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مركز العالم العربي للبحوث والتنمية
Arab World For Research & Development

Results of an Opinion Poll

Evaluation of Present and Future

Government Performance

Evaluation of Leaders and Parties

PLC and Presidential Elections

Local Elections

The Peace Process

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Field work: 21-22 June 2010

Sample Size: 1,200 Palestinians in the West Bank & Gaza

Margin of error: ± 3 %

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The Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) releases the results of its most recent public opinion poll in the West Bank and Gaza. The poll was conducted less than two weeks after the cancelation of the local elections dated 17 July, 2010 (21-22 June 2010). The sample size was 1200 Palestinian adults with a margin of error (+/- 3%). The poll questioned Palestinians on the following issues: evaluation of present and future, government performance, evaluation of leaders and parties, PLC and presidential elections, local elections and the peace process. The full results are available to interested individuals, institutions, media outlets and decision makers on our website (www.awrad.org). The poll was carried out under the supervision of Dr. Nader Said – Foqahaa, the President of AWRAD.

Highlights:

- 75 percent of the respondents believe that the economy is declining.
- 67 percent consider the (creation of jobs and fighting poverty) as their first priority.
- 44 percent oppose and 42 percent support the postponement of the local elections.
- 30 percent blame Fateh and 24 percent blame Hamas for the postponement.
- 74 percent believe that the elections will not take place until Fateh and Hamas reconcile.
- 66 percent support the renewal of the (truce) between Hamas and Israel.
- 48 percent support and 47 percent oppose direct negotiations between the PA and Israel.
- 47 percent would appoint Fayyad and 22 percent would appoint Haniyeh for the PM position.
- Presidential election: 50 percent for a Fateh candidate, 25 percent for a Hamas candidate and another 25 percent for an independent candidate.
- PLC election: PLO list headed by Abbas (54 percent), Islamist list headed by Haniyeh (24 percent), independent list headed by both Fayyad and Mustafa Bargouthi (22 percent).

Detailed Results:

1. Needs and Priorities:

The poll reveals the following results concerning the assessment of internal priorities in the West Bank and Gaza:

- Job creation and poverty alleviation: Two-thirds of the respondents selected the issue of (job creation and poverty alleviation) as their number one priority.
- The rate in Gaza reached 73 percent and in the West Bank 63 percent.
- The number two priority is the improvement of the educational system with 16 percent selecting that as their first priority, with 18 percent in the West Bank and 12 percent in Gaza.
- About 8 percent selected the development of health services as their first priority.
- Transportation and road repair came as the number four priority with about 3 percent.

When asked to evaluate the overall situation of Palestinian society, about two-thirds of the respondents said it is moving in the wrong direction, while 27 percent said it is moving in the right direction.

As much as 80 percent in Gaza said that society is moving in the wrong direction, compared with 60 percent in the West Bank.

Regarding the economy, 75 percent said that it is getting worse while 21 percent said that it is getting better. A vast majority of Gazans (87 percent) felt that the economy is getting worse, while 67 percent of West Bank respondents felt the same way.

2. Evaluation of Government Performance

Palestinians in the West Bank were questioned about their government (headed by Dr. Salam Fayyad) and Gazans about their government (headed by Mr. Ismael Haniyeh). The results reveal the following trends:

- Palestinians are almost equally divided between positive, fair and negative evaluation of most areas for both governments.

- The negative evaluation of the performance of the Haniyeh government had reached an all-time low, while the performance of the Fayyad government is stabilizing.
- Gazans are generally more polarized about the performance of their government than West Bank respondents who tend to be in the middle.
- **Improvement of security:** Both governments receive their best evaluation in the area of improving security, where 39 percent of West Bank respondents and 38 percent of Gaza respondents evaluated the performance of their respective governments as good. In addition, 34 percent of West Bank respondents and 30 percent of Gaza respondents evaluated the performance of their respective governments as fair. In contrast, the negative evaluation in Gaza was higher (32 percent) than in the West Bank (25 percent).
- **Fighting corruption:** Gazans were divided about the performance of the Haniyeh government in the area of fighting corruption, 28 percent said it was good, and 29 percent fair. In contrast, 43 percents said that the Haniyeh government's effort in this area is weak. As for the Fayyad government, 24 percent evaluated its efforts in this area as good and 35 percent as fair, compared with 38 percent as weak.
- **Health services:** About 32 percent evaluated the performance of the Fayyad government in the area of providing health services as good, compared with only 16 percent for the Haniyeh government. About 60 percent evaluated the performance of the Haniyeh government in this area as weak, compared with 27 percent felt the same way about the Fayyad government. For Fayyad, there is no change detected in this regard since March 2009. For Haniyeh, however the negative evaluation in this field went from 35 percent (March 2009) to 60 percent now.
- **Improving the economy:** About 24 percent evaluated the performance of the Fayyad government in improving the economy as good and 36 percent as fair. In contrast, 50 percent evaluated its performance as weak. Increasing from 40 percent during October 2008. As for the Haniyeh government, 69 percent evaluated its performance in improving the economy as weak, 24 percent as fair and only 7 percent as good.

In general, the poll reveals that more Palestinians (47 percent) would choose Fayyad for the position of the prime minister at the present time, compared with 22 percent who would choose Haniyeh.

