



In a recent poll conducted by Near East Consulting (NEC)

44% believes that the Palestinian reconciliation will fail

**53% agrees that Hamas owns the right to take a central role in the
Palestinian government**

Ramallah-the West Bank: Near East Consulting (NEC) July survey reveals that 56% of the respondents expect that the Palestinian reconciliation will succeed (51% in the Gaza Strip versus 59% in the West Bank); while 44% think that the reconciliation will fail.

The survey was conducted between the 4th and the 6th of July 2011 on a random sample of 838 Palestinians over the age of 18 in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem. The margin of error is +/-3.4% and the confidence level is 95%.

Regarding the Hamas' role in the Palestinian government, the majority, 53%, agree that Hamas should play a central role in the government versus 32% who think that Hamas' involvement will threaten the relations with foreign countries, and 15% said that Hamas' participation will not change anything.

In addition, 32% of the Palestinians favor the establishment of a system with two governments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while 77% oppose the idea, as it will harm Palestinian internal unity. Moreover, 67% prefer a government that includes all factions and 33% prefer a government composed of the winning party.

In a question about the impact of a potential United Nations recognition of a Palestinian state, 54% of the Palestinians think that the recognition will lead to positive impact while 7% think the opposite, and 39% said it would not change anything.

In another context, 75% believe that the Palestinians factions' recognition of the Jewish state will not improve the chances for peace and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

NEC also asked about the Palestinians' perceptions of the Arab "Spring" and its impact on the Palestinian cause. The results show that 64% of the respondents think that the recent changes in the Arab countries will positively change the Arabs' formal position towards Palestine, 7% said it will change the position negatively, and 28% said that the Arab position will not be affected at all.

Moreover, the survey results show a significant decrease in the level of support for a peace agreement with Israel in comparison with the survey conducted by NEC in April 2011 (60% in July and 72% in April). In the same context, 58% of the Palestinians call on Hamas to change its position regarding the elimination of the state of Israel.



As for factional trust, the popularity of Fateh has reached 39% compared to 9% that trusts Hamas, while the majority (43%) does not trust any faction.

The greater part (55%) gives the legitimacy to the Fayyad Government, and 16% to the Hanieh government, noting that 29% believes that neither is legitimate.

In response to the question as to which strategy respondents think is better for maximizing Palestinian national interest, 47% preferred the Fateh strategy while 11% favored Hamas, about 42% gave no preference to either strategy.

About how the respondents identify themselves, 60% identified themselves first as Muslims, 18% as Palestinians, 17% as human beings first and 5% as Arabs first.

The increase in adherence to religious identity is also reflected in the system preferred by the Palestinian people. About 46% of the respondents said that they believe that the Islamic system of government is the best for Palestine to be modelled after, while 21% chose a system like one of the Arab countries.

As for the economic situation, the results show that 45% of the Palestinians live below the poverty line (55% in the Gaza Strip and 41% in the West Bank. In addition, 22% of the Palestinians are unemployed and 17% work as part time. The unemployment rates appear significantly in the Gaza Strip, refugee camps and in the Palestinian villages.
