Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

Public Opinion Poll NO (24)

The Peace Process after Netanyahu's Election, Freedom of Expression, Democratization under the PNA, the Recent Arab Summit, the Performance of the Legislative Council, June 28-30, 1996

This is the Survey Research Unit's (SRU) twenty-third public opinion poll. It covers the topics of the peace process after Netanyahu's election as Israel's Prime Minister, the final status negotiations, freedom of expression and democratization under the Palestinian National Authority, the recent Arab Summit and the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The SRU has been conducting regular public opinion polls to document an important phase in the history of the Palestinian people and to record the reaction of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to current events. CPRS does not adopt political positions and does not tolerate attempts to influence the conclusions reached. CPRS is committed to providing a scholarly contribution to the study of Palestinian politics and publishing the results of all its studies. Poll results provide a vital resource for researchers needing statistical information and analysis. The polls also give members of the community an opportunity to voice their opinions and to seek to influence decision-makers on issues of concern to them.

The following is an analysis of the results obtained in the twenty-third opinion poll conducted by the SRU.

General Background

Among the more important events in the two-month period preceding this poll, the Palestinian National Council (PNC) held its twenty-first session in Gaza on 4 April 1996. This session took place after the Israeli authorities allowed a select group of Palestinian leaders from outside the occupied territories to attend the meeting. Top of the agenda was the discussion and vote on the amendment of the Palestinian National Charter which contradicts the PLO's commitments in the Oslo agreements with Israel. The majority agreed that the Charter should be amended, with 504 in favor, 54 opposed and 14 abstained. Also, by the end of the session, a new executive committee of the PLO was elected.

A new Palestinian Government was formed by the Executive office. It was presented to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) for a vote of confidence and to discuss its guideline. The new government received the vote of confidence from the PLC, after debate and criticism from the members.

Within this period, Likud party leader, Binyamin Netenyahu, was elected as Israel's Prime Minister, while the centrist, right-wing and religious parties maintained a majority of seats in the Knesset. The Israeli elections were accompanied by a continued closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from Israel and Jerusalem. The closure aggravated the already poor economic conditions for Palestinians. An Arab Summit was held in Cairo to discuss the outcome of the Israeli elections and confirm Arab countries' support of Palestinians as they enter the final status negotiations with Israel.

Palestinian police raided Al-Najah National University in Nablus, on 30 March, arresting students who were believed to belong to opposition groups. The PLC condemned the crackdown on educational institutions and called for upholding the freedom of expression on campuses and throughout Palestinian society.

Israel continued to maintain strict security measures throughout the occupied territories not under Palestinian Authority. Also, in violation of the Oslo agreements, Israel confiscated more Palestinian land to build by-pass roads and expand existing settlements. This resulted in confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the areas of Qalqilia, Samon' and villages nearby Ramallah. Israel also imposed harsher restrictions on Palestinians in Jerusalem, including areas of political activity, building permits and residency status. Leading advocates of Palestinian rights maintain that these policies are intended to prejudice the negotiations on final status of Jerusalem.

Methodology

The questionnaire used in this poll was designed by through consultation with CPRS researchers. Prior to the polling dates, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 50 respondents in the Nablus area. As in all of our polls, it includes a large number of demographic and attitudinal variables (see Table 1 for the demographic distribution of the sample). Interviews were conducted between 28-30 March 1996 (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). The total sample is 1,382 persons, with 865 from the West Bank and 518 from the Gaza Strip.

Sample Distribution

Characteristic	% of Total	Count	Characteristic	% of Total	Count
Region					
West Bank	62.0	607	**Education**		
Gaza Strip	38.0	373	Up to 9 years	47.2	458
Total*	100.0	980	10-12 years	31.2	303

			2 years College University**	9.4 12.3	91 120
Place of Residence City Town Village Refugee Camp	 42.3 4.3 35.1 18.2	 414 43 344 179	**Marital Status** Single Married Divorced or Windowed	 25.2 69.3 5.5	 245 674 54
Age 18-22 23-27 28-32 33-37 38-42 43-47 48-52 50+	 19.8 16.6 14.0 12.2 9.2 8.2 5.5 14.6	 192 161 136 118 90 79 53 142	**Occupation** Laborer Craftsman Housewife Specialist*** Employee**** Merchant Student Farmer	 9.8 8.3 42.2 0.4 13.9 4.8 8.0 2.4	 94 80 405 4 133 46 77 23
Refugee Status Refugee Non-Refugee	 41.2 58.8	 400 572	Retired None	1.2 9.0	12 86
Gender Male Female	 49.4 50.6	 481 493	**Religion** Moslem Christian	 94.9 5.1	 924 49

*Note, as discussed more fully below, the sample size (counts and percentages) have been weighted in order to obtain unbiased estimates.

**Includes all post-secondary degrees.

***Specialists are defined as Professors/University Instructors, Engineers, Doctors, Lawyers, Pharmacists or Executives.

****Employees are defined as School Teachers, Government Employees, Nurses, Lower-level Company Employees.

Sample Selection

The sample in this poll was obtained using a multi-stage sampling technique. There are four stages in the process of randomly selecting units of the population into the sample. These are the following:

1. selecting population locations with probabilities proportional to size of the sample (PPS);
2. selecting one or two random blocks from each location;
3. selecting a house using systematic random sampling; and
4. selecting a person 18-years or older from the household.

We used 75 population locations in this poll, from which 1,382 households were selected into the sample. In this poll, the gender distribution does not reflect expected population parameters and

therefore had to be weighted to obtain unbiased estimates of the actual population. Specifically, we obtained an unequal distribution of men and women in the sample (*i.e.*, 40% men and 60% women), which was corrected by reducing the base of the sample size to n=980.

