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The Palestine/Israel Pulse: A Joint Poll

---FOR RELEASE---

Support for a two-state solution among Palestinians and Israelis declines to just one-third on each side, along with growing opposition to the detailed items of a permanent peace agreement for implementing a two-state solution. Slightly more Israeli Jews support one unequal state under Israeli rule than the two-state solution; but both publics still prefer two states to any other democratic framework for resolving the conflict. Pairs of reciprocal incentives can raise support somewhat on both sides, showing some flexibility particularly among the Israelis. But trust is declining to new low points, and a majority of Palestinians reject four proposed confidence building measures while a majority of Israelis accepts half of them.

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These are the results of Palestine-Israeli Pulse: A Joint Poll conducted by the [Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research \(PSR\)](#) in Ramallah and [the International Program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Tel Aviv University](#) with funding from the [Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah](#) and the [Representative Office of Japan to Palestine](#) through [UNDP/PAPP](#). The joint poll was conducted during December 2022.

Support for the **two-state solution** drops significantly among Palestinians and Israeli Jews, from 43% in September 2020 to 33% among the Palestinians and 34% among Israeli Jews. Two-thirds of Palestinians and 53% of Israeli Jews are opposed. Among Israeli Arabs, support remains stable at 60% and opposition at 21%, though this is significantly lower than their support historically, prior to 2020. Among all Israelis, Jews and Arabs, 39% in total support the two-state solution. This is the lowest level of support for this concept among Palestinians, Israeli Jews, and all Israelis, since the beginning of the *Pulse*, in June 2016 and it is the lowest support for all groups since the start of the Oslo process in the early 1990s .

The current survey tested the concept of a **two-state confederation** between the states of Israel and Palestine. Five components were identified detailing aspects of freedom of movement, citizenship and residency for refugees and settlers, Jerusalem and joint authorities for civic affairs. Palestinians and Israeli Jews supported the concept by almost identical percentages, 22% and 21% respectively compared to 59% among Israeli Arabs. Surprisingly, support in the Gaza Strip is significantly higher than in the West Bank, 34% and 15% respectively.

The survey tested other alternatives to the two-state solution: (1) a **one-state with equal rights** for Israeli Jews and Palestinians and (2) a **one-state ruled by one of the sides, with only limited rights for the other**:

- *One equal democratic state* is supported by 20% of Israeli Jews, 44% of Israeli Arabs, and 23% of Palestinians. These percentages are lower than those found in the previous *Pulse* in September 2020.
- *One non-democratic state* ruled by Israel without equality for Palestinians is supported by 37% of Israeli Jews; one Palestinian state without equality for Jews is supported by 30% of Palestinians

and 20% of Israeli Arabs. Compared to 2020, the current percentages indicate a slight increase among Israeli Jews and a significant decrease among Palestinians for this alternative.

- *Little interest in equal voting rights:* In the event that Israel annexes the West Bank, a majority on both sides – two-thirds of Palestinians (66%) and over 70 percent of Israeli Jews (71%) do *not* believe Palestinians should demand the right to vote. A large majority, more than three-quarters of Palestinians (78%) say they would not vote or participate in Knesset elections in such a case, but nearly 60 percent of Israeli Jews (58%) believe they will.

Attitudes continue to harden when presented with 11 detailed items of a two state *peace package* identical to the one we presented in mid-2018 and September 2020. The basis of this plan is drawn from two state negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian leadership over the years. Support has been declining in recent surveys and in 2022 the trend continued, against the background of increased escalation and hardline political developments in Israel:

- Only a quarter of the Palestinians (26%), 31% of Israeli Jews, and 62% of Israeli Arabs support the detailed peace package. Compared to September 2020, current support among Israeli Jews is down by 5 points and by 1 point among the Palestinians; but support among Israeli Arabs indicates a 13-point increase (support in 2020 was unusually low in that group). Support among Gazans is more than twice as much as among West Bankers, 18% and 38% respectively; two years ago, support among West Bankers stood at 25% compared to 31% among Gazans. *Among Palestinians and Israeli Jews, the current levels of support for the package are the lowest since 2016.*
- Large majorities of Palestinians reject all 11 components of the peace package; among Israeli Jews, four of the 11 components receive majority support, while large majorities of Israeli Jews reject five of the components
- A Jewish majority among secularists and self-defined left-wingers support the package; among the Palestinians, significant minorities among Fatah voters, the non-religious, and the Gaza Strip support the detailed peace package.

The peace package comprises: a de-militarized Palestinian state, an Israeli withdrawal to the Green Line with equal territorial exchange, family unification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees, West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall under Israeli sovereignty and the Muslim and Christian quarters and the al Haram al Sharif/Temple Mount under Palestinian sovereignty, Israeli and the future state of Palestine will be democratic, the bilateral agreement will be part of a regional agreement with other Arab countries, the US and major Arab countries will ensure full implementation of the agreement by both sides, and the end of the conflict and claims.

