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## Press Release

A public opinion poll conducted by Jerusalem Media & Communications Center on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Declaration

**Prevalence of pessimism concerning the state, peace and reconciliation**

**The majority blames Hamas for the failure of the Egyptian efforts on the national dialogue**

**A majority supports a national unity government**

**A majority does not trust any Palestinian faction or figure**

**The truce has not made any difference**

**The factions retain their popularity with Fatah Movement still taking the lead**

**The general public is not satisfied with the American role and is not optimistic regarding Obama**

The public opinion poll conducted by Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the period November 20-23, 2008, showed that a majority of the Palestinians are pessimistic regarding peace and the possibility of establishment of a Palestinian state as Palestinians mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

When asked if they were optimistic or pessimistic regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the majority of the respondents (37.2%) said they have no confidence on the possibility of establishment of an independent Palestinian state while a ratio of 34.8% said they are less confident on its establishment and a ratio of 25% said they are more confident.

A climate of pessimism prevailed among the Palestinian masses with regards the success of the Egyptian efforts exerted to end the Palestinian internal split. A majority (52.6%) expressed pessimism regarding the

success of the Egyptian efforts to achieve national unity compared with a ratio of 39.7% who expressed optimism.

The JMCC poll results showed that the ratio of those who expressed pessimism on the Egyptian efforts to achieve national unity in Gaza Strip (59.5%) was higher than in the West Bank (48.6%).

With regards to the side that is viewed responsible for the failure of the Egyptian efforts to hold the Palestinian dialogue, a ratio of 35.3% said Hamas is more responsible for the failure of the Egyptian efforts while a ratio of 17.9% said Fatah is more responsible and a ratio of 12.3% said that both Fatah and Hamas are responsible for this.

It seems that the current conditions in Gaza Strip are pushing its residents to blame Hamas more for obstructing the Palestinian national dialogue as 42.3% in Gaza Strip said Hamas is more responsible with a ratio of 31.2% in the West Bank who blamed Hamas more for the stalemate in the national unity efforts.

A majority of the respondents expressed support to the formation of a national unity government consisting of representatives from all factions. When asked about the preferred formula for an interim government that can prepare for early elections according to the Egyptian paper, a ratio of 50.9% said they support a national coalition government contrary to the formula mentioned in the Egyptian paper, while 21.4% support keeping the caretaker government in the West Bank until holding elections and a ratio of 18.7% pointed out that they support a government of independents (technocrats), in accordance with the Egyptian paper formula.

On the issue of the truce between Israel and Hamas in Gaza Strip, a majority (40.7%) said the truce did not make any difference compared with a ratio of 29.3% who said that the truce harmed the Palestinian national interests and 27.2% said the truce served the Palestinian national interests.

No substantial change has happened regarding the popularity of the various Palestinian factions and figures. A majority (31.3%) said they trust Fatah Movement more compared with a ratio of 16.6% who said they trust Hamas Movement more. A ratio of 2.4% said they trust Islamic Jihad more and 2.3% said they trust the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) more.

When asked if elections were to take place today, a ratio of 23.8% said they would elect Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) while a ratio of 19.7% said they would vote for Ismaeel Hanieh.

At the level of Palestinian figures' popularity, President Abu Mazen enjoyed the confidence of 15.9% compared with 13.8% to Ismaeel Hanieh while Marwan al-Barghouthi enjoyed the support of 6.7%.

When asked if legislative elections were held today, a ratio of 36.8% said they vote for Fatah while 19.5% said they would vote for Hamas and a ratio of 3.7% said they would vote for the PFLP.

Upon assessing the satisfaction level on the role of the major world countries vis-à-vis the peace process, an overwhelming majority (87.5%) said they are not satisfied with Washington's role in the peace process with United Kingdom coming in second rank with a dissatisfaction ratio reaching 80.6% followed by Germany (former EU President) with a dissatisfaction ratio of 68.1% and France, the current EU President, came in the fourth place with a dissatisfaction ratio of 64.5%.

