

PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL POLICY ATTITUDES

A joint program of the Center on Policy Attitudes and the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland

Americans on the Israel/Palestinian Conflict

A STUDY OF US PUBLIC ATTITUDES

May 8, 2002

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OVERVIEW

To explore US public attitudes on the Israel-Palestinian conflict, the Program on International Policy Attitudes conducted an in-depth study that included: a review of existing polling from other organizations, focus groups in Chicago and Baltimore, and a nationwide poll of 801 randomly selected Americans May 1-5 (margin of error plus or minus 3.5-4%).

A unique feature of the poll was that for some issues PIPA consulted with the Embassy of Israel and the Palestinian Mission at the UN, developing a series of questions in which the Israeli and Palestinian positions were presented and then evaluated.

Some key findings:

- A majority of Americans say they blame both sides equally for the failure to reach peace and express equal levels of frustration for each side.
- A very strong majority thinks that US policy should be even-handed in the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Only a small minority believes that this is true of current US policy, while a clear majority feels that it favors Israel.
- A strong majority backs President Bush's initiative calling for Israelis to withdraw their forces from Palestinian towns. More than four out of five Americans support the idea of an international conference.
- Majorities favor the US putting greater pressure on both Israel and the Palestinians by withholding aid.
- A majority is critical of Israel's recent military actions in the West Bank and believes that they have increased the probability of further attacks against Israeli civilians.
- An overwhelming majority rejects the idea that Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians

- are a legitimate means of resisting Israeli occupation.
- A very strong majority would support US participation in a peacekeeping operation to monitor and enforce a peace agreement, if it is a UN-sponsored, multilateral operation.
- A strong majority favors the UN playing a major role in trying to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

FINDINGS

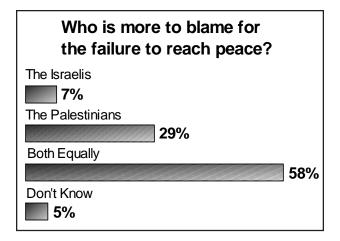
Even-Handed Evaluation of Israelis and Palestinians

A majority of Americans say they blame both sides equally for the failure to reach peace and express equal levels of frustration with each side. Half express equal levels of sympathy. Of the remainder, one in three or less take a more favorable view of the Israelis, while significantly fewer take a more favorable view of the Palestinians. Mean ratings favor the Israelis, but only by a modest margin. Only a small minority view Israel's conflict with the Palestinians as similar to America's war on terrorism.

Numerous polls have asked respondents whether they blame the Israelis or Palestinians more, or with which side they have more sympathy. Given only these two options, a strong plurality has expressed a more favorable view of the Israelis. But large percentages of respondents in these polls—sometimes more than half—have not answered either way, suggesting widespread discomfort with the question. For example, an April 16 Fox News poll asked, "Who do you think is more to blame for the failure to reach peace in the Middle East: the Israelis or the Palestinians?" A remarkable 55% refused to answer. Of the 45% that did, 12% blamed the Israelis more and 33% the Palestinians.

When PIPA reasked the Fox News question cited above about blame for the failure to reach peace, it offered the additional response option of "both

sides about equally." The percentage refusing to answer the question dropped from 55% to just 5%. Most striking, a majority of 58% chose the new response option of "both sides about equally." Of the remainder, 29% blamed the Palestinians more, while 7% blamed the Israelis more.



In the current poll respondents were also asked how much *frustration* they felt with each side, as well as how much *sympathy* they felt. They were asked to rate each side independently and were given a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning low frustration or sympathy and 10 meaning a very high level.

Respondents were quite even-handed. On the frustration scales, 55% gave scores that were exactly equal (48%) or within one point (7%). On the sympathy scales, 49% gave scores that were exactly equal (41%) or within one point (7%). (Percentages do not add up exactly due to rounding.)

Of the remainder, the gap on frustration was fairly narrow, with 21% expressing more frustration with the Palestinians and 14% with the Israelis. Somewhat more gave a higher score for sympathy with Israel (34%) than for the Palestinians (10%).

