



## **On the eve of the Fateh Sixth**

### **Congress: AWRAD publishes the results of its opinion poll carried out among the members**

#### **(Cautious optimism and hope for change)**

August 3, 2009

#### **Highlights**

- 61 percent support convening the Congress on time and under any circumstances, even if the Gaza members were unable to attend.
- Representation of Gaza, membership and the performance of the (Membership Committee) are the main points of contention.
- 60 percent of the members are optimistic about the success of the Congress.
- 73 percent believe that the Congress will not lead to a split in the Fateh movement.
- 59 percent believe that the Congress will lead to fundamental change in the current leadership.
- 77 Percent support the allocation of a quota for women in both the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee. The largest support is for a 30 percent representation.
- In case the Gaza members do not attend the Congress, 53 percent support the allocation of a quota for Gaza in the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee.
- 40 Percent evaluate that the performance of the (Preparatory Committee) as weak; another 44 percent believe that the performance of the (Membership Committee) is weak.
- The representation of women in the membership of the Congress is less than 18 percent.

#### **Introduction:**

The Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) carried out an opinion poll on the attitudes of the members of the Fateh Congress who are registered on lists that were available for AWRAD from official sources. Three hundred (300) female and male members were interviewed to represent all sectors and geographical areas (West Bank, Gaza, and Diaspora). The sample included 82 percent men and 18 percent women. About 42 percent were from the West Bank, 34 percent were from Gaza and 24 percent from the Palestinian Diaspora. The

sample was also representative of all age groups. Most of the interviews were carried out by phone and some through face-to-face interviews. Dr. Nader Said, the President of AWRAD, declared that the cooperation of the members in filling out the questionnaires was astounding, reflecting a positive attitude and forward –looking approach.

### **Main results**

#### **First: division about the preparations for the congress**

- 61 percent of the members evaluated the preparations for the congress positively (satisfied or satisfied to some extent), and 38 percent evaluated the preparations negatively (dissatisfied or dissatisfied to some extent).
- 25 percent evaluated the performance of the Preparatory Committee as good, and 35 percent evaluated its performance as medium. In contrast, 40 percent evaluated the performance of the Committee as weak.

#### **Second: negative evaluation of the Membership Committee and the representation of the various sectors.**

- 11 percent of the members declared that they are satisfied about the membership in the Congress. In addition, 23 percent declared that they are (satisfied to some extent). In contrast, 50 percent said that they are dissatisfied. In addition to 16 percent saying that they are (dissatisfied to some extent).
- As for the representation of various regions and sectors in the congress, 11 percent declared that they are satisfied, and 38 percent said that they are satisfied to some extent. In contrast, 33 percent said that they are dissatisfied about their representation in the congress. This in addition to 18 percent who said that they are dissatisfied to some extent.
- About the performance of the Membership Committee, 44 percent declared that its performance is (weak), 41 percent evaluated its performance as (medium). As for those who evaluated its performance as good, they were 15 percent.

#### **Third: Cautious Optimism**

- 61 percent of the members announced that they are optimistic about the success of the Congress in achieving its objectives. In addition, 24 percent were neutral (between optimism and pessimism). In contrast, 15 percent announced that they are pessimistic.
- 52 percent declared that the Congress will lead to significant change in the agenda of the movement, and 26 percent said that this will be achieved to some extent. In contrast, 12 percent do not expect any substantial changes.
- 59 percent declared, as well, that the Congress will lead to changes in the current leadership. In addition, 38 percent declared that changes will take place to some extent. Only 4 percent did not expect that the congress will bring changes to the current leadership.
- A majority of (73 percent) are not worried that the congress would bring any fragmentation in the Fateh Movement. In contrast, 16 percent are worried (to some extent), and 12 percent are worried to a large extent that the Congress will lead to a split in the movement.

#### **Fourth: Representation of Gaza strip**

- The majority (61 percent) of the congress members in West Bank, Gaza and the Diaspora support convening the congress on its planned date despite all circumstances.
- And in case that the Congress was convened without the presence of the Gaza members or most of them, 52 percent support an allocation of an agreed-upon quota for Gaza members in both the Council and the Committee.
- As for postponing the vote for Gaza council members until circumstances allow it, 30 percent supported this choice. In contrast, 18 percent do not support any of the above choices.

#### **Fifth: The participation of women in the Congress**

- The percentage of women interviewed within the sample did not exceed 18 percent of the Congress members.
- 77 percent of the members support a quota for women in the Revolutionary Council.
- A majority support dedicating 30 percent of the seats for women in the Council.
- As for the Central Committee, 73 percent support dedicating a percentage of seats to women.
- The largest group of supporters falls between 20-30 percent.

#### **Sixth: Regional variation**

Dr. Nader Said argues that despite the general consensus on the importance of the Congress and the overall optimism, regional variance might be a source of concern. The West Bank and Gaza representatives agree on some issues, whereas, the West Bank and the Diaspora representatives agree on other issues. Dr. Nader Said believes that the sources of contention will be the issue of membership and the presence of Gaza members. The following are examples of the regional variance:

- West Bank and Gaza (WBG) representatives are less satisfied with the preparations for the congress compared to the Diaspora representatives. As much as 82 percent of the Diaspora representatives positively evaluate the preparations, while 61 percent of Gaza representatives feel the same way.
- WBG) representatives are also less satisfied with the performance of the Preparatory Committee, where 46 percent of the Diaspora representatives evaluate it as good, and only 19 percent of Gaza representatives and 17 percent of West Bank representatives feel the same way.
- 50 percent of the Diaspora members declared that they are content with the Congress membership. Whereas, 24 percent of Gaza representatives and 34 of West Bank representatives share the same position.
- The Diaspora representatives are the most optimistic (82 percent) about the success of the Congress, compared to 57 percent in the West Bank and 51 percent in Gaza.
- 68 percent of Gaza representatives expect changes within the current leadership, 61 percent of the Diaspora representatives and 50 percent of West Bank representatives expect the same.

- 87 percent of the Diaspora representatives support a quota for women, 83 percent of Gaza representatives share the same support. The least support is in the West Bank (66 percent).
- 73 percent of the Diaspora representatives support convening the Congress on the date set even if the Gaza representatives were not present. About 65 percent of West Bank representatives share the same thing.
- As for the Gaza representatives, they were divided, where 48 percent of them supported that and 50 percent opposed it.
- The Gaza representatives were also divided about the scenarios of their representation if the congress was convened without their presence. About 44 percent supported the postponement of the elections until circumstances allow, whereas, 42 percent of Gaza representatives supported a quota for Gaza members.
- A majority of Diaspora and West Bank representatives supported the second scenario which is an agreed-upon quota for Gaza.