At the first stage of the sampling procedure, CPRS fieldworkers and researchers create maps of the localities of population centers randomly selected into the sample. These maps indicate the boundaries, main streets and clusters of residential neighborhoods in these areas. They are further divided into a number of sampling units (blocks), with each unit comprising an average of 100 housing units.

Households are selected based on a systematic sampling procedure. For example, if the fieldworkers estimate the number of houses in the sampling unit to be 100 and were assigned 10 interviews, the fieldworkers divide 100 by 10, obtaining 10. Then the fieldworkers conduct the first interview in the 10th household, and the second in the 20th and so forth. Fieldworkers start their sample selection of housing units from a well defined point in the area such as a post office, mosque or busines. They are instructed to report on the direction of their sampling walks, and play an active role in drawing maps of each locality as well as estimating the number of houses in each block.

Data Collection

Our fieldworkers participated in a number of workshops and training sessions where we discuss the aims and methods of the poll. The topics we covered are household interviewing techniques, confidence building, mapping and sampling procedures. Four special training seminars were held prior to the poll which were attended by a total of 75 fieldworkers.

Fieldworkers are grouped into teams of two who are supervised by senior CPRS researchers. Senior researchers make random visits to interview locations to discuss the research process with the teams. More than fifty percent of our fieldworkers are female, so as to ensure the representation of women in the sample. Fieldworkers are assigned a limited number of interviews (an average of 17 per team) to allow for careful interviewing.

The non-response rate for this sample is around 3%. Some respondents, we believe, were reluctant to state their views out of fear or disinterest in the present political circumstances.

Data Analysis

In previous polls, we estimated the margin of error to be approximately $\pm$3%. For this poll, however, we estimate the margin of error to be $\pm$5%.

The data were processed through SPSS, a computer program that is able to detect illogical answers and other inconsistencies.

Results

Unemployment

The results of this poll show that the total unemployment rate in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 37%, a 12-point decrease since March 1996 (Poll #22). As consistently found in previous polls, unemployment in the Gaza Strip (47%) is higher than in the West Bank (30%). The high rates can be mainly attributed to the continued closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from Israel since the February and March bombings. Note, these figures were collected within a three-day period (28-30 June 1996), from respondents 18-years or older, and based on a definition of unemployment used by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Overview

Attitudes toward the future of the peace process, measured by several questions, mostly indicate a general high level of support for its continuation. This support is tempered by reservations particularly when it comes to the belief that the final status negotiations will result in an acceptable solution to both the Israelis and Palestinians. These findings, examined together, can be partly explained by the sense of improvement or disappointment in the national reconstruction and transition to democracy efforts on the domestic level. For supporters of the peace process, the majority tends to have trust in the new Palestinian government, the perception that freedom of expression is better under the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and that the election of Netanyahu as Israel's new Prime Minister left no impact on the future of the peace process. As for the opposition, those who do not support the continuation of the peace process or identify with the "peace camp", their views tend to be pessimistic on both regional and domestic issues.

Future of the Peace Process

West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians are almost evenly divided regarding the future of the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis, after the Israeli elections and the formation of the new Likud-led government. 34.4% say that they are optimistic, 27.6% pessimistic while 33.3% think that the elections will not affect the peace process. Optimism is higher in the Gaza Strip (42.2%) than in the West Bank, where 29.6% expressed optimism and 31.4% pessimism. As for those who think that the elections will not change the peace process there is no significant difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. On this issue, and on several others, men tend to be more pessimistic than women (31.0% and 24.2%, respectively); the more educated tend to have more pessimistic attitudes than the less educated (see Table 2); and the younger members of the sample are more likely to believe that there is no change, but are more optimistic than older people. This is a change in attitude, however, from March 1996 (Poll #22), when 40% thought that an Israeli government led by the Labor Party would be better in regard to Palestinian goals. Only 4.9%

thought that the Likud Party would be better and 43% expressed that there is no difference between the two Israeli parties.

On the final status negotiations, which will be greatly affected by the Israeli election results, a similar pattern emerges. Overall, public opinion is almost divided on the question of whether or not it is possible to reach an acceptable solution in the course of negotiations over Jerusalem, Refugees, Borders and Israeli Settlements. 44.3% think it is possible to reach a solution acceptable to both parties, but 47.5% do not. In the Gaza Strip, belief in a positive outcome (51.6%) is higher than in the West Bank (39.8%). Once again, men are more pessimistic than women on this question (52.0% and 43.6%, respectively); and those with higher education levels are more likely to think that the final status negotiations will not lead to an acceptable solution than less educated respondents in our sample (see Table 2).

A majority of the Palestinians polled (50.5%) believes that Palestinians cannot rely on Arab countries to support them in obtaining their rights, as discussed in the recent Arab Summit. 43.1% think that Arab countries will support Palestinian rights and only 6.4% had no opinion on the matter. As with the attitudes on the Israeli elections and the outcome of the final status negotiations, there are differences between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, men and women and the more and less educated (see Table 2). In all cases, the former tends to be more pessimistic than the latter.