When all the scores were combined, the average scores were favorable to Israel, but by a fairly modest margin. On frustration, Israel scored a 5.4 while the Palestinians scored a 5.8. On sympathy, Israel scored a mean of 5.7 while the Palestinians scored a 4.3.

Asked whether the Israelis and Palestinians "have

been too willing to compromise, too unwilling to compromise, or about right," 41% rated both sides equally, 35% rated the Palestinians as more unwilling and 8% rated the Israelis as more unwilling.

Conflict Not Viewed as Part of War on Terrorism

Consistent with the majority's resistance to attributing blame to one side, only a small minority saw Israel's conflict with the Palestinians as like the war on terrorism. As shown below, when offered three options for framing the conflict, only 17% chose to compare it to the war on terrorism.



An April CBS News poll did find that 59% agreed with a statement that made a direct comparison between Israel's actions and the US war on terrorism. But, though Americans may agree that there is some parallel, they do not see the war on terrorism as the best way to describe the conflict.

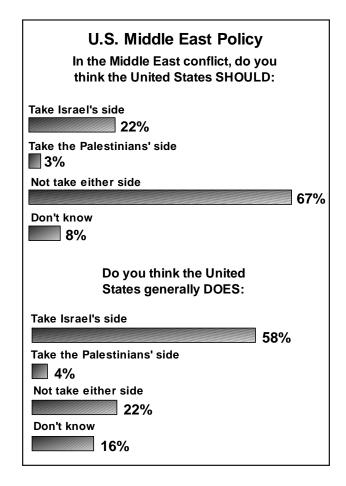
Support for More Even-Handed US Policy

A very strong majority thinks that US policy should be even-handed in the Israel-Palestinian conflict and only a small minority believes that this is true of current US policy, while a clear majority feels that it favors Israel. Consistent with this even-handed orientation, if the Palestinians do come to a peace agreement with Israel, a majority favors equalizing the amount of aid that the US gives to each side.

Consistent with their even-handed view of the parties to the conflict, a very strong majority thinks that the US should take an even-handed approach

to the conflict. As shown below, when asked which side the US should take, a strong majority of 67% said that the US should not take either side, while 22% said the US should take Israel's side and just 3% the Palestinians' side.

Perhaps most significant, only a small minority (22%) said that the US is taking such an even-handed approach. Rather, a clear majority (58%) said that the US is favoring Israel. Four percent said the US favors the Palestinian side and 16% said they did not know.



Consistent with this even-handed orientation, a majority is ready to equalize the amount of aid the US gives Israel and the Palestinians. "If the Palestinians come to terms with Israel in a peace agreement," 57% said that the US should then "equalize the amount of aid it gives to Israel and to the Palestinians," while 22% preferred to see "the US continue to give Israel more." A large percentage (17%) did not answer the question.

Strong Support for Bush Initiatives

Bush's recent efforts to reduce the level of conflict. A very strong majority thinks that September 11th has heightened the importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A strong majority backs Bush's initiative calling for Israel to withdraw its forces from Palestinian towns. An overwhelming majority supports Secretary of State Colin Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat, and an even larger majority supports the idea of an international conference. Recent polling also shows overwhelming approval of Bush expressing support for a Palestinian state.

Contrary to much criticism on op-ed pages around the country, and despite the failure to achieve a breakthrough, a very strong majority is supportive of President Bush's having gotten more deeply involved in the problem of the Middle East. Asked, "Overall, do you think that President Bush did the right thing or made a mistake recently by getting involved in trying to reduce the level of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?" 70% said that he did the right thing, while just 23% saw it as a mistake.

Some of this support may be related to the belief that since September 11th the Israel-Palestinian conflict has become more important—though, arguably, given the war in Afghanistan and the new priorities of a global war on terrorism, one might conclude that the Middle East conflict is relatively less important. But in the current poll, 73% said that "the events of September 11th have made the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians more important," while just 12% said that it has become less important.

Americans do not seem to concur with those who believe that presidents should not get too deeply involved in Middle East negotiations. Asked, "Thinking back, do you think that President Clinton did the right thing or made a mistake by getting as involved as he did in trying to make peace between Israel and the Palestinians?" 59% said that he did the right thing, while just 30% said he made a mistake.

