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Results of Palestinian Public Opinion Polls
No 15
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Background:

- The explosion that took place in Jabalia refugee camp on Sep. 23 during a military parade organized by Hamas celebrating the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. The explosion took the lives of 20 citizens.
- The tense relationship between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas on the background of the explosion and the armed confrontations between the two sides which were reconciled later on.
- The launching of rockets from the Gaza Strip on Israel following the explosion and the Israeli threat to retaliate with an unprecedented harmful response if these rockets do not stop.
- A covenant of honor is signed on Oct. 17 by 12 Palestinian factions excluding Hamas regarding commitment to well-defined principles before and after the second legislative elections.
- An Israeli rejection, backed by the Americans, to the participation of Hamas in the coming legislative elections. The Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian factions consider the Israeli rejection an interference in Palestinian internal affairs. They emphasize the importance of the participation of all Palestinians in the elections which will be held on January 25, 2005.
- The continuous Israeli incursions and assassinations; several leaders and subjects of the Palestinian factions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were assassinated.
- Reaching an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians with American mediation to reoperate the border crossing of the Gaza Strip especially Rafah crossing with Palestinian suspensions that the agreement may not be honored by the Israelis. Hamas considered the agreement a weak one which reduces the Palestinian sovereignty and hurts the dignity of Palestinians.

The Results:

Following are the results of the Fifteenth Palestinian Public Opinion Poll conducted by the Centre for Opinion Polls and Survey Studies at An-Najah National University during the period from November 16 to 18, 2005. **The University sponsors all polls conducted by its Centre.**

This poll undertakes several subjects centered on the coming Palestinian legislative elections, an assessment of the performance of institutions of the Palestinian Authority, the state of democracy and human rights in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in addition to political sympathies and other issues.

The sample included 1360 persons whose age group is 18 and above and who have the right to vote. The sample forms one per thousand from among the total number of Palestinian people of this age group. The enclosed questionnaire was distributed on 860 persons from the West Bank and 500 persons from the Gaza Strip. The sample was drawn randomly and the margin of error is about $\pm 3\%$; still 2.5% of the members of the sample refused to answer the questionnaire.

* The Opinions represented in the results reflect those of the study; they do not represent by any means the opinion of An-Najah National University.



Major results:

- 66.8% from among respondents believe that the second legislative elections will be conducted on its specified date.
- 53.% from among respondents assert that the legislative elections will be democratic and fair; 37.1% say the opposite.
- 54.8% from among respondents do not know what the mixed elections system on the basis of which the coming elections will be conducted is, 53.6% do not know what the proportional percentage elections system is and 43.3% do not know what the elections system which is based on dividing the country into circles is.
- 37.4% from among respondents believe that the present Legislative Council members are concerned about conducting elections; 52.9% believe that they are not.
- The major thing that respondents hope to see new Legislative Council members perform is fighting corruption with 28.1% followed by putting an end to poverty and unemployment with 26.9%, the rule of law with 22.2% and improving health services and education with 10.6%.
- 56.4% from among respondents see that the internal security conditions permit conducting legislative elections; 35% see the contrary.
- 75.5% from among respondents will participate in the coming legislative elections and 24.5% will not.
- 20.4% from among respondent will not participate in the legislative elections because of religious reasons, 6.3% for political reasons, and 40.2% will not participate because in their view the elections will not change anything.
- When respondents who say that they will not participate in the elections are asked about the factors that may make them change their opinion and participate 5.7 % say that they may change their opinion if they see a convincing elections program that meets their personal ambitions, 2.1% say if they are given financial incentives, 25.3% say if they find competent candidates, 1.8% say if any of their relatives or acquaintances run for the elections, 15.1% say if they see an elections program that would respond to their national ambitions, and 46.7% say they will not participate under all circumstances.
- 2.5% say they will reelect the same members of the present Legislative Council and 29.4% say they will not reelect anyone of them.
- The characteristics that respondents see qualifying for the candidate they will elect in the coming Legislative Council elections are as follows:

Being uncorrupted	92.00%
Educational qualifications	85.03%
Being religious	77.64%
Patriotic history	77.39%
Belongness to a political party	55.60%
Male gender	51.71%
The economic situation of the candidate	37.72%
Family Belongness	36.10%
Female gender	34.36%
Place of habitation	34.31%
Kinship	34.11%
Being an ex-Legislative Council member	27.51%