Table 2
Attitudes on Israeli Elections, Final Status Negotiations and Arab Summit by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts (n)

	Israeli Elections		Final Status		Arab Summit	
	optimistic	pessimistic	acceptable	unacceptable	can rely	cannot rely
Total	34.4 (336)	27.6 (270)	44.3 (432)	47.5 (464)	43.1(419)	50.5 (491)
Region						
West Bank	29.6 (179)	31.4 (190)	39.8 (240)	53.2 (321)	40.1 (242)	54.5 (329)
Gaza Strip	42.2 (157)	21.4 (80)	51.6 (192)	38.2 (142)	48.0 (177)	44.0 (162)
Gender						
Male	33.3 (160)	31.0 (149)	42.6 (204)	52.0 (249)	36.3 (173)	60.0 (286)
Female	29.3 (174)	24.2 (119)	45.6 (224)	43.6 (215)	49.7 (243)	41.7 (204)
Education						
Illiterate-Elementary	38.5 (98)	27.9 (71)	50.9 (130)	35.3 (90)	55.2 (140)	34.2 (87)
Secondary-HS	35.3 (210)	27.4 (163)	43.9 (261)	49.3 (294)	41.7 (247)	53.5 (316)
DiplomaCollege-Post Graduate	20.9 (25)	28.7 (34)	31.1 (37)	64.9 (77)	24.7 (29)	72.1 (85)

Age						
18-27	33.7 (119)	27.0 (95)	43.6 (154)	49.1 (174)	42.8 (150)	50.3
28-37	38.6 (98)	23.2 (59)	45.7 (116)	48.6 (123)	41.0 (103)	(177)56.2
38-47	33.9 (57)	25.6 (43)	45.7 (77)	46.0 (78)	42.4 (71)	(141)51.2
48+ years old	31.4 (61)	36.1 (70)	42.5 (83)	43.9 (85)	48.2 (93)	(86)42.6 (82)

As suggested by the findings displayed in Table 2, Palestinians' future outlook can be described as a cautious blend of optimism and pessimism. These attitudes are inconsistent with support for the continuation of the peace process which is at its highest, with 81.1% supporting and 13% opposing. (In the March #22 Poll, CPRS found that 78% supported its continuation and 16% stopping it.) But again, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (86.3%) are more likely than those in the West Bank (77.8%) to support the continuation of the peace process; and West Bankers are nearly three times (16.8%) more likely to advocate stopping the process than Gazans (5.6%). On this question, there is no significant difference between the attitudes of men and women, but the difference between education and age levels is pronounced (see Table 3).

Such high support for the continuation of the peace process is reflected in the high percentage of total respondents (69%) who ithemselves with a party or faction that supports the peace process. 66.9% of Palestinians in the West Bank and 72.5% in the Gaza Strip classify themselves within the "peace camp" (see Table 3 and further discussion based on Tables 11 & 12 below). On the recent decision by the Palestinian National Council to amend the National Charter, a condition by Israel to continue the peace process, a little less than the plurality (47.6%) was in favor and a sizable percentage (31.1%) was opposed (see Table 3). Note again the relationships between age and education levels: the older and the less educated the respondent the more likely s/he is to be in support of continuation of the peace process, identify with the "pro-peace camp" and favor the amendment of the Palestinian National Charter. In a similar question asked in Poll #20 (13-15 October 1995), pending the decision to amend the Charter, 50% supported and 39% opposed it.

Table 3
Attitude on Continuation of the Peace Process, Identification with Support/Oppose Camp, Amendment of National Charter by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts (n)

	Continuation		**Camp**		**Amend Charter**	
	support	oppose	peace	opposition	support	oppose
Total	81.1 (790)	12.5 (122)	69.0 (673)	11.6 (113)	47.6 (464)	31.9 (311)
Region						
West Bank	77.8 (469)	16.8 (101)	66.9 (403)	13.9 (84)	44.7 (270)	37.2 (225)
Gaza Strip	86.3 (321)	5.6 (21)	72.5 (270)	7.8 (29)	52.2 (194)	23.2 (86)
Gender						
Male	80.4 (385)	13.6 (65)	69.7 (333)	13.8 (66)	48.0 (230)	39.2 (188)
Female	81.7 (402)	11.6 (57)	68.7 (338)	9.3 (46)	46.9 (230)	25.1 (123)

Education						
Illiterate-						
Elementary	84.6 (216)	8.1 (21)	75.7 (193)	5.1 (13)	52.1 (133)	18.4 (47)
Secondary-	81.9 (488)	13.3 (79)	68.6 (408)	12.6 (75)	47.6 (283)	33.6 (200)
H.S. Diploma	69.6 (82)	17.9 (21)	57.6 (68)	19.9 (24)	36.4 (43)	53.5 (63)
College-Post Graduate						
Age						
18-27	77.2 (273)	14.4 (51)	62.6 (221)	14.5 (51)	45.7 (161)	34.4 (121)
28-37	79.7 (202)	14.5 (37)	69.7 (177)	12.7 (32)	46.2 (117)	36.1 (91)
38-47	82.5 (139)	11.8 (20)	73.7 (123)	8.8 (15)	52.8 (89)	29.4 (49)
48+ years old	89.1 (172)	7.1 (14)	75.9 (148)	6.9 (13)	48.2 (94)	23.8 (46)

Domestic Politics

Such high support for the continuation of the peace process, but divided views on its outcome based on regional factors and future outlook, is partly explained by the perception of improvement and trust (or lack of it) in the new Palestinian government and institutions. These findings suggest that there is a strong relationship between a positive or negative assessment of the domestic national reconstruction and transition to democracy efforts and support or opposition to the peace process. This observation can be measured in several attitudinal variables and tested by the strength of the relationship between these variables.

Governance

Most Palestinians we polled (56%) trust the ability of the newly formed Palestinian government to improve the general Palestinian performance, 21.1% gave a negative response and 22.8% are not sure at this time. Trust varies by region: Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are more likely to trust the government (60.7%) than in the West Bank (53.2%), but there is no regional difference between those who are not sure. Women also expressed a higher level of trust than men, who, in turn, are more likely to not to trust the new government (see Table 4). There is a strong negative relationship between trust and education level: the higher the education level the lower the level of trust in the government's ability to improve the Palestinian performance (see Table 4). Age of the respondent has no discernible affect on this attitude.