On the impact of the victory of Barack Obama in the US presidential elections and the hopes on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, a majority (57.5%) said Obama's victory won't make any difference on the chances of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict while a ratio of 20.2% said Obama's victory made them more optimistic while a ratio of 17.7% said they became more pessimistic.

## **Methodology:**

A random sample of 1200 people over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between 20-23 November 2008. The interviews were conducted in randomly selected homes, and the subjects inside each home were also selected randomly according to Kish tables. The interviews were conducted in 60 sampling points chosen randomly according to population.

In the **West Bank** 760 people were surveyed from the following areas: **Hebron:** Hebron, Tarqoumia, As-Samou', Dura, Halhoul, Arroub RC, Sourif, Biet Awwa. **Jenin:** Jenin, Jenin RC, Ya'bad, Arrabeh, Kaferet, Serees, Maithaloun, Toubas, Aqqabeh. **Bethlehem:** Bethlehem, Biet Jala, Dar Salah, Battir, Hindaza, Dhesheh RC, **Ramallah & al-Bireh:** Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Silwad, al-Jalazon RC, Der Ghassaneh, Biet Rima, Kufr Nimeh, Ras Karkar. **Jericho:** Jericho, 'Ein Es-Sultan RC. **Jerusalem:** Abu Dies, Al'Izariya, Biddo, Shufat RC, Shufat, Old City, Biet Hanina, Biet Hanina Tahta, al-'Issawia, Wadi el-Joz, Jabal el- Mukaber, Sour Baher. **Nablus:** Nablus, Kufr Qalil, Roujib, Salfit, Yasouf, Der el-Hatab, Askar RC, Burqa, Der Sharaf. **Tulkarem and Qalqilya:** Tulkarem, Tulkarem RC, Iktabeh, Far'oun, Qalqilia, Kufr Jammal.

In the **Gaza Strip:** 440 people were surveyed from: **Gaza:** Shati RC, a-Shuja'ia, Attufah, Al-Durj, Sheikh Radwan, a-Nasser, a-rimal a-Shamali, a-rimal, a-Janoubi, Sabra, A-Zeitoun. **Khan Younis:** Absan al-Saghira, Khan Yunis, Bani Suheila, Abasan al-Kabira, Khan Yunis RC. **Rafah:** Rafah, Rafah RC. **Gaza North:** Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Jabalia RC, Beit Hanoun. **Deir al-Balah:** Deir Al Balah, Nussirat RC, al-Maghazi RC.

The margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percent, with a confidence level of 95%.

### **Sample Distribution**

51.7 % of the respondents were from West Bank, 11.6 % from Jerusalem, 36.7 % from the Gaza Strip.

29.2% said they live in villages 15.0% in refugee camps, and 55.8 % in towns/cities.

50.9% were male, 49.1% were female.

64.7% were married, 29.0%, single, 3.5% widowed, 1.4% divorced, 1.4% no answer.

The average age of the respondents was 35 years.

### **Occupation of Respondents**

- Students 12.8%
- laborers 11.8%
- Farmers/fishermen 3.3%
- Craftsmen 1.3%
- Businessmen/private business 6.9%
- Public Sector Employees 11.8%
- Private Sector Employees 6.8%
- Professionals (e.g. doctors/lawyers/ pharmacists/engineers) 1.6%
- Housewives 32.8%
- Unemployed 8.4%
- Retired 2.0 %,
- No answer 0.5%.

