

Palestinian Public Opinion: Trends and Strategic Implications



September 2009

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Key Points

Findings of the IPI poll of 2,402 Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza between Jun 23 and Jul 17 include:

- Palestinians want a two-state solution and are ready to be peace partners with Israel to get it.
- The Arab Peace Initiative greatly strengthens the appeal of the two-state solution.
- Palestinians are skeptical of America and Obama – but many hope he can advance the peace process.
- The main gestures discussed in Washington and Jerusalem – a settlement freeze and reducing checkpoints – are the least important to Palestinians of six confidence-building measures.
- Palestinian elections would be close, but Abbas and Fatah would benefit from progress on national unity, security, sector reform, and the peace process.
- Fatah is seen as the party of governance and peace – Hamas now only as the party of resistance, which also resonates with Palestinians.

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Palestinians want a two-state solution, though many would consider a provisional state.

Here are several options for a Palestinian state. Please tell me which option you would prefer most.

A Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza, separate from Israel	55%	A Palestinian state with final borders including land swaps alongside the Israeli state now with all other issues such as Jerusalem, refugees, and settlements to be negotiated	37%
One state shared by both Palestinians and Israelis	11%	Status quo continues until all these issues have been negotiated and agreed	27%
Palestine joins a confederation with Jordan and Egypt with shared defense and foreign policy	11%	A Palestinian state with provisional borders alongside the Israeli state now with all other issues such as Jerusalem, refugees, and settlements to be negotiated	14%

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Q. 130, 129

Two thirds of Palestinians support the Arab Peace Initiative – and a two-state peace plan as a way to implement it.

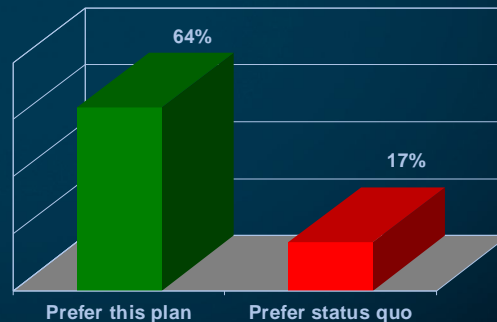
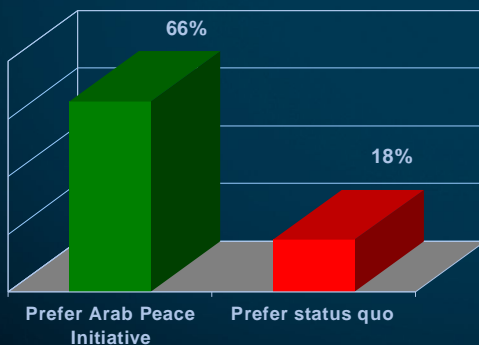
The Arab Peace Initiative calls for:

- Israeli withdrawal from lands occupied in 1967, according to UN resolution 242;
- The creation of a Palestinian state on those lands;
- Resolution of the refugee problem according to UN resolution 194 and;
- Arab recognition of Israel.

Comparing the Arab Peace Initiative to the status quo, do you strongly prefer this plan, somewhat prefer this plan, somewhat prefer the status quo, or strongly prefer the status quo?

Comparing this plan to implement the Arab Peace Initiative as a package to the status quo, do you strongly prefer this plan, somewhat prefer this plan, somewhat prefer the status quo, or strongly prefer the status quo?

(Details on next slide)



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Q. 131, 133

A two-state peace plan based on the Taba and Geneva Accords commands broad, and on all but one point, majority support.

Here are parts of a possible deal to implement the Arab Peace Initiative and establish two separate states of Palestine and Israel.

	Favor	Oppose
Under UN Res 242, withdrawal from all Gaza and West Bank, except 4% land swap for some settlements.	56%	42%
East Jerusalem Palestine's capital, with Arab neighborhoods, including in Old City, and Temple Mount; Jewish neighborhoods, Jewish Quarter, Wailing Wall to Israel.	46%	52%
Palestine has strong internal security forces and, after five years' calm, an Army; until then Jordanian, Egyptian troops ensure security.	53%	44%
Refugees' right of return and compensation recognized under UN Res 194. Host countries, Israel, and 3rd countries decide residency. Return to Palestine free, Israel admits as many as Australia, Canada, and European countries. Compensation paid for lost property and possessions	69%	27%
Plan's implementation ends conflict and claims. Palestine will be sovereign state. Palestine and Israel recognize each other diplomatically and as homelands of their peoples.	56%	38%

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Q. 132

Palestinians' acceptance of the peace plan is a big change from 2000, when they rejected similar post-Camp David deals.