When asked to assess the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), 36.9% rated it as "Fair", 28.7% as "Good" and lastly 14.8% as "Bad". Similar to the trust in the new government, a similar percentage (20.2%) are not sure about the performance of the newly elected PLC. As with most variables already discussed, we find a similar pattern in terms of region, gender, education and age of respondent (please refer to Table 4). In the Election Day Survey (20 January 1996), respondents expressed a higher level of optimism toward candidates they elected. 43% expected that the candidate they voted for will fulfill their election campaign promises; 47% thought that they will to some extent; while only 10% said that the candidates will not. Despite the low rating of the performance of PLC, relative to respondents' expectations, a great majority (78.4%) of all Palestinians polled intends to participate in the up-coming elections for local councils in their area. This finding is higher than the 71% who said that they will participate in the

general elections for the PLC, obtained in Poll #20 (13-15 October 1995). As with the General Elections, SRU plans to track participation in local elections over time in future polls.

Table 4
Trust in New Government and Performance of Palestinian Legislative Council by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts (n)

	New Government		Performance of PLC			
	Trust	Not Trust	Good	Fair	Bad	Not Sure
Total	56.0 (546)	21.1 (206)	28.0 (272)	36.9 (359)	14.8 (144)	20.2 (196)
Region						
West Bank	53.2 (321)	24.0 (145)	28.7 (173)	37.7 (227)	16.8 (101)	16.8 (101)
Gaza Strip	60.7 (226)	16.4 (61)	26.9 (99)	35.7 (132)	11.6 (43)	25.8 (95)
Gender						
Male	52.6 (252)	25.9 (124)	24.9 (119)	38.7 (185)	18.2 (87)	18.2 (87)
Female	59.3 (290)	16.7 (82)	31.2 (152)	35.0 (171)	11.5 (56)	22.4 (109)
Education						
Illiterate-Elementary	64.5 (163)	13.4 (34)	38.4 (98)	27.4 (70)	10.9 (28)	23.3 (59)
Secondary-H.S. Diploma	55.0 (328)	22.0 (131)	25.9 (153)	39.7 (253)	15.3 (90)	19.1 (113)
College-Post Graduate	42.6 (50)	33.7 (40)	17.2 (21)	41.3 (49)	21.9 (26)	19.5 (23)
Age						
18-27	54.0 (191)	22.3 (79)	24.7 (87)	43.1 (151)	13.2 (46)	19.0 (67)
28-37	55.7 (141)	23.4 (59)	28.6 (72)	35.0 (88)	17.2 (44)	19.2 (48)
38-47	59.9 (100)	19.2 (32)	31.7 (53)	35.7 (60)	15.4 (26)	17.1 (29)
48+ years old	58.0 (112)	17.6 (34)	31.0 (60)	28.8 (56)	14.0 (27)	26.2 (51)

Transition to Democracy

Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip are divided on the status of freedom of expression, an important indicator in the transition to democracy, under the Palestinian National Authority. About 48% of the respondents believe that freedom of expression has become better since the arrival of the PNA; while another 48% think it has become worse or did not change. Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (52.1%) are more likely than in the West Bank (44.8%) to think that the freedom of expression has improved; with no regional difference for those who think it has become worse; but more West Bankers (20.6%) than Gazans (12.4%), however, say that it has not changed since the arrival of the PNA. Similarly, 49% feel that people today cannot criticize the PNA without fear, and only 42% feel that they can. There is no significant difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For both of these variables, men are more likely than women to think the freedom of expression has become worse or has not changed under the PNA and are more fearful to criticize the PNA. There are also strong negative relationships between freedom of expression and

criticism with age and education of the respondent: the older and less educated a respondent, the more likely s/he thinks that freedom of expression has improved and can criticize the PNA without fear (see Table 5).

Table 5
Freedom of Expression and Ability to Criticize the PNA by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts

	Freedom of Expression			Criticism of PNA	
	better	no change	worse	without fear	with fear
Total	47.6 (465)	17.5 (171)	30.5 (298)	43.9 (429)	49.1 (479)
Region					
West Bank	44.8 (271)	20.6 (125)	30.3 (183)	44.3 (268)	48.3 (292)
Gaza Strip	52.1 (194)	12.4 (46)	30.9 (115)	43.3 (161)	50.3 (187)
Gender					
Men	41.0 (197)	15.8 (76)	39.4 (189)	39.0 (187)	55.3 (265)
Women	53.5 (263)	19.1 (94)	22.2 (109)	48.9 (241)	42.7 (210)
Education					
IPreparatory	56.5 (144)	16.6 (43)	22.4 (57)	52.0 (133)	38.5 (98)
Secondary-H.S. Diploma	47.6 (284)	18.0 (107)	30.4 (181)	43.6 (260)	50.6 (302)
CollePost Graduate	27.8 (33)	16.1 (19)	49.6 (59)	29.3 (35)	63.8 (76)
Age					
18-27	42.3 (150)	18.6 (66)	34.5 (122)	39.4 (139)	55.2 (195)
28-37	46.4 (118)	17.6 (45)	32.5 (83)	44.7 (114)	49.7 (126)
38-47	50.7 (86)	18.6 (31)	25.7 (43)	46.0 (77)	44.3 (74)
48+ years old	55.9 (109)	14.5 (28)	24.6 (48)	49.8 (97)	40.4 (79)

On a question related to the issues of freedom of expression and the ability to criticize the Palestinian National Authority without fear, CPRS asked respondents to rate the treatment of Palestinian citizens by the police and security services. 44.3% of the respondents feel that the treatment is "Good", 36.8% "Fair" and 14.4% "Bad". Although Palestinians on the West Bank tend to be more critical of the PNA and its institutions overall, 46.7% rate the police and security services as "Good", compared to 45.5% in the Gaza Strip, who, in turn, mostly (42%) assessed the treatment of citizens as "Fair". Men have a more critical attitude toward the police and security services than women. There is also a strong negative relationship between education level and assessment of treatment: the more educated the more likely to rate it as "Bad". Older respondents tend to think that the treatment is "Good", but the bulk of the younger respondents think it is "Fair". Refugees also gave a more favorable assessment than non-refugees (see Table 6).