Approval of Call for Israeli Withdrawal

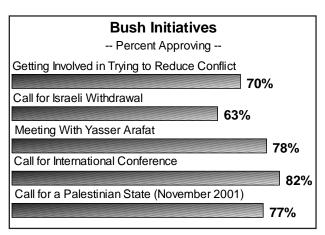
A strong 63% said they approved of President Bush's April demand "that Israel withdraw its troops from the Palestinian towns it recently took over." Twenty-six percent disapproved. This level of support is down from the 71% approval found in an April 5-7 Gallup poll that asked a similar question shortly after his Rose Garden speech. Support may be down a bit due to his lack of success in producing results.

Approval of Meeting With Yasser Arafat

Despite the negative image of Yasser Arafat that has been recorded in numerous polls, an overwhelming majority approved of US diplomatic contacts with him. Asked, "In April, Secretary of State Colin Powell met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Do you approve or disapprove of Secretary Powell meeting with Yasser Arafat?" 78% approved and 15% disapproved.

Approval of International Conference

An overwhelming majority approves of the recent initiative to hold an international conference. Respondents were presented the following question. "As you may know, the US, together with the European Union, Russia and the UN, have agreed to hold a major international conference to try to help resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Do you think this is a good idea or not a good idea?" Eighty-two percent said they thought it was a good idea, while just 12% thought it was not.



Approval of Call for Palestinian State

In November 2001 PIPA asked, "President Bush has said that there ought to be a Palestinian state, provided that it recognizes the right of Israel to exist. Do you support or do you oppose this position?" An overwhelming 77% approved.

Support for Putting Greater Pressure on Both Israel and the Palestinians

Majorities favor the US putting greater pressure on both Israel and the Palestinians. If Israel does not fully withdraw its troops from the West Bank areas it took over recently, a majority favors the US telling Israel not to use US-provided battlefield weapons for these operations. If the Israelis and Palestinians continue to refuse to declare a ceasefire and return to the negotiating table, strong majorities support the US saying that it will reduce the aid it provides to both the Palestinians and Israel, and that it will withhold spare parts for advanced weapon systems the US has given to Israel. A plurality would favor saying that the US would stop dealing with Yasser Arafat.

Majorities favor putting greater pressure on both Israel and the Palestinians. Asked, "If Israel does not fully withdraw its troops from the towns it recently took over, do you favor or oppose telling Israel not to use US-provided battlefield weapons in these operations?" 52% said that they favored the idea while 35% were opposed (don't know, 12%).

As shown below, if the Israelis and the Palestinians refuse to respond to the US call for them to declare a ceasefire and return to the negotiating table, strong majorities would favor the US saying that it will reduce aid to both the Israelis (61%) and the Palestinians (63%). Half the sample in each case was also told the amount of the aid that goes to Israel (3 billion dollars) and to the Palestinians (80 million dollars). This information had no significant effect on the responses.

To apply pressure, a strong majority (64%) also favored the US saying that it would withhold spare parts for some of the advanced weapons the US

Pressuring Israelis and Palestinians "As you may know, the U.S. has called for the Israelis and Palestinians to declare a ceasefire and return to the negotiating table. Here are some things that the U.S. could say it will do, if they continue to refuse." Pressuring Palestinians Favor Withhold some of the aid that the U.S. gives to the Palestinians 63% No longer deal with Yasser Arafat Fressuring Israelis Withhold some of the aid that the U.S. gives to Israel 61% Withhold spare parts for some of the advanced weapons the U.S. has given to Israel 64%

has given Israel. However, only 50% favored the US saying that it would no longer deal with Arafat, while 41% were opposed to this idea.

Criticism of Recent Israeli Military Action

A majority is critical of Israel's recent military actions in the West Bank and believes that they have increased the probability of further attacks against Israeli civilians. A majority believes that Israeli troops were not only seeking to root out terrorists, but were also seeking to punish the general Palestinian population. This assessment held constant both before and after hearing Israeli and Palestinian positions on this issue. An overwhelming majority believes that Israel should allow the UN to investigate the Israeli military operation in Jenin.