However, Israeli Jews, and to a lesser extent Palestinians, show a measure of flexibility when offered incentives, even when the incentives represent a reciprocal trade-off – in return for the incentive, the other side gets an incentive as well:

- Seven different pairs of reciprocal incentives convinced more *Israeli Jews* to support the detailed peace package for two-state solution mentioned above, than those who initially supported the plan; an average of 30% of Israeli Jews (compared to 45% in September 2020) who were initially opposed changed their minds in response to the various incentive pairs. *Two pairs of reciprocal incentives caused a majority of Jewish Israelis to say they were more likely to support the detailed two-state peace package.*
- Two pairs of reciprocal incentives convinced slightly more *Palestinians* to support the peace package than those who supported it at first; on average, 12% of Palestinians (compared to 21% in September 2021) who opposed the initial agreement were prepared to change their minds. None of the paired incentives convinced a majority of Palestinians to say they were more likely to support the detailed two-state peace package.
- These findings show declining effectiveness of reciprocal incentives and less flexibility of attitudes compared to 2020, but indicate that a limited portion of people on each side might still change its mind under changing circumstances.

The poll explored the reactions of the two public to four reciprocal confidence building measures (CBMs).

These are measures the two sides can jointly take now to improve the Palestinian-Israeli environment and promote healthy conditions for a resumption of viable peace negotiations. The CBMs tested in the poll included steps Israelis would want, such as the Palestinian Authority dropping its claims at the International Criminal Court, payments to prisoners, removing incitement from textbooks, and Palestinian security forces apprehending Palestinian militants, and steps Palestinians would want, such as building in area C, release of prisoners, holding elections in East Jerusalem, and cessation of Israeli army incursions into area A. Each specific item contained reciprocal measures for the Israeli and Palestinian side, such as:

"Palestinian security services will enter all areas under the PA control to arrest and disarm any armed Palestinians and those planning to carry out attacks against Israelis and the Israeli army to stop its incursions into area A of the Palestinian territories"

- Among Palestinians, none of the measures examined received significant support. Among Israeli Jews, two measures received majority support: Textbooks and PA elections (54%) and PA security cooperations and Israeli incursions (51%).
- Among Israeli Jews, "Textbooks and PA elections" is the measure with the highest support across all groups – as per the following text.

"Palestinians will revise their current school textbooks to remove any incitement against Jews and Israeli will allow Palestinians in East Jerusalem to participate in the PA elections in accordance with the terms of the Oslo agreement"

- Among Israeli Arabs all CBMs get high support without significance difference between them.
- Among Palestinians, the support for CBMs in general is higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, among Fatah voters, non-religious and 18–39-year-old. The two items that received higher support are "ICC and Area C" and "Payments to prisoners and release of prisoners".

The deeper divide: No partner, distrust, and poor perceptions of the other

The hardening of attitudes is driven by deep concerns about the ultimate goals of the other side. Indeed, perceptions of the other have worsened significantly since mid-2017 and are currently at a low point, with the two sides a mirror image of one another.

- The overwhelming majority of Israeli Jews (84%) and 61% of Palestinians think there is no peace partner on the other side, hence it is impossible to reach a peace agreement. Similarly, only 17% of Palestinians believe most Israeli Jews have peaceful intentions., compared to 44% in June 2017 and 39% in June 2018, though the current finding is close to that of 2020, 18%. On the Israeli side, 12% of Israeli Jews say the same about Palestinians, compared to 33% in June 2017, 35% in June 2018, and 19% in 2020. The largest percentage on each side, 52% among Israeli Jews and 44% of the Palestinians think the other side wants to wage armed struggle or war, respectively. The overwhelming majority of Israeli Jews (82%) and Palestinians (75%) think the other side will never accept the existence of their independent state.
- The overwhelming majority of Palestinians and Israeli Jews, 86% and 85% respectively, believe the other side cannot be trusted; 50% of Israeli Arabs think Israeli Jews cannot be trusted.
- Distrust is reinforced by a prevailing perception on both sides that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is characterized by zero-sum relations: "Nothing can be done that's good for both sides; whatever is good for one side is bad for the other side." Findings show that 65% of Israeli Jews, 46% of Israeli Arabs agree, and 71% of Palestinians agree with this dismal zero-sum characterization.
- Our findings indicate that both Israeli Jews and Palestinians see the entire land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan river (i.e., the whole land of Israel/Palestine) as belonging to their group through high and identical scores (93%). Also, the majority among both publics, 94% among the Palestinians and 68% among Israeli Jews, negate the idea that the land belongs to the other side as well, thus perceiving the territory as exclusive to them.

The Palestinian sample size was 1270 adults interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip in 127 randomly selected locations between 1-4 December, 2022. The margin of error is +/-3%. The Israeli sample includes 900 adult Israelis interviewed through the internet by New Wave Research in Hebrew and Arabic between 6-13 December 2022. The number of Jews interviewed inside Israel is 500, 200 West Bank settlers, and 200 Israeli Arabs. The combined Israeli data file has been reweighted to reflect the exact proportionate size of these three groups in the Israeli society, and to reflect current demographic and religious-secular divisions. The margin of error is +/-3.34%. The survey and the summary report have been drafted by Dr. Khalil Shikaki, director of PSR, Dr. Nimrod Rosler and Dr. Alon Yakter from Tel Aviv University and Dr. Dahlia Scheindlin.

Complete poll summary attached. For more information or interviews: contact Khalil Shikaki, PSR director, at pcpsr@pcpsr.org or 02 296 4933 or 059-944-4045; Nimrod Rosler, Head of the International Program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Tel-Aviv University, rosler@tauex.tau.ac.il; or Dahlia Scheindlin, at dahlia60@gmail.com or 0544384605.



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From the People of Japan

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