. In December 2011, similarly, 38% supported this arrangement and 60% opposed it.

(4) Demilitarized Palestinian State

Among Palestinians 28% support and 71% oppose the establishment of an independent Palestinian state that would have no army, but would have a strong security force and would have a multinational force deployed in it to ensure its security and safety. Israel and Palestine would be committed to end all forms of violence directed against each other. A similar compromise received in December 2011, 32% support, and opposition reached 67%.

As in previous polls, this item receives the lowest level of support by Palestinians -- 1% lower than the Jerusalem item. Unlike the refugees and Jerusalem components, this issue has not received due attention in public discourse, as it should, since it may become a major stumbling block in the efforts to reach a settlement.

Among Israelis 70% support and 26% oppose this arrangement compared to 67% support and 33% opposition obtained in December 2011.

(5) Security Arrangements

In the Palestinian public 46% support and 53% oppose a compromise whereby the Palestinian state would have sovereignty over its land, water, and airspace, but Israel would have the right to use the Palestinian airspace for training purposes, and would maintain two early warning stations in the West Bank for 15 years. A multinational force would remain in the Palestinian state and in its border crossings for an indefinite period of time. The task of the multinational force would be to monitor the implementation of the agreement, and to monitor territorial borders and coast of the Palestinian state including the presence at its international crossings. In comparison,

in December 2011, 50% of the Palestinians supported this parameter while 49% opposed it.

In the Israeli public 59% support and 35% oppose this arrangement compared to 63% who supported it and 33% who opposed it in December 2011.

(6) End of Conflict

In the Palestinian public 59% support and 39% oppose a compromise on ending the conflict that would state that when the permanent status agreement is fully implemented, it will mean the end of the conflict and no further claims will be made by either side. The parties will recognize Palestine and Israel as the homelands of their respective peoples. In December 2011 63% supported and 35% opposed this item.

In the Israeli public 68% support and 28% oppose this component in the final status framework. In December 2011, similarly, 70% of the Israelis supported it while 27% opposed it.

The Whole Package

Among Palestinians 42% support and 56% oppose the whole package combining the elements as one permanent status settlement. In December 2011, 50% supported and 49% opposed such a package.

Among Israelis 56% support and 40% oppose all the above features together taken as one combined package. In December 2011 58% supported and 39% opposed such a package.

It is important to see that the pattern of support for the overall package is more than the sum of its parts, suggesting that people's calculus is compensatory and trade-offs are considered. Despite strong reservations regarding some of the components, the overall package always receives greater support in both publics, where the desirable components and the chance of reaching a permanent status agreement seem to compensate for the undesirable parts.

- Despite the actual majority support for the final status package in Israel, only 33% of the Israelis estimate that a majority in their society supports this package, while 57% believe that the majority opposes it. These perceptions tap the normative facet of public opinion and indicate that the package has not acquired widespread normative legitimacy in the Israeli public. Among Palestinians, where the majority opposes such a package, 49% identify this majority, while 42% think that there is majority support for it.
- In terms of mutual perceptions, majorities of both Israelis and Palestinians think that there is no majority support for this permanent status settlement package on the other side. 55% of the Israelis think that a majority of Palestinians opposes such a package, and 56% of the Palestinians think that a majority of Israelis opposes the package.

- Both sides' expectations regarding a final status settlement are grim: 65% among Israelis and 62% among Palestinians think it is impossible to reach such a settlement these days.

· As we do periodically in our joint polls, we asked Israelis and Palestinians about their readiness for a mutual recognition of identity, as part of a permanent status agreement and after all issues in the conflict are resolved and a Palestinian State is established. Our current poll shows that 65% of the Israeli public supports such a mutual recognition and 30% oppose it. Among Palestinians, 40% support and 59% oppose this step. In September 2012, 62% of the Israelis supported and 30% opposed this mutual recognition of identity; among Palestinians, 44% supported and 54% opposed this step.

Summary Table: Support for Clinton's Permanent Settlement Framework 2003-2012

		Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Aug	Dec	Dec	Dec
		03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
1) Borders and Territorial Exchange	ISR	47%	55%	53%	44%	46%	46%	47%	49%	51%	46%
	PAL	57%	63%	55%	61%	56%	54%	49%	49%	63%	53%
2) Refugees	ISR	35%	44%	43%	38%	44%	40%	36%	36%	42%	42%
	PAL	25%	46%	40%	41%	39%	40%	37%	41%	45%	41%
3) Jerusalem	ISR	41%	39%	38%	38%	36%	40%	34%	38%	38%	38%
	PAL	46%	44%	33%	39%	36%	36%	31%	36%	40%	29%
4) Demilitarized State	ISR	61%	68%	69%	62%	61%	64%	56%	62%	67%	70%
	PAL	36%	27%	20%	28%	23%	27%	24%	24%	32%	28%
5) Security Arrangements	ISR	50%	61%	62%	51%	53%	56%	49%	52%	63%	59%
	PAL	23%	53%	43%	42%	51%	35%	34%	38%	50%	46%
6) End of Conflict	ISR	66%	76%	80%	68%	66%	67%	68%	68%	70%	68%
	PAL	42%	69%	64%	62%	66%	55%	55%	58%	63%	59%
Overall Package	ISR	47%	64%	64%	52%	53%	52%	46%	52%	58%	56%
	PAL	39%	54%	46%	48%	47%	41%	38%	40%	50%	42%

(D) Conflict management and threat perceptions

· 51% of Israelis support negotiation with the Hamas government in order to reach a compromise agreement with the Palestinians, 46% oppose such talks. However 66% think that the majority opinion opposes such negotiations.

· Among Israelis, 55% are worried and 44% are not worried that they or their family may be harmed by Arabs in their daily life, in September 2012 the corresponding figures were 51% and 48%. Among Palestinians, 74% are worried that they or a member of their family could be hurt by Israel in their daily life or that their land would be confiscated or home demolished; 26% are not worried. Similar results were obtained in our September poll (72%; 28%).

· The level of threat on both sides regarding the aspirations of the other side in the long run is very high. 61% of Palestinians think that Israel's goals are to extend its borders to cover all the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea and

expel its Arab citizens, and 20% think the goals are to annex the West Bank while denying political rights to the Palestinians. The modal category among Israelis is that the Palestinian aspirations in the long run are to conquer the State of Israel and destroy much of the Jewish population in Israel (42%); 18% think the goals of the Palestinians are to conquer the State of Israel. Only 12% of the Palestinians think Israel's aspirations in the long run are to withdraw from part of the territories occupied in 1967 after guaranteeing its security, and 6% think Israel aspires to withdraw from all of the territories occupied in 1967 after guaranteeing its security. 23% of Israelis think the aspirations of the Palestinians are to regain all of the territories conquered in 1967, and 13% think the Palestinians aspire to regain some of the territories conquered in 1967.

· These mutual perceptions are very much off the mark.

21% of the Israelis say the aspirations of Israel are to withdraw to the 1967 border after guaranteeing Israel's security; 40% say it is to withdraw from parts of the territories after guaranteeing Israel's security; 13% say it is to annex the West Bank without granting political rights to the Palestinians living there; and 14% say it is to annex the West Bank and expel the Palestinians living there.

Among the Palestinians 29% say that the aspirations of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO are to regain some of the territories conquered in the 1967 war; 33% say it is to regain all the territories conquered in the 1967 war; 21% say it is to conquer the State of Israel and regain control over the pre 1948 Palestine; and 12% say it is to conquer the State of Israel and destroy much of the Jewish population in Israel