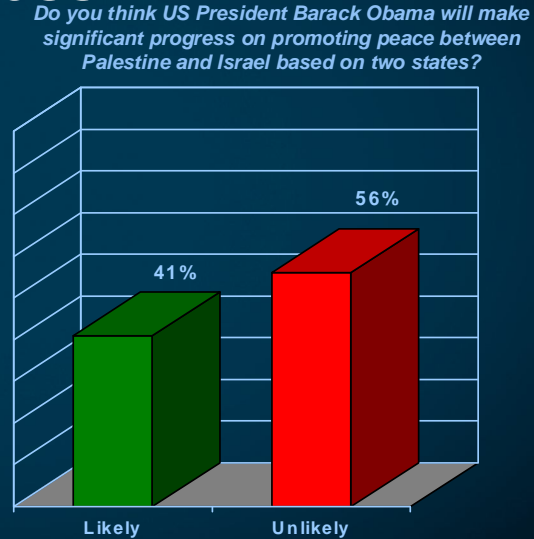
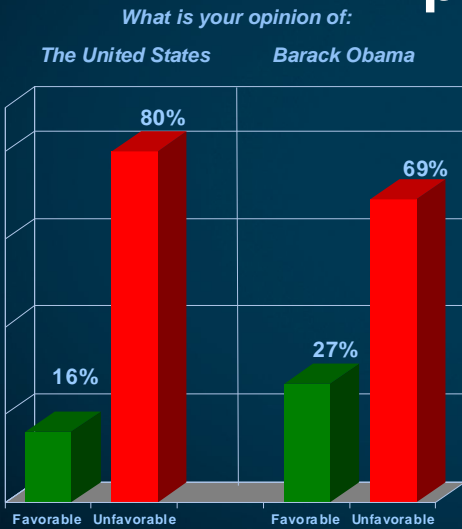
	2000	2009
Israeli withdrawal From 96% of WB/G, 4% land swap	Reject	Accept
Refugees Recognize Res 194, most return to Palestinian state, compensation for losses	Accept	Accept
Demilitarization	Reject No Air force or heavy weapons, Israelis on Jordan	Accept No army for 5 yrs, international force
Jerusalem divided East as capital, includes Haram es Sharif	Reject Large margin	Reject Narrowly
End of Conflict Mutual recognition, no further claims	Reject	Accept

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Q. 132

Most Palestinians remain skeptical of the US and President Obama, but many are hopeful that he will significantly advance the peace process.



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Q. 98, 99, 116

Getting rid of settlement/outposts and freeing prisoners matter more to Palestinians than ending settlement growth or cutting checkpoints.

Here are several steps that could be taken to advance the peace process. Please tell me which issue you think is most important

	All	West Bank	Gaza
Evacuation of settlements/outposts	28%	35%	16%
Release of prisoners	27%	23%	34%
Further withdrawal from the West Bank	13%	13%	13%
Easing of border crossing	11%	9%	15%
Halting demolitions and settlement building activity	7%	4%	11%
Easing of checkpoints	6%	6%	6%

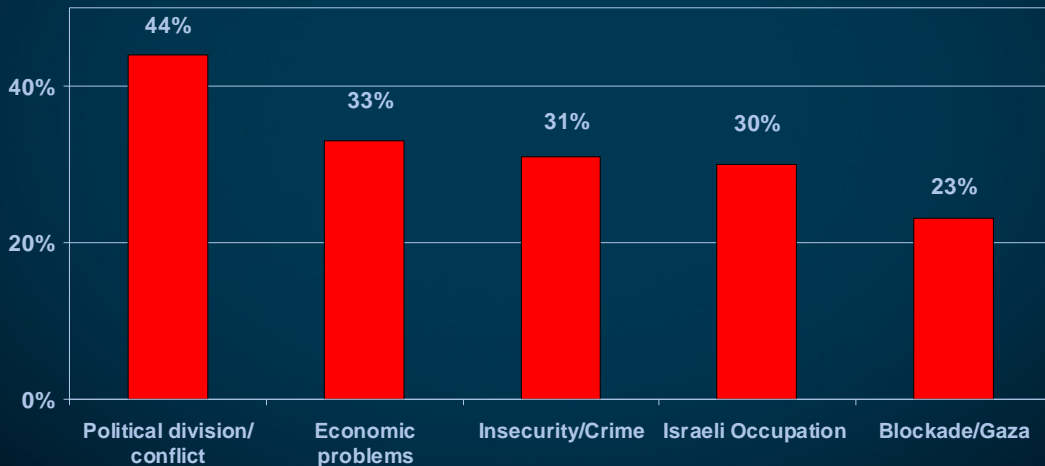
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Q. 128

Political division concerns Palestinians most, followed by the economy, insecurity, Israeli occupation, and the Gaza blockade.