- 39.5% from among respondents will vote for Fateh block in the coming Legislative Council elections, 19.9% will vote for Hamas block and 4% will vote for the Public Front block, 2% will vote for the National Initiative block, 0.2% will vote for Fida block, 0.8% will vote for the Democratic Front block and 1.2% for the People's Party block.
- If the choice before voters in the coming legislative elections is limited to a choice between two blocks, one representing the PLO and another representing Hamas, 55.8% from among respondents will vote for the PLO block and 29.1% will vote for the Hamas block.
- If the choice before voters in the coming legislative elections is limited to a choice between Fateh block and Hamas block, 52% from among respondents say they will vote for Fateh block and 30.5% say that they will vote for Hamas block.
- If there is a coalition of blocks, 24.3% will vote for a coalition from among different Islamic factions, 40.8% will vote for a coalition from Fateh, Fida and People's Party, 5.1% will vote for a coalition between the Public Front and the Democratic Front, and 2.7% will vote for a coalition from the Palestinian National Initiative and independent members.
- 41.1% from among respondents say that the basic principle which decides casting their votes in the coming legislative elections is the good reputation of the candidate, 16.9% say it is the patriotic history of the candidate and 11.9% say it is the candidate's elections program.
- As for elections on the basis of percentage electoral lists, 28% from among respondents say that the basic principle which makes them decide to whom they will give their vote in the coming legislative elections is the elections program of the candidate; 34.6% say it is the political orientations of the list.
- 20.3% from among respondents say that their priority on the local scale is alleviating poverty and unemployment, 18.2% say it is controlling the local security situation, 23.8% say it is freeing prisoners, 19.6% say it is fighting corruptions in public institutions, 7.4% say it is providing personal security for citizens, 2.3% say improving educational and health services, and 5.2% say it is putting an end to mediations (*wasta*) in appointments in public positions.
- The percentage of those who assess the performance of the presidential office as "good" and fair" is 74.2%, the Palestinian Government 63.9%, the Legislative Council 53.7%, the judicious system 58.8%, and the security apparatuses 55.2%.
- 33.1% from among respondents support launching armed operations from the Gaza Strip if Israel keeps its control over the border crossings of the Strip.
- 14% from among respondents believe that the Palestinian Authority in the last period was able to impose security and order on the Gaza Strip.
- 20.7% from among respondents believe that the state of democracy in Palestine is good; 28.8% say that it is bad.
- 25.3% say that the political system in Palestine is proceeding towards building a democratic system.
- 25.3% from among respondents assess respect paid by the Palestinian Authority to human rights in Palestine as "good".
- 34.5% from among respondents assess respect paid by the PA to the freedom of press as "good".



- 42.4% from among respondents say that they are able to criticize the policies of the Palestinian Authority without fear.
- 35.6% from among respondents believe that the Palestinian social system gives them the freedom to adopt any religion or thought they like; 37.6% say the contrary.
- 82.9% from among respondents do not feel safe neither for themselves nor for their families and properties.
- As for political affiliation respondents give the following results:

People's Party	1.3%
Democratic Front	1.0%
Islamic Jihad	2.4%
Fateh	37.1%
Hamas	19.3%
Fida	0.1%
Popular Front	3.5%
Palestinian National Initiative	1.5%
I am an independent nationalist	6.5%
I am an independent Islamist	5.4%
None of the above	20.6%
Others	2.2%



The General Results

President Mahmoud Abbas ascertained that the legislative elections will be conducted on its appointed time in January of the next year (2006). Do you believe that the elections will be conducted on the appointed time.

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	66.8	66.6	67.2
No	23.9	26.0	20.2
No opinion/I do not know	9.3	7.3	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you believe that the coming legislative elections will be democratic and fair?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	53.0	54.0	51.4
No	37.0	38.0	35.4
No opinion/I do not know	9.9	8.0	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The coming elections will be conducted according to the mixed elections system. Do you know what mixed elections system means?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	39.3	32.8	50.4
No	54.8	63.8	39.2
No opinion/I do not know	6.0	3.4	10.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you have any knowledge of the proportional elections system?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	40.7	33.1	53.6
No	53.6	64.2	35.4
No opinion/I do not know	5.7	2.7	11.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you have any knowledge of the elections system which is based on dividing the country into circles?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	51.3	45.8	60.6
No	43.3	51.3	29.6
No opinion/I do not know	5.4	2.9	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Do you believe that the present Legislative Council members are concerned about conducting the legislative elections on the appointed time?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	37.4	42.0	29.6
No	52.9	49.9	58.0
No opinion/I do not know	9.7	8.1	12.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Generally speaking, what is the basic thing that you hope the coming Legislative Council to accomplish after its election in January of the coming year?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Upgrading the educational and health services	10.6	10.9	10.0
Reducing poverty and unemployment	26.9	29.0	23.4
Imposing order and the rule of law	22.2	21.3	23.8
Imposing control over the executive power	5.7	5.1	6.8
Fighting corruption	28.1	29.7	25.4
Other	3.8	2.2	6.4
No opinion/I don not know	2.7	1.9	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