In a telling answer question about the truthfulness of responses to this poll, which is also intended to measure people's perceptions freedom of expression under the Palestinian Authority, 21% said that *most* people are afraid to give truthful answers and 45% said *some* people are afraid to give

truthful answers to the questions. On the other hand, less than one percent of the respondents admitted that they themselves have not give truthful answers to *all* of the questions; and only 5% said they have give truthful answers to *some* of the questions; 81% claimed they have given truthful answers to *all* of the questions and 13% to *most* of the questions.

As for the Palestinian media in the process of democratization, more respondents (41%) think that the Palestinian media under the PNA have shown a commitment to the freedom of expression and democracy; compared to 33% who think they have failed to uphold such values. Again, regional differences are significant; as 37.6% of Palestinians in the West Bank and 46.8% in the Gaza Strip believe that the Palestinian media uphold the freedom of expression and democracy. Conversely, 40.1% in the West Bank and 31.2% in the Gaza Strip think that the Palestinian media have failed. There is no regional difference among people who have no opinion on this matter. More women (42.5%) than men (39.2%), in our sample, think that the Palestinian media uphold democratic values, as do the less educated (see Table 6). Also, there is a difference between refugees and non-refugees: 38.9% of refugees compared to 42.5% of non-refugees think that the Palestinian media are democratic (please refer to Table 6).

Table 6
Palestinian Police & Security and the Media Under the Palestinian Authority by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts

	Palestinian Police & Security			Media	
	good	fair	bad	democratic	undemocratic
Total	44.3 (433)	36.8 (359)	14.4 (140)	41.1 (402)	36.7 (359)
Region					
West Bank	46.7 (282)	33.6 (203)	14.0 (85)	37.6 (228)	40.1 (243)
Gaza Strip	40.5 (151)	42.0 (156)	15.0 (56)	46.8 (174)	31.2 (116)
Gender					
Men	38.4 (184)	40.3 (193)	18.2 (87)	39.2 (188)	44.8 (215)
Women	49.9 (246)	33.4 (164)	10.8 (53)	42.5 (209)	29.3 (144)
Education					
Illiterate-	57.5 (147)	28.8 (73)	9.3 (24)	42.3 (108)	27.1 (69)
PreparatorySecondary-	41.0 (244)	40.1 (239)	15.1 (90)	42.9 (255)	36.9 (220)
H.S. Diploma	30.8 (37)	38.3 (46)	22.7 (27)	29.3 (35)	57.7 (69)
College-Post Graduate					
Age					
18-27	39.7 (140)	41.0 (145)	15.2 (54)	45.4 (161)	37.2 (131)
28-37	43.0 (109)	34.4 (87)	17.9 (46)	39.2 (99)	39.5 (100)
38-47	48.2 (81)	38.8 (65)	10.1 (17)	34.7 (59)	38.5 (65)
48+ years old	51.8 (101)	29.6 (58)	12.3 (24)	40.9 (80)	30.7 (60)

Refugee Status					
Refugee	40.3 (161)	39.6 (158)	16.8 (67)	38.9 (156)	39.8 (215)
Non-Refugee	47.0 (268)	34.9 (200)	12.8 (73)	42.5 (243)	34.7 (144)

Some 51% of the respondents are able to watch the Palestinian TV station in their area: in the Gaza Strip it is 84% while in the West Bank it is only 30%. The most popular TV station among Palestinians in the West Bank is the Jordanian station (watched by more than 54% of the respondents), followed by local stations in the different cities of the West Bank (13%) and the Palestinian and Israeli stations (each watched by about 9%). In the Gaza Strip, where the signal of the Palestinian TV station is easily received by 84.2% of the respondents, 56.6% watch this more than any other; while only 6% watch the Jordanian TV station (whose signal is not clearly received). The Egyptian TV station is the second most popular station in the Gaza Strip (16%); and the Israeli is the third, with 12% watching (see Table 7). No local TV stations are available in the Gaza Strip.

Table 7
Ability to Watch Palestinian TV station, TV Station Most Watched by Palestinians and Most Trusted News Bulletins (Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli) by Region, weighted percentages and counts

	Most Watched TV			Most Trusted News Bulletin		
	Palestinian	Jordanian	Israeli	Palestinian	Jordanian	Israeli
Total	26.7 (356)	36.1 (345)	10.3 (98)	21.0 (200)	18.4 (174)	32.3 (306)
Region						
West Bank	8.5 (83)	54.2 (531)	9.4 (92)	10.1 (99)	23.5 (230)	33.5 (328)
Gaza Strip	56.6 (555)	6.4 (63)	11.7 (115)	39.1 (383)	10.0 (98)	30.3 (297)

As shown in Table 7, when it comes to trusting the news bulletins of different TV stations, the picture is different. The most trusted news bulletin in the Gaza Strip is the Palestinian TV station (39.1%), followed by Israeli (30.3%) and lastly Jordanian TV (10%). In the West Bank 34% trust Israeli new bulletins, 24% Jordanian, 11% foreign stations and 10% Palestinian. Among those who actually receive the Palestinian TV signal in the West Bank, only 21% say they trust the new bulletins the most.