What is the biggest problem facing Palestine?
(Responses given by 10% or more)



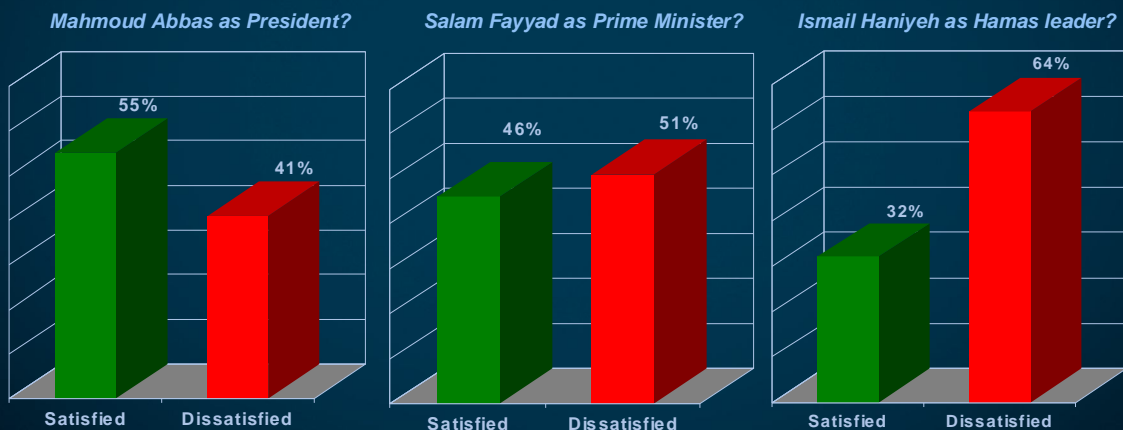
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Q. 3

President Abbas has majority job approval, while ratings are split on Prime Minister Fayyad and negative for Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the following political figures handle their jobs?



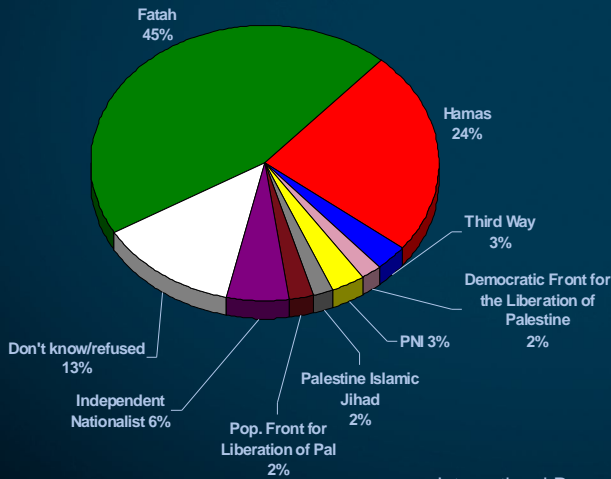
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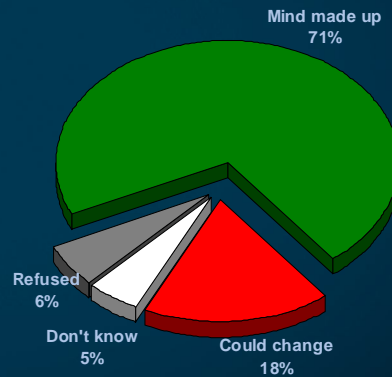
Q. 5, 6, 7

Fatah leads Hamas in the PLC party vote, but a majority depends on don't-knows, potential switchers, and the electoral system.