A strong majority is critical of Israel's recent military actions in the West Bank. As noted above, 63% approved of Bush's call for Israeli withdrawal, and if the Israelis do not withdraw, 52% favored telling Israel to not use US-provided weapons in these operations.

Americans perceive Israel's actions as self-defeating. Asked, "Do you think that the recent Israeli military intervention in the West Bank has increased or decreased the likelihood of further suicide bombings against Israeli civilians?" 62% said

they increased them, while just 15% said they decreased them. Five percent volunteered that they made no difference and 17% did not know.

A key issue is whether Israel's actions are, as Israel claims, simply meant to root out the terrorists' infrastructure there, or if Israel is also trying to punish the general Palestinian population—something that would be a violation of international law. When respondents were initially presented this question, a majority said they believed that Israel has been trying to punish the population. Thirty-six percent said they believed that the Israelis "have only been trying to root out terrorists, though they may have hurt some civilians unintentionally." However, 55% said they have been either "primarily trying to punish the population" (21%) or "primarily trying to root out terrorists, but in some cases have also tried to punish the population" (34%).

Naturally the question arises, what if Americans were given the opportunity to hear both sides of this issue—would it have an effect on their views one way or the other? To find out, PIPA consulted with representatives from the Embassy of Israel and the Palestinian mission at the UN to develop the best presentation of their positions on this issue. Near the end of the questionnaire (so as not to affect other responses), respondents were read each argument and asked to evaluate how convincing they found each one. As shown below, 52% found the Israeli argument convincing while 53% found

On Recent Military	Action in	the	West	Bank
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Israeli Argument (Written in consultation with Israeli E	Israeli Argument Palestinian Argument (Written in consultation with Israeli Embassy) (Written in consultation with Palestinian UN			UN mission)		
scores of Israeli civilians, Israeli forces had no choice but to seek out the terrorists. Israel was forced to do this because the Palestinian Authority has reneged on its own commitment to prevent terrorism. The Israeli forces had orders to avoid hurting civilians and to surgically target the terrorists. The extensive damage that occurred was in the context of difficult house-to-house fighting. Israel only acted like the US in Afghanistan in seeking out terrorists who murder		entire ne fired mis access of to whole declared tions, UN the UN I resisting	orces have killed women and children, bulldozed neighborhoods crushing the people living there, hissiles into densely populated areas, blocked of ambulances, and cut off electricity and water ble towns for long periods. The Red Cross has ed that Israel has violated the Geneva conven-UN agencies have protested Israeli actions, and I has created a fact-finding team which Israel is g. Clearly these actions are designed to hurt at Palestinian civilians, not just to target terrorist			
Convincing	52%	Convin	cing	53%		
Conclusion			Before Arguments After Arguments			
The Israelis have only been trying to root out terrorists, though they may have hurt some civilians unintentionally		36%	30%			
The Israelis have been primarily trying to punish the population		21%	21%			
The Israelis have been primarily trying to root out terrorists, but in some cases have also tried to punish the population		34%	37%			

the Palestinian argument convincing. When asked after hearing the arguments, the percentage saying that Israel was only trying to root out terrorists slipped 6% to 30%, while the percentage saying that the Israel was at least sometimes punishing the population rose to 58%.

UN Investigation of Jenin Operation

An overwhelming majority 76% says that Israel should allow the UN to investigate Israel's military operation in Jenin. Just 15% were opposed. Support was equally high when respondents were told that Israel has not allowed the UN team to conduct the investigation.

Palestinian Attacks on Civilians Seen as Unjustifiable

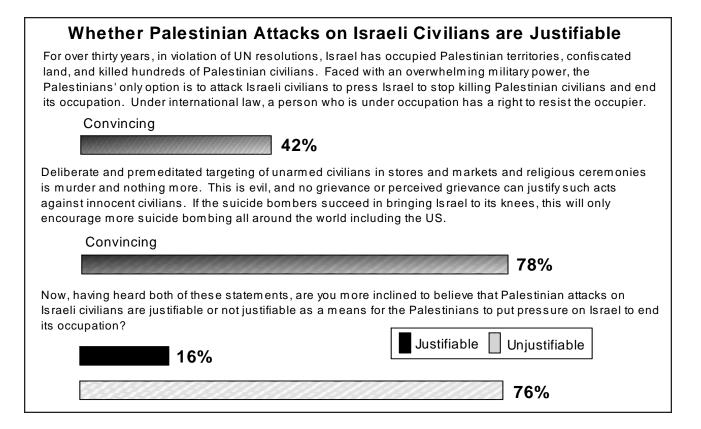
An overwhelming majority rejects the idea that Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians are a legitimate means of resisting Israeli occupation, after hearing arguments on both sides of this question. If the Palestinians refrain from such attacks and limit themselves to nonviolent forms of protest, then the percentage willing to put more

