



JOINT PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

The joint poll aimed at examining possible changes in Palestinian and Israeli public attitudes in the post Arafat era regarding six basic elements of Israeli-Palestinian permanent status negotiations: (1) Final borders and territorial exchange, (2) Refugees, (3) Jerusalem, (4) A demilitarized Palestinian state, (5) Security arrangements, and (6) End of conflict. Questions regarding similar and identical elements were asked in December 2003. While the 2003 elements were presented as constituting the main components of the Geneva Initiative, this poll made no mention of the Geneva initiative and the elements were presented as constituting a possible permanent status agreement. The poll also sought to revisit a question asked in June 2003 regarding public willingness to accept a settlement that would contain a mutual recognition of Israel as the state of the Jewish people and Palestine as the state of the Palestinian people. The findings indicate a significant increase toward more dovish views among both Israelis the Palestinians compared to the situation 12 and 18 months ago.

The poll was conducted between December 30, 2004 and January 10, 2005. Total Palestinian sample size was 1319 adults interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The margin of error is 3%. The Israeli sample included 501 adult Israelis interviewed by phone with a margin of error of 4.5%.

Here are the main findings:

(1) Final Borders and Territorial Exchange

Among Palestinians 63% support or strongly support and 35% 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 respondents. The map was identical to that presented to respondents in December 2003. At that time, support for this compromise, with its map, stood at 57% and opposition at 41%.

Among Israelis 55% support and 43% 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. The Palestinians will receive in return territory of similar size along the Gaza Strip. In December 2003, 47% of the Israelis supported this component while 50% opposed it.

(2) Refugees

Among Palestinians, 46% support and 50% 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

*This joint survey was conducted with the support of the Ford Foundation Cairo office and the Japanese Government

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 2003, only 25% agreed with an identical compromise while 72% opposed it.

Among Israelis 44% support such an arrangement compared to 35% who supported it in December 2003.

(3) Jerusalem

In the Palestinian public 44% support and 54% 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 Israel 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 2003, an identical compromise had a similar reception with 46% supporting it and 52% opposing it.

Among Israelis however, only 39% agree and 60% 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 2003 41% supported this arrangement and 57% opposed it.

(4) Demilitarized Palestinian state

Among Palestinians 27% support and 61% 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 that contained all these elements with the exception of the part on the deployment of a multinational force received in December 2003 the support of 36% and the opposition of 63%.

Among Israelis 68% agree and 30% disagree to this arrangement compared to 61% who agreed and 58% who disagreed to it a year ago in December 2003.

(5) Security Arrangements

In the Palestinian public 53% support and 45% oppose a compromise whereby the Palestinian state would have sovereignty over its land, water, and airspace, but Israel will 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 December 2003, a similar compromise that contained these same elements with the exception of the part on the multinational force received the support of 23% and the opposition of 76%.

In the Israeli public 61% support and 37% oppose this arrangement compared to 50% who supported it and 46% who opposed it a year ago in December 2003.

(6) End of Conflict.

In the Palestinian public 69% support and 29% 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. An identical question received in December 2003 the support of 42% and the opposition of 55%.

In the Israeli public 76% support and 23% oppose this component in the final status framework. In December 2003, 66% of the Israelis supported it while 33% opposed it.

The Whole Package

Among Palestinians 54% support and 44% oppose the whole package combining the elements as one permanent status settlement. In December 2003, 39% supported and 58% opposed an identical overall combined package presented in the context of the Geneva Initiative.

Among Israelis 64% support and 33% oppose all the above features together taken as one combined package. A year ago only 47% of the Israelis supported and 49% opposed a similar overall package presented in the context of the Geneva initiative.

The main difference between the December 2003 and the December 2004 versions presented to both Israelis and Palestinians is that while the first version stated that the package was that of the Geneva initiative, the second did not. In addition, in presenting the elements of the compromise in December 2004, we merged the parts dealing with the multinational force (presented in 2003 as a separate element) into the two elements of the demilitarized state and the security arrangements.

Mutual Recognition of Identity

Among Palestinians 63% support and 35% oppose the proposal that after the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and the settlement of all issues in dispute, including the refugees and Jerusalem issues, there would be a mutual recognition of Israel as the state of the Jewish people and Palestine as the state of the Palestinian people. In June 2003, only 52% of the Palestinians supported this proposal and 46% opposed it.

Among Israelis 70% support and 16% oppose the mutual recognition of identity proposal. In June 2003, 65% of the Israelis supported it and 33% opposed it.

It should be emphasized that these figures have been obtained after a prolonged period of reduced violence between the two sides and during the Palestinian election campaign. In addition as mentioned above the current survey has been detached from the Geneva initiative context within which the December 2003 questions were asked.

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE FINDINGS

Changes in Support for Clinton’s Permanent Settlement Framework Among Israelis and Palestinians in the last year				
	Israelis Dec. 2003	Israelis Jan. 2005	Palestinians Dec. 2003	Palestinians Dec. 2004
1) Borders and Territorial Exchange	47%	55%	57%	63%
2) Refugees	35%	44%	25%	46%
3) Jerusalem	41%	39%	46%	44%
4) Demilitarized Palestinian State	61%	68%	36%	27%
5) Security Arrangements	50%	61%	23%	53%
6) End of Conflict	66%	76%	42%	69%
Overall Package	47%	64%	39%	54%
Mutual Recognition of Identity	65%	70%	52%	63%