Presidential Vote Preference



Willingness to Switch Vote



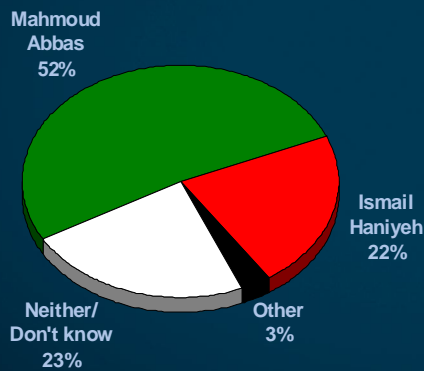
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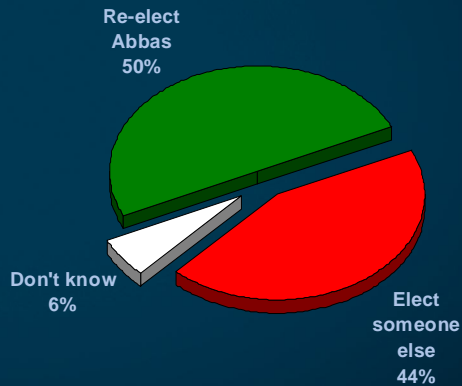
Q. 50, 51

Abbas leads Haniyeh on the presidential vote, but the close split on his re-election suggests he would face a tight race.

Presidential Vote Preference



Re-election Vote Preference

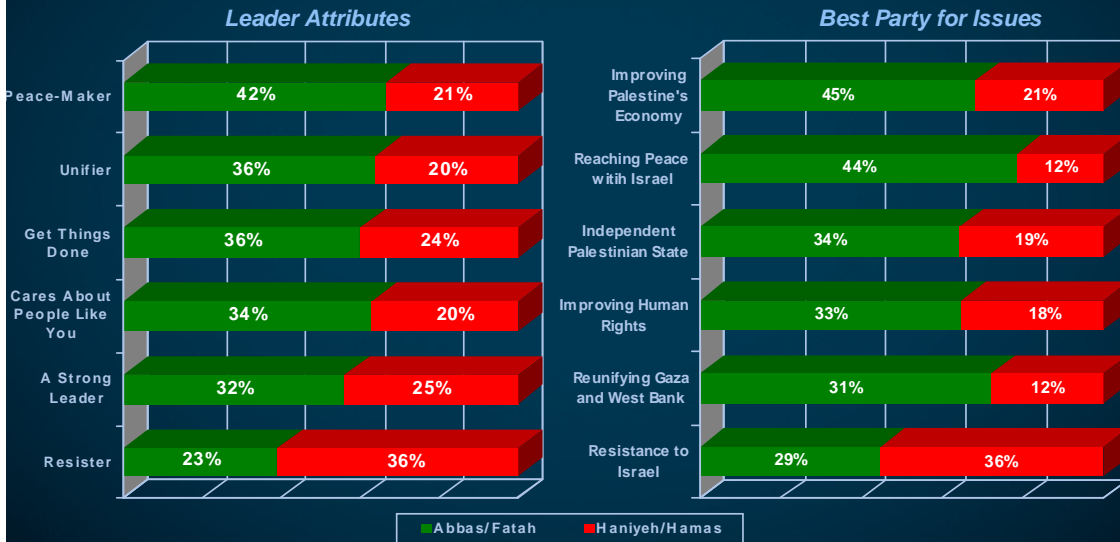


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Q. 48, 52

Fatah leads on peace, unity, the economy, and leadership – while Hamas leads only on the issue of resistance.



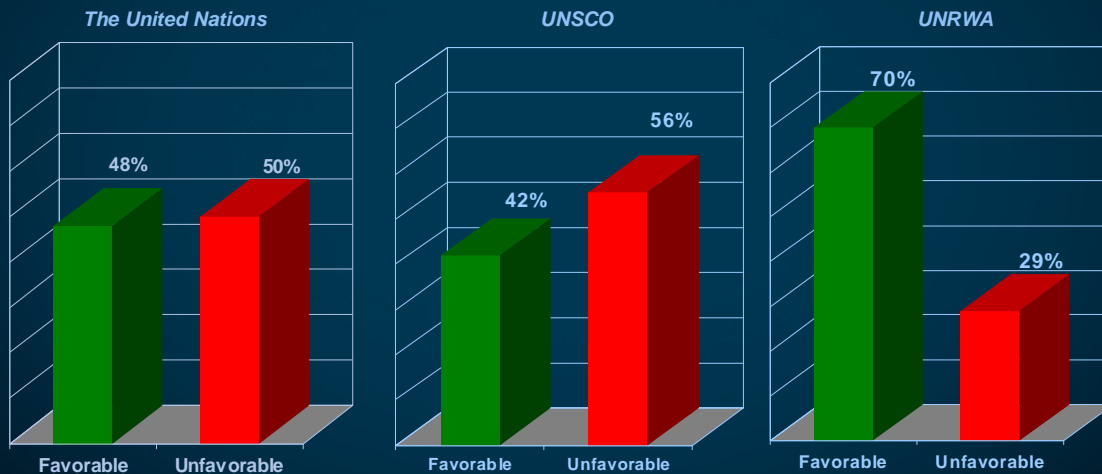
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Q. 54

Palestinians are split on the UN, negative on UNSCO, but hold UNRWA in high regard.