Political Affiliation

CPRS has tracked political affiliation over time in two ways. First, by asking respondents directly to state their political affiliation (*i.e.*, party or faction). In this poll, we adopted a second approach of asking respondents to identify themselves with a party or faction that supports or opposes the peace process which we intend to track over time (see Table 3 for total figures and breakdown by demographic distribution). As for political affiliation, directly stated by the respondent, there is an overall stability in the distribution of responses since December 1994, with a few notable exceptions. One, affiliation with Hamas has declined since December from nearly 17% to 7.8%,

averaging 10-points; as has Fateh, the largest political party among Palestinians. Affiliation with Fetah reached a high of 55.3% in December 1995, but in this poll, affiliation has fallen a full 12-points below its high and 4-points below its average (47.3%) since December 1995. Accompanying declines in Fateh and Hamas, there has been a notable steady increase in respondents with "None of the Above" political affiliation. With an average of 19.7%, this group has grown from a low of 11.7% in December 1995 (See Poll #21) to its highest point (28.1%) in this June poll (see Table 8).

Table 8
Political Affiliation, weighted percentages and counts (n)

	Dec. 1994	Dec. 1995	March 1996	June 1996	Average
Hamas	16.6 (177)	9.7 (110)	5.8 (73)	7.8 (76)	10.0
Al-Sha'b	0.8 (9)	1.8 (21)	1.7 (22)	2.4 (23)	1.7
PFLP	6.7 (72)	3.8 (43)	2.1 (26)	4.0 (39)	4.2
Fateh	43.1 (460)	55.3 (628)	47.5 (597)	43.3 (424)	47.3
Feda	0.8 (9)	0.4 (5)	0.2 (2)	0.7 (7)	0.6
Islamic Jihad	2.6 (28)	2.0 (23)	1.0 (13)	1.9 (19)	1.9
DFLP	1.4 ()	1.5 (17)	1.1 (14)	0.8 (7)	1.2
Islamic Independent	3.7 (39)	3.6 (41)	4.4 (55)	3.7 (36)	3.9
National Independent	4.9 (52)	3.2 (36)	6.0 (75)	4.5 (44)	4.7
None of the Above	11.7 (125)	13.8 (157)	25.0 (314)	28.1 (275)	19.7
Others	7.7 (82)	4.8 (55)	5.3 (67)	2.9 (28)	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	---

For the three largest political groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Fateh, Hamas and None of the Above), there are some notable demographic variations. Within Hamas and the None of the Above categories, there is no regional differences, but more women than men identify their political affiliation with both groups. Palestinians in the West Bank (49.7%) are more likely than Gazans (39.3%) to support Fateh, as are men, the less educated and younger respondents in our sample (see Table 9).

Table 9
Political Affiliation (Hamas, Fateh and None of the Above) by Selected Variables, weighted percentages and counts

	Hamas	Fateh	None of the Above
Total	7.8 (76)	43.3 (422)	28.1 (274)
Region			
West Bank	8.8 (53)	39.3 (237)	29.4 (177)
Gaza Strip	6.2 (23)	49.7 (185)	26.0 (97)
Gender			
Male	5.8 (28)	46.8 (224)	22.8 (109)
Female	9.7 (48)	40.2 (197)	33.1 (163)
Education			
Illiterate-Preparatory	8.3 (21)	42.9 (110)	29.1 (74)
Secondary-H.S. Diploma	7.3 (43)	45.4 (270)	28.3 (169)
College-Post. Graduate	10.0 (12)	34.6 (41)	25.1 (30)
Age			
18-27	8.4 (30)	44.7 (158)	26.7 (94)
28-37	8.8 (22)	45.3 (115)	26.7 (68)
38-47	8.2 (14)	42.6 (72)	27.7 (47)
48+ years old	5.0 (10)	40.2 (78)	33.1 (64)

There is also a significant relationship between gender, political affiliation and attitudes toward the national reconstruction effort. With Hamas, Fateh and the None of the Above categories women tend think that the freedom of expression is better under the Palestinian National Authority, the Palestinian media uphold the values of freedom of expression and democracy and can criticize the PNA without fear (compare statistics across Table 10).

Table 10

Political Affiliation of Men and Women by Attitudes toward Freedom of Expression, the Palestinian Media and Ability to Criticize the PNA, weighted percentages and counts

	Political Affiliation					
	Hamas		Fateh		None of the Above	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
Freedom of Expression						
Better	32.1 (9)	37.9 (18)	54.9 (123)	67.1 (133)	28.4 (31)	44.4 (72)
No Change	7.1 (2)	18.4 (9)	17.4 (39)	16.7 (33)	15.6 (17)	21.0 (34)
Worse	57.1 (16)	41.4 (20)	24.6 (55)	13.6 (27)	45.9 (54)	26.8 (43)

Palestinian Media						
Democratic	42.9 (12)	39.1 (19)	51.8 (116)	52.2 (103)	24.8 (27)	32.8 (53)
Undemocratic	42.9 (12)	39.1 (19)	34.4 (77)	22.9 (45)	53.2 (58)	30.7 (50)
Criticism of PNA						
With Fear	46.4 (13)	47.1 (23)	47.3 (106)	58.8 (116)	26.9 (29)	40.3 (65)
Without Fear	53.6 (14)	49.4 (24)	46.0 (103)	37.0 (73)	66.7 (72)	45.4 (74)

Attitudes toward the future of the peace process, as measured by several variables, are strongly associated with identification with the "peace" or "oppose" camps, in some surprising and expected ways. Unsurprisingly, people with the "peace camp" overwhelmingly support the continuation of the peace process (91.6%); but are more hesitant about the amendment of the National Charter (57.5%), as stipulated by agreements with Israel. Moreover, those who are within the "peace camp" tend to be optimistic about the Israeli elections or think they won't change the future of the peace process (40.2% and 29.3%, respectively). Yet, they also think that the final status negotiations will lead to an acceptable solution (52%) and Arab countries are committed to uphold Palestinian rights (50%).