**Results:**

**Q.1 In general, how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel towards the future? Would you say you are: Very optimistic, Optimistic, Pessimistic, or Very pessimistic**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n=440</b>
<b>Very optimistic</b>	7.6	9.1	5.0
<b>Optimistic</b>	55.0	57.1	51.4
<b>Pessimistic</b>	27.1	25.7	29.5
<b>Very pessimistic</b>	9.8	7.4	14.1
<b>No answer</b>	0.5	0.7	0.0

**Q.2 This month marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, on this occasion, do you feel more confident, less confident or not confident at all regarding the possibilities of establishing the independent Palestinian state?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>More confident regarding the possibility of establishment of an independent Palestinian state</b>	25.0	28.8	18.4
<b>Less confident regarding the possibility of establishment of an independent Palestinian state</b>	34.8	31.1	41.4
<b>Not confident at all regarding the possibility of establishment of an independent Palestinian state</b>	37.2	36.3	38.6
<b>Don't know \ No answer</b>	3.0	3.8	1.6

**Q.3 As part of the efforts to prepare for the next Palestinian elections, some propose the formation of a national coalition that includes representatives from all the factions while others propose the formation of a government of independent figures (technocrats) and others propose keeping the current caretaker government in the West Bank until elections take place, which option do you prefer?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n=440</b>
<b>The formation of a national coalition government that includes representatives from all the factions</b>	50.9	50.5	51.6
<b>The formation of a government of independent figures (technocrats)</b>	18.7	18.7	18.6
<b>Keeping the current caretaker government in the West Bank until elections take place</b>	21.4	20.4	23.2

Don't know	6.8	7.9	5.0
No answer	2.2	2.5	1.6

**Q.4. The truce agreement between Hamas and Israel which lasted almost six months is expected to expire soon and now there is talk about extending it for six additional months; what do you think: Do you believe that the truce between Hamas and Israel served the Palestinian national interest and must be renewed or that it harmed the Palestinian national interests and must not be renewed or that it didn't make any difference?**

	Total n= 1200	West Bank n= 760	Gaza n= 440
It served the national interest and must be renewed	27.2	27.0	27.5
It harmed the national interest and must not be renewed	29.3	28.2	31.1
The truce didn't make any difference	40.7	40.4	41.1
Don't know \ No answer	2.8	4.4	0.3

**Q.5 Egypt has exerted efforts towards Palestinian national unity following the split that happened between Gaza and the West Bank, do you feel optimistic regarding the success of the Egyptian efforts or pessimistic?**

	Total N= 1200	West Bank n= 760	Gaza n= 440
Optimistic regarding the success of the Egyptian efforts to achieve the Palestinian national unity	39.7	40.5	38.2
Pessimistic regarding the success of the Egyptian efforts to achieve the Palestinian national unity	52.6	48.6	59.5
Don't know \ No answer	7.7	10.9	2.3

**Q.6 The current Egyptian efforts to start dialogue among the Palestinian factions towards national unity are facing a lot of difficulties; which party do you think should be blamed for obstructing the Palestinian national dialogue?**

	Total n= 1200	West Bank N= 760	Gaza n=440
Fatah	17.9	16.7	20.0
Hamas	35.3	31.2	42.3
Hamas & Fatah	12.3	13.7	9.8
Israel	2.5	1.3	4.5
Others	6.5	5.8	7.7
Don't know	17.8	21.8	10.9
No answer	7.7	9.5	4.8

\* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

**Q.7 The US Presidential Elections were recently held resulting in the victory of Barack Obama from the Democratic Party. Did the victory of Obama make you more optimistic regarding the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict or more pessimistic or do you think Obama's victory won't make any difference?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>N= 760</b>	<b>n=440</b>
<b>More optimistic</b>	20.2	21.7	17.5
<b>More pessimistic</b>	17.7	18.0	17.0
<b>Obama's victory wont make any difference</b>	57.5	54.5	62.7
<b>Don't know</b>	3.3	3.8	2.3
<b>No answer</b>	1.3	2.0	0.5

**Q.8 How satisfied are you regarding the role of the following countries in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process? Are you satisfied very much, satisfied to some extent, not satisfied to some extent or not satisfied at all?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
<b>1- France</b>	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>Satisfied very much</b>	5.7	5.0	6.8
<b>Satisfied to some extent</b>	23.5	24.6	21.6
<b>Not satisfied to some extent</b>	21.1	19.2	24.3
<b>Not satisfied at all</b>	43.4	43.0	44.1
<b>No answer</b>	6.3	8.2	3.2