There are people who see that the local security conditions allow for conducting democratic and fair legislative elections and there are those who see the opposite. What is your opinion?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Local security conditions allow for conducting elections	56.4	57.8	54.0
Local security conditions do not allow for conducting elections	35.0	37.6	30.6
No, opinion/I do not know	8.6	4.7	15.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Will you participate in the coming legislative elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	75.5	74.1	87.0
No	24.5	25.9	22.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Why don't you want to participate in the elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
For religious reasons(a religious taboo)	20.4	22.4	16.4
For religious reasons(they come under the umbrella of Oslo)	6.3	3.6	11.8
Elections will not change any thing	40.2	36.8	37.4
I am not convinced with the running blocks	18.0	22.4	9.1
The political stream that I support will not participate	4.5	3.1	7.3
Others	6.3	8.1	2.7
No opinion/I do not know	4.2	3.6	5.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

What are the reasons that will compel you to change your opinion so that you will participate in the elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The availability of a convincing elections program that will satisfy my personal ambitions.	5.7	6.3	4.6
Receiving financial incentives from a candidate	2.1	2.2	1.8
The availability of competent candidates.	25.3	26.0	23.9
The running of one of my relatives or acquaintances in the elections..	1.8	1.8	1.8
The availability of an elections program that would meet my national aspirations.	15.1	15.2	14.7
Other	3.3	3.1	3.7
I will not participate at all.	46.7	45.3	49.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In the coming legislative elections whom do you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The same members of the present LC	2.5	2.7	2.3
Some of the members of the present LC	11.6	14.1	7.5
I will not vote for any one of the members of the present LC	29.4	22.9	40.1
I will decide then	55.4	59.3	48.8
No opinion / I do not know	1.0	0.9	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



What characteristics do you see qualifying in the person that you intend to vote for in the coming legislative elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Kinship	3.4111	2.8000	4.4087
Educational qualifications	8.5029	8.8110	8.0000
Belongness to a party	5.5977	5.1386	6.3470
Family belongness	3.6101	2.9215	4.7378
Patriotic history	7.7385	7.4953	8.1362
Being religious	7.7644	7.9276	7.4974
Place of habitation	3.4312	2.9387	4.2365
Economic situation	3.7719	3.3281	4.4987
Being a PLC ex-member	2.7510	2.6855	2.8582
Male gender	5.1709	4.8774	5.6521
Female gender	3.4361	3.1947	3.8325
Being uncorrupted	9.1951	9.5912	8.5476

To which of the following blocks do you give your vote?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Hamas	19.9	18.1	22.9
Fateh	39.5	37.7	42.4
Public Front	4.0	3.5	4.9
Palestinian National Initiative	2.0	1.9	2.1
Fida	0.2	0.0	0.5
Democratic Front	0.8	0.5	1.3
People's Party	1.2	0.8	1.8
Others	4.3	3.9	4.9
I have not decided yet	28.2	33.6	19.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

If you are given a choice in the coming LC elections to choose between two blocks only, one representing the PLO and one representing Hamas, whom do you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The PLO block	55.8	54.6	57.6
Hamas block	29.1	30.9	26.2
No opinion / I do not know	15.1	14.5	16.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

If you are given a choice in the coming LC elections to choose between two blocks only, one representing Fateh and one representing Hamas, whom do you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Fateh block	52.0	52.2	51.7
Hamas block	30.5	31.8	28.5
No opinion / I do not know	17.5	16.0	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



If the coalition of blocks comes as follows, which block do you vote for?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
A coalition formed from members of different Islamic faction(Jihad & Hamas)	24.3	24.7	23.7
A coalition of Fateh, Fida & People's Party.	40.8	39.2	43.4
A coalition of the Public Front & the Democratic Front.	5.1	4.6	5.9
A coalition of the Palestinian Initiative and independent members.	2.7	2.8	2.6
A block from Independent nationalists	4.2	4.2	4.1
A block from Independent Islamists	4.3	4.1	4.6
Others	2.8	3.0	2.6
I haven't decided yet	15.8	17.5	13.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

What is the major thing that will make you decide to whom you will give your vote in your elections circle in the coming legislative elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Belongness to the party of the candidate	20.9	16.0	28.8
Family belongness to the candidate	2.3	1.4	3.9
Personal acquaintance with the candidate	6.9	6.4	7.7
The good reputation of the candidate	41.4	48.0	29.8
Candidates Patriotic History	16.9	16.7	17.2
The candidates elections program	11.9	11.5	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

As for elections on the basis of proportional lists(on the national level) what is the major thing that will make you decide to which block you will give your vote in the coming legislative elections?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The political orientation of the block	34.6	33.8	36.0
The elections program of the block	28.0	27.1	29.3
The names of candidate in the block	27.3	29.5	23.7
Other	2.2	2.4	1.8
No opinion/I do not know	8.0	7.3	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