On the other hand, those respondents who identify with the "oppose camp" can be characterized as pessimistic on all these issues; importantly, and surprisingly, 39.5% support the continuation of the peace process, despite their identification with the "oppose camp:, compared to 47.7% who oppose the continuation of the peace process. The "swing camp", as on domestic issues, are mainly pessimistic, with one exception; the bulk (44.7%) of swing respondents think the outcome of the recent Israeli elections will not change the future of the peace process (see Table 11).

Table 11

Support/Oppose Peace (Process) Camps by Attitudes toward the Future of the Peace Process, weighted percentages and counts

	Support/Oppose Peace (Process) Camps		
	Support Camp	Swing	Oppose Camp
Israeli Elections			
Optimistic	40.2 (270)	25.2 (48)	15.9 (18)
No Change	29.3 (201)	44.7 (85)	34.5 (39)
Pessimistic	25.7 (173)	23.7 (45)	46.0 (52)
Final Status Negotiations			
Acceptable	52.0 (350)	32.8 (62)	17.4 (19)
Unacceptable	39.8 (286)	22.9 (106)	79.7 (89)
Arab Summit			
Can Rely	50.0 (334)	33.8 (63)	19.0 (21)
Cannot Rely	43.9 (293)	56.8 (106)	79.0 (89)

Continuation of Peace Process			
Support	91.6 (615)	68.0 (129)	39.3 (45)
Oppose	5.6 (40)	15.1 (29)	47.7 (54)
Amendment of National Charter			
Support	57.5 (387)	33.7 (63)	11.8 (13)
Oppose	23.7 (159)	33.0 (62)	79.1 (89)

Identification with either the "peace camp" or "opposition camp", as indicated by our findings, is strongly associated with positive or negative attitudes toward domestic political issues than with regional factors and future outlook. As shown in Table 12, the bulk of the respondents both support the "peace camp" and believe that Palestinians can trust their government (66.1%) and its elected representatives (84.4% think the performance of the PLC is "Good"), exercise the freedom of expression (57.1%), criticize the PNA (50.4%) and that the treatment of Palestinian police and security is "Good" (84.4%).

Note, however, that the strength of the statistical (not numerical) relationships moves in the opposite direction with identification of the "swing" and "oppose" camps. In other words, respondents who identify with the "swing" or "oppose" camps are much more likely to be critical of the government and its institutions. For example, 50.9% of those in the "oppose camp" believe that they cannot trust the government; only 25.7% feel that they are able to criticize the PNA without fear; moreover, 36.1% assess the treatment of Palestinian citizens by their police and security as "Bad" compared to only 19.1% who believe it is "Good". As can be expected, there is less variation between negative and positive attitudes among those respondents who identify with the "swing" camp, but, nevertheless, they are overall more negative in their assessments than the "peace camp" (see Table 12).

Table 12
Support/Oppose Peace (Process) Camps by Attitudes toward Domestic Politics, weighted percentages and counts

	Support/Oppose Peace (Process) Camps		
	Support Camp	Swing	Oppose Camp
Ability to Criticize PNA			
Able	50.4 (339)	32.1 (61)	25.7 (29)
Not Able	42.8 (288)	57.3 (108)	72.4 (82)
Freedom of Expression			
Better	57.1 (384)	32.8 (62)	15.9 (18)
No Change	15.6 (105)	25.5 (48)	67.5 (76)
Worse	22.8 (153)	36.0 (68)	14.8 (17)
Performance of PLC			
Good	84.4 (229)	11.8 (32)	3.9 (11)
Fair	68.8 (247)	19.4 (70)	11.7 (42)

Bad	44.7 (64)	29.4 (42)	25.9 (37)
Not Sure	66.7 (131)	22.7 (44)	10.7 (21)
Treatment by Police & Security			
Good	52.0 (350)	32.4 (61)	19.1 (22)
Fair	33.1 (223)	49.3 (93)	37.6 (42)
Bad	11.7 (78)	11.2 (13)	36.1 (41)
Trust in Government			
Trust	66.1 (444)	41.5 (78)	21.3 (24)
Not Sure	20.2 (136)	29.0 (55)	27.8 (31)
Not Trust	13.7 (92)	29.4 (55)	50.9 (57)

To summarize, there is a strong relationship between satisfaction or disillusionment with the national reconstruction process and identification with the support and opposition camps of the peace process. In other words, opponents of the peace process are largely critical of domestic issues and pessimistic about its future. Although some supporters of the peace process are also critical of the new Palestinian government and its institutions as well as the final status negotiations Israel, on the whole, they fully endorsethe continuation of the peace process and are largely satisfied with the national reconstruction effort on the domestic level. As for the swing camp, who comprise a sizable minority of the population, their support for the continuation of the peace process appears to be mainly associated with a combination of present trust in the government and an optimism toward finding an acceptable solution in the final status negotiations with Israel.