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
<b>2- United Kingdom</b>	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>Satisfied very much</b>	1.8	2.5	0.7
<b>Satisfied to some extent</b>	11.6	13.3	8.6
<b>Not satisfied to some extent</b>	20.0	20.1	19.8
<b>Not satisfied at all</b>	60.6	56.8	67.0
<b>No answer</b>	6.0	7.3	3.9

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
<b>3- Germany</b>	<b>N= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>Satisfied very much</b>	2.9	2.9	3.0
<b>Satisfied to some extent</b>	21.1	23.2	17.5
<b>Not satisfied to some extent</b>	21.3	20.7	22.5
<b>Not satisfied at all</b>	46.8	43.9	51.8
<b>No answer</b>	7.9	9.3	5.2

4- United States	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N= 1200	n= 760	n= 440
Satisfied very much	1.7	2.1	0.9
Satisfied to some extent	7.1	8.0	5.5
Not satisfied to some extent	11.8	11.7	12.0
Not satisfied at all	75.7	73.7	79.1
No answer	3.7	4.5	2.5

**Q9. Which Palestinian faction do you trust the most?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	N=1200	n= 760	n= 440
Fatah	31.3	28.8	35.5
Hamas	16.6	12.8	23.2
Islamic Jihad	2.4	1.3	4.3
PFLP	2.3	1.8	3.2
National Initiative	1.3	1.7	0.5
Other Islamic Factions	3.9	5.5	1.1
Others	1.8	2.0	1.4
Don't trust anyone	35.8	39.9	28.6
No answer	4.6	6.2	2.2

\* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

**Q10- Which Palestinian personality do you trust the most?**

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
	n= 1200	n= 760	n= 440
Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)	15.9	13.9	19.3
Isma'eel Haniyeh	13.8	10.5	19.5
Marwan Barghouthi	6.7	6.7	6.6
Mustafa Barghouthi	3.0	3.0	3.0
Salam Fayyad	2.5	3.2	1.4
Yasser Arafat	2.5	3.2	1.4
Mohamad Dahlan	2.0	0.3	5.0
Khaled Mish'al	1.4	0.8	2.5
Ahmad Sa'adat	1.3	1.1	1.8
Ramadan Shalah	1.0	0.1	2.5
Others	5.9	6.1	5.7
Don't trust anyone	38.7	44.3	28.9
No answer	5.3	6.8	2.4

\* These answers were not included as part of the options read to the interviewee

**Q11- If presidential elections were held today, for which one of the following candidates would you vote?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n= 1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>Mahmoud Abbas ( Abu Mazen)</b>	23.8	23.2	25.0
<b>Ismaeel Haniyeh</b>	19.7	17.0	24.3
<b>Mustafa Barghouthi</b>	8.8	8.6	9.1
<b>Salam Fayyad</b>	4.4	5.5	2.5
<b>Mohamad Dahlan</b>	3.8	1.4	7.7
<b>I will not vote</b>	32.8	36.1	27.3
<b>No answer</b>	6.7	8.2	4.1

**Q12- If legislative council elections were held today, for which of the following political parties would you vote?**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>
	<b>n=1200</b>	<b>n= 760</b>	<b>n= 440</b>
<b>Fatah</b>	36.8	34.7	40.2
<b>Hamas</b>	19.5	17.8	22.5
<b>PFLP</b>	3.7	3.4	4.1
<b>National Initiative</b>	3.1	3.4	2.5
<b>Islamic Jihad</b>	2.5	1.4	4.3
<b>PPP</b>	0.6	0.9	0.0
<b>DFLP</b>	0.5	0.8	0.0
<b>FIDA</b>	0.2	0.3	0.0
<b>Won't vote</b>	26.8	30.3	20.7
<b>No answer</b>	6.3	7.0	5.7