What are your most important priorities on the local level at the current stage?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Reducing poverty and unemployment.	20.3	20.6	19.8
Controlling the local security	18.2	19.3	16.5
Releasing prisoners	23.8	28.3	16.5
Fighting corruption in public institutions	19.6	17.6	22.9
Security personal security for citizens.	7.4	7.2	7.7
Improving educational and health conditions	2.3	2.7	1.8
Limiting mediation (<i>wasta</i>) in the appointment in public positions	5.2	3.3	8.2
Others	3.1	0.9	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

How do you evaluate the performance of the following Palestinian institutions since the election of President Mahmoud Abbas?

Total					
	Good	Fair	Bad	I don't know/ No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	31.0	43.2	20.0	5.7	100.0
The Palestinian Government	23.8	40.1	31.6	4.5	100.0
The Legislative Council	16.4	37.3	39.7	6.6	100.0
The judicious system	23.8	35.0	33.5	7.7	100.0
The security apparatuses	19.6	35.6	40.8	4.0	100.0
West Bank					
	Good	Fair	Bad	I don't know/ No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	34.0	43.8	17.2	5.0	100.0
The Palestinian Government	27.9	41.0	27.2	3.8	100.0
The Legislative Council	19.3	39.2	35.5	6.0	100.0
The judicious system	25.7	34.5	32.1	7.7	100.0
The security apparatuses	24.0	36.9	36.5	2.7	100.0
Gaza Strip					
	Good	Fair	Bad	I don't know/ No opinion	Total
The Presidential Institution	26.0	42.2	24.8	7.0	100.0
The Palestinian Government	16.8	38.4	39.2	5.6	100.0
The Legislative Council	11.4	34.0	47.0	7.6	100.0
The judicious system	20.4	35.8	36.0	7.8	100.0
The security apparatuses	12.0	33.4	48.2	6.4	100.0



After the Israeli withdrawal for the Gaza Strip, do you support or reject launching armed resistance operations against Israel from the liberated areas in the Gaza Strip?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I support	33.1	35.9	28.2
I reject	58.7	58.3	59.4
No opinion/I do not know	8.2	5.8	12.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Since the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, do you believe that the Palestinian Authority has been capable of imposing order, law and security in the Gaza Strip?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	14.0	15.6	11.4
Partially	39.6	37.9	42.6
No	42.8	42.3	43.6
No opinion/I do not know	3.5	4.2	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

As for the state of democracy in Palestine, how do you see it?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	20.7	19.7	22.6
Fair	47.6	46.0	50.2
Bad	28.8	32.1	23.2
No opinion/I do not know	2.9	2.2	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you think that the political system in Palestine is heading towards building a democratic system?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	25.3	26.3	23.6
Partially	46.2	43.1	51.4
No	23.9	27.0	18.6
No opinion/I do not know	4.6	3.6	6.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



How do you assess the respect paid to human rights by the Palestinian Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	25.3	27.0	22.4
Fair	42.6	41.4	44.8
Bad	28.7	29.3	27.6
No opinion/I do not know	3.4	2.3	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

How do you assess the respect paid to the freedom of press in Palestine by the Palestinian Authority?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Good	34.5	37.0	30.2
Fair	42.3	39.9	46.4
Bad	17.8	18.7	16.2
No opinion/I do not know	5.4	4.4	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Can you criticize the policies of the Palestinian Authority without fear?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	42.4	45.7	36.6
Partially	31.4	25.7	41.2
No	24.4	27.7	18.8
No opinion/I do not know	1.8	0.9	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do you think that the Palestinian social system gives you the freedom to adopt any religion or idea you choose?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	35.6	38.4	30.8
Partially	23.2	16.6	34.4
No	37.6	41.7	30.6
No opinion/I do not know	3.6	3.3	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0



Under the current local security situation that we go through, do you feel that you, your family and properties are secure?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	16.3	13.8	20.4
Partially	30.4	24.5	40.6
No	52.5	61.2	37.6
No opinion/I do not know	0.8	0.5	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Which of the following political affiliations do you support?

PARTY	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
People's Party	1.3	0.9	2.0
Democratic Front	1.0	0.8	1.2
Islamic Jihad	2.4	1.3	4.4
Fateh	37.1	36.0	38.8
Hamas	19.3	19.4	19.0
Fida	0.1	0.0	0.2
Popular Front	3.5	3.5	3.6
Palestinian National Initiative	1.5	1.5	1.6
I am an independent nationalist	6.5	5.6	5.6
I am an independent Islamist	5.4	6.7	3.2
None of the above	20.6	22.9	16.6
Others	2.2	1.3	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0