3. The Postponement of Local Elections

Local elections were scheduled on the 17th of July 2010. Just one day before the closing date for the submission of lists, the Palestinian government headed by Mr. Fayyad, in agreement with Presidential directions and a decision by top Fateh leadership, issued a brief statement postponing the elections. At the same time, Hamas had already made a decision to boycott the elections and prevented their conduct in Gaza. The poll shows that Palestinians were split on this issue:

- Almost equal numbers of respondents support (42 percent) and oppose (44 percent) the postponement of the local elections. About 15 percent were not sure.
- About 30 percent of the respondents blamed Fateh for the postponement, while 24 percent blamed Hamas for that. Outside forces were blamed by 15 percent and the Central Election Commission by 8 percent. Only 6 percent blamed the ministerial cabinet headed by Fayyad.
- Blame for both Fateh and Hamas was higher in Gaza than in the West Bank. About 34 percent of Gazans blamed Fateh compared with 28 percent of West Bank respondents. Blame for Hamas was the highest in Gaza as 40 percent blamed it, compared with 34 percent blaming Fateh.
- About 39 percent believed that the main reason for the postponement of the election was the desire of Fateh to reach reconciliation with Hamas. Another 27 percent believed the time was not appropriate for local council elections. Against common perceptions among the intellectuals, only 23 percent believed that the elections were postponed because Fateh is not ready and afraid that it will lose the elections.
- The image of Fateh was, however, negatively influenced by the postponement, where 57 percent said that they have a more negative view of Fateh after the postponement. Only 20 percent have a more positive view. About 17 percents said that their views of Fateh had not changed.
- The postponement of the local elections, and the endorsement of Fateh for that, encouraged the majority (63 percent) to support local elections that take place only after a reconciliation agreement is reached between Fateh and Hamas. In contrast, 31 percent believed that the elections should take place as soon as possible.

4. Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) Election

The majority of respondents (61 percent) believed that elections for President, PLC and local councils will take place soon. Another (73 percent), however, believed that no elections will be held until Fateh and Hamas reconcile.

In a contest for popularity, the following results will emerge (percentages out of the public):

- **Fateh:** 43 percent, 41 percent in the West Bank and 46 percent in Gaza.
- **Hamas:** 14 percent, 11 percent in the West Bank and 18 percent in Gaza.
- **PFLP, Mubadara:** each received between 4-5 percent.
- **Will not vote/undecided:** 31 percent.

If elections took place on the day of the poll, and the listed groups (in the attached table) ran, the following results are predicted by AWRAD (based on those who say that they will vote and taking into consideration a margin of error of 3 percent added to Hamas and subtracted from Fateh):

- **Fateh:** 58 percent in both the West Bank and Gaza.
- **Hamas:** 23 percent, 19 percent West Bank and 27 percent in Gaza.
- **PFLP:** 6-7 percent.
- **Mubadara:** 6-7 percent.
- **All other groups:** 1-3 percent each.

If only FIVE lists ran, AWRAD predicts that they will receive the following results (taking into consideration those who say that they will vote):

- A list of **Fateh** headed by **M. Abbas:** 47 percent.
- A list of **Hamas** headed by **Haniyeh:** 23 percent.
- A list of **independents** headed by **Mustafa Bargouthi:** 12 percent.
- A list of **independents** headed by **Fayyad:** 9-10 percent.
- A list of **leftists** headed by **Saadat:** 6 percent.

If only the following THREE lists ran, the results would be as follows:

- A list of **Fateh** and **PLO** factions headed by **Abbas:** 51 percent.
- A list of **Islamists** including **Hamas** headed by **Haniyeh:** 26 percent.
- A list of **independents** headed by both **Fayyad** and **Mustafa Bargouthi:** 23 percent.

5. Presidential Elections

In a popularity contest in the realm of public opinion, the poll reveals the following results:

- **Abbas:** 31 percent; 29 percent in the **West Bank** and 35 percent in **Gaza**.
- **Marwan Bargouthi:** 14 percent; 13 percent in the **West Bank** and 16 percent in **Gaza**.
- **Haniyeh:** 10 percent; 8 percent in the **West Bank** and 14 percent in **Gaza**.
- **Fayyad:** 8-9 percent; 11 percent in the **West Bank** and 5 percent in **Gaza**.
- **Mustafa Bargouthi:** 8 percent; equal support in the **West Bank** and in **Gaza**.
- **Khaled Mashal:** 5 percent.
- **Mahmoud Zahhar:** less than 1 percent.
- **Others/undecided:** 23 percent.

If elections took place on the day of the poll, AWRAD predicts the following results:

- **A Fateh** candidate supported by both **Abbas** and **Marwan:** 55percent.
- **A Hamas** candidate supported by **Haniyeh, Mashal, and Zahhar:** 24 percent.
- **An Independent** candidate supported by both **Mustafa Bargouthi** and **Fayyad:** 21 percent.

If President Abbas decided not to run, the following results will emerge:

- **Marwan Bargouthi:** 35 percent.
- **Fayyad:** 27 percent.
- **Haniyeh:** 19 percent.
- **Mustafa Bargouthi:** 13 percent.
- **Mashal:** 5 percent.
- **Zahhar:** 1-2 percent.

6. The Performance of the CEC

- About 60 percent believe that the CEC is non-partisan, while 19 percent believe otherwise. About 22 percent are neutral or don't know.
- 68 percent believe that the CEC did a good job with the registration process before the local elections were canceled.

7. The Peace process

Palestinians continue to be divided over conducting direct negotiations with Israel:

- About 48 percent support direct negotiations between Israel and the PA.
- About 47 percent oppose such direct negotiations.
- About two-thirds of the respondents support a renewal of the (truce agreement) between Hamas and Israel (that will expire in September 2010); 26 percent oppose such a renewal.
- In addition, 68 percent believe that Hamas and other groups should not return to the firing of missiles against Israeli cities; 26 percent support.