What is your opinion of the following international organizations?



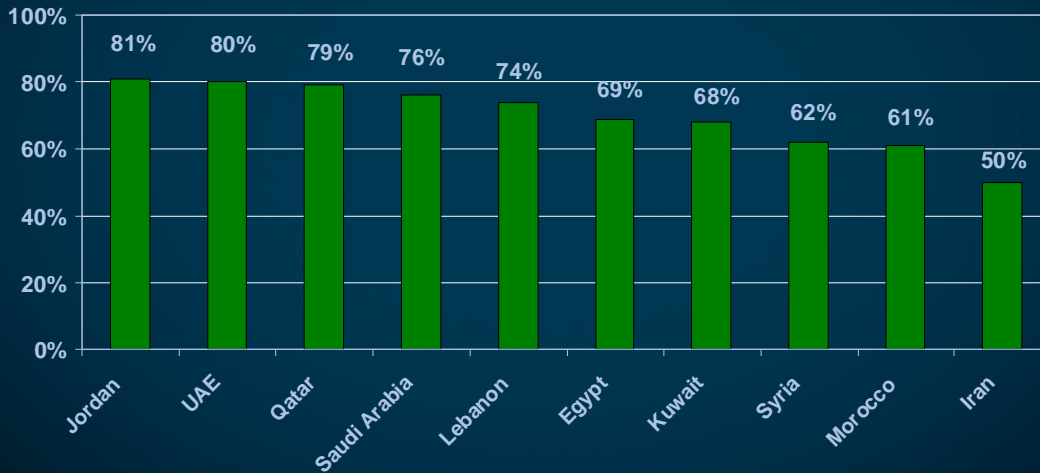
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Q. 95-97

Jordan, UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia are the most popular neighbors among Palestinians.

What is your opinion of the following countries?
(Percent Favorable)



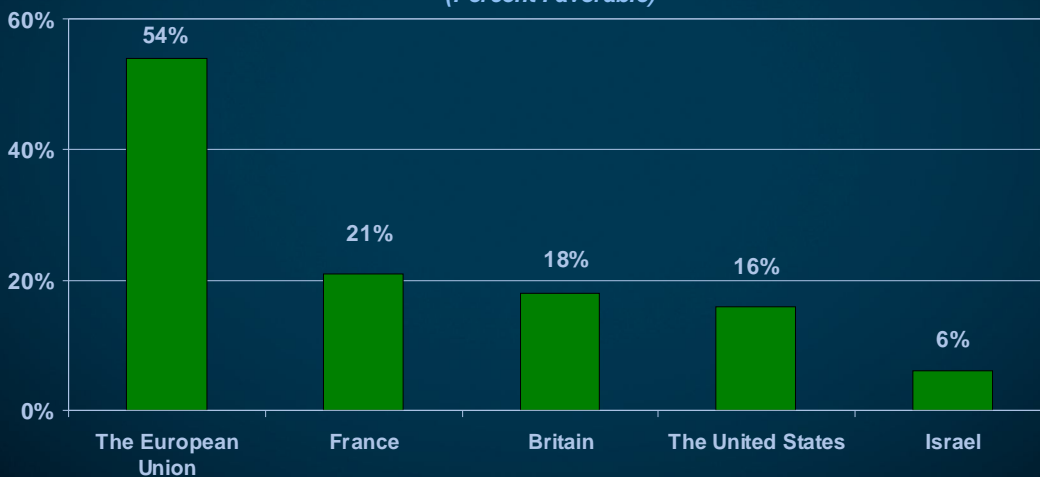
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Q. 102, 104-112

Views of major Western powers and Israel are not favorable, though the EU is well liked, particularly in Gaza.

What is your opinion of the following countries and international organizations?
(Percent Favorable)



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Q. 113, 103, 101, 100, 98

Who are Palestine's enemies? Who are its friends? Who are both?

Who do you perceive as Palestine's closest ally in the region?

•Egypt:	23%
•Nobody:	15%
•Jordan:	14%
•Iran:	12%
•Syria:	11%
•Saudi Arabia:	8%
•UAE:	8%
•Qatar:	4%

Who do you perceive as Palestine's greatest threat in the region?

•Israel:	76%
•USA:	9%
•Iran:	6%
•Other:	4%
•Jordan:	3%
•Nobody:	1%

Q. 114 & 115

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