Appendix

	W.Bank & Gaza	**W.Bank**	**Gaza**
***Unemployment**	37%	30%	47%

1. Regarding the future of the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis in the aftermath of the success of the Likud party and its leader, Netanyahu, in the Israeli elections, and after the formation of a new Israeli government, I feel:

a)optimistic	34.4%	29.6%	42.2%
b)pessimistic	27.6%	31.4%	21.4%
c)no change has taken place	33.3%	34.8%	31.0%
d)no opinion	04.7%	04.3%	05.3%

2. Regarding the freedom of expression since the arrival of the Palestinian Authority, I feel:

a)It has become better than before its arrival	47.6%	44.8%	52.1%
b)It has become worse than before its arrival	30.5%	30.3%	30.9%
c)It did not change	17.5%	20.6%	12.4%
d)No opinion	04.4%	04.4%	04.5%

3. Regarding the recent decision by the Palestine National Council to amend the Palestinian National Charter, I:

a) Support the decision	47.6%	44.7%	52.2%
b) Oppose the decision	31.9%	37.2%	23.2%
c) No opinion	20.5%	18.0%	24.6%

4. Regarding the Palestinian media under the Palestinian Authority, I see it

a) Upholds freedom of expression and democracy	41.1%	37.6%	46.8%
c) Shows failure to uphold freedom of expression and democracy	36.7%	40.1%	31.2%
c) No opinion	22.2%	22.3%	22.0%

5. After the convening of the recent Arab Summit Conferences, do you feel that the Palestinians can rely on the Arab countries to support them in obtaining their rights?

a) Yes	43.1%	40.1%	48.0%
b) No	50.5%	54.5%	44.0%
c) No opinion	06.4%	05.3%	08.0%

6. The formation of the new Palestinian government has recently been announced. Do you have trust it the ability of this government to improve the general Palestinian performance?

a) Yes	56.0%	53.2%	60.7%
b) No	21.1%	24.0%	16.4%
c) Not sure	22.8%	22.8%	22.9%

7. Regarding the permanent status negotiations over Jerusalem, Refugees, Borders, and Settlements, between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, I believe:

a) There is a possibility to reach a solution acceptable to the two parties.	44.3%	39.8%	51.6%
b) There is no possibility to reach a solution acceptable to the two sides.	47.5%	53.2%	38.2%
c) No opinion	08.2%	07.0%	10.2%

8. Regarding the treatment of citizens by the Palestinian police and security services, I feel it is

a) Good	44.3%	46.7%	40.5%
b) Fair	36.8%	33.6%	42.0%
c) Bad	14.4%	14.0%	15.0%
d) No opinion	4.5%	5.7%	2.5%

9. In which camp do you classify yourself?

a)The supporters of the peace process.	69.0%	66.9%	72.5%
b)The opposition to the peace process.	11.6%	13.9%	7.8%
c)I do not support or oppose the peace process.	19.4%	19.2%	19.8%

10. I believe the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council so far has been:

a)Good	28.0%	28.7%	26.9%
b)Fair	36.9%	37.7%	35.7%
c)Bad	14.8%	16.8%	11.6%
d)No opinion	20.2%	16.8%	25.8%

11. Do you intend to participate in the upcoming elections to the local council in your area?

a)Yes	78.4%	78.6%	77.9%
b)No	16.3%	16.8%	15.4%
c)Not Sure	05.3%	04.5%	06.6%

12. In your opinion, can people today criticize the Palestinian Authority without fear?

a)Yes	43.9%	44.3%	43.3%
b)No	49.1%	48.3%	50.3%
c)No opinion	07.0%	07.4%	06.3%

13. Regarding the current peace process between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, I

a)Support its continu-ation.	81.1%	77.8%	86.3%
b)Support ending it	12.5%	16.8%	05.6%
c)No opinion	06.4%	05.4%	08.0%

14. Which of the following political trends do you support?

a)PPP	2.4%	2.6%	2.1%
b)PFLP	4.0%	3.5%	4.9%
c)Fateh	43.3%	39.3%	49.7%
d)Hamas	7.8%	8.8%	6.2%
e)DFLP	0.8%	0.5%	1.2%
f)Islamic Jihad	1.9%	1.6%	2.4%
g)Fida	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%
h)Independent Islamists	3.7%	4.6%	2.2%
i)Independent Nationalists	4.5%	5.5%	2.8%
j)None of the above	28.1%	29.4%	26.0%
k)Others	2.9%	3.5%	1.9%

15. Are you able to watch the Palestinian TV station in your area?

a)Yes	50.7%	30.0%	84.2%
b)No	36.9%	53.8%	9.5%
c)Sometimes	12.5%	16.2%	6.3%

16. The TV station which I watch more than the others is (select one station only):

a)The Israeli Television	10.3%	9.4%	11.7%
b)The Jordanian Television	36.1%	54.2%	6.4%
c)The Palestinian Television	26.7%	8.5%	56.6%
d)The Egyptian Television	9.0%	4.6%	16.3%
e)Local TV stations	8.2%	13.3%	---
f)Foreign stations	2.4%	3.1%	1.3%
g)Others	7.2%	6.9%	7.6%

17. The TV station whose news bulletins I trust more than the others is

a)The Israeli Television	32.3%	33.5%	30.3%
b)The Jordanian Television	18.4%	23.5%	10.0%
c)The Palestinian Television	21.0%	10.1%	39.1%
d)The Egyptian Television	3.1%	2.1%	4.9%
e)Local TV stations	1.4%	2.1%	0.3%
f)Foreign stations	8.1%	10.9%	3.6%
g)Others	15.7%	18.0%	11.8%

18. Regarding the answers to the questions of this poll, I believe that:

a)Most people are afraid to give truthful answers reflecting their attitudes.	21.2%	20.6%	22.2%
b)Some people are afraid to give truthful answers reflecting their attitudes.	44.5%	46.4%	41.3%
c)Most people give truthful answers reflecting their attitudes.	26.5%	25.5%	28.2%
d)No opinion	7.8%	7.4%	8.3%

19. As far as I am concerned, I

a)Have given truthful answers to all the questions.	81.3%	82.1%	80.1%
b)Have given truthful answers to most of the questions.	12.7%	12.5%	13.0%
c)Have given truthful answers to some of the questions.	4.7%	4.3%	5.4%
d)Have not given any truthful answers .	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
e)No opinion	1.1%	0.9%	1.4%