pressure on Israel to make more compromises would rise from a moderate to an overwhelming majority.

While a moderately strong majority is critical of Israeli actions against Palestinian towns, an overwhelming majority rejected the argument made by some Palestinians (though not by the Palestinian Authority, which officially rejects terrorism) that attacks on Israeli civilians are a legitimate means of resisting Israeli occupation.

Respondents were presented a position in support of the view that such attacks are legitimate. This argument was developed by studying Palestinian and pro-Palestinian sources that take positions defending such attacks. The Israeli position was developed in consultation with the Embassy of Israel. The position that such attacks are justifiable was found convincing by just 42%, while the opposing position was found convincing by an overwhelming 78%.

When asked—after evaluating both positions—whether they thought such attacks are justifiable or not, an overwhelming 76% said they are not.



If Palestinians Used Nonviolent Forms of Protest

If the Palestinians refrain from further terrorism and limit themselves to nonviolent forms of protest, then the percentage willing to put more pressure on Israel to make more compromises would rise from a moderately strong majority to an overwhelming majority.

To set a baseline, respondents were asked, "Overall, do you favor or oppose the US putting more pressure on Israel to make compromises with the Palestinians?" Fifty-six percent said they would favor doing so, with 35% opposed.

Those who were opposed to putting more pressure or did not answer were then asked, "I'd like you to imagine that the Palestinians stopped engaging in all forms of terrorism, including suicide bombing, and instead used nonviolent forms of protest such as demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts. Would you then favor or oppose the US putting more pressure on Israel to make compromises with the Palestinians?" Sixty-four percent of this group said they would then change their position to favor putting more pressure on the Israelis,

thus raising the percentage willing to put more pressure on the Israelis to an overwhelming 84%.

If Palestinians Use Non-Violent Forms of Protest Favor US putting more pressure on Israel to make compromises 56% Favor US putting more pressure on Israel if Palestinians stop terrorism and use non-violent forms of protest

Opposition to Israeli Settlements

A modest majority believes that Israel should not build settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. This is true both before and after respondents hear Israeli and Palestinian arguments on the issue.

Respondents were initially presented the subject

Settlements

Israeli Position		Palestinian Position					
Bank and Gaza because Jews have lived in these areas for centuries and have legitimate historical claims to property there.		UN resolutions 242 and 338, which were endorsed by nearly all members of the UN, including the US, called for Israel to withdraw from territories it invaded in the 1967 war. Thus, for Israel to build new settlements in these areas is illegal under international law.					
Convincing	54%	Convincing 57			57%		
Just as Arabs live in Israel, Jews should be able to live in the areas which could come under Palestinian control in the future. Thus, Israel has a right to build housing for Jews who want to live in those areas.		During the peace process, Israeli settlement activity doubled. As Israel was negotiating about land with the Palestinians, they continued to illegally confiscate land. Clearly the Israelis are negotiating in bad faith and undermining the peace process.					
Convincing	51%	Convincing 51%			51%		
Conclusion			All right to Build	Should not Build			
Do you think it is all right for Israel to build settlements the West Bank and Gaza, or do you think they should no			Before Arguments	35%		52% 54%	
		ot?	After Arguments	32%			

of the Israeli settlements with the following statement: "A highly controversial issue is that Israel has built villages for Israelis, called settlements, in the West Bank and Gaza, which are territories where Palestinians live that have been occupied by Israel since the 1967 war."

Part of the sample was then asked, "Do you think it is all right for Israel to build settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, or do you think they should not?" Fifty-two percent said they should not, while 35% said it was all right (don't know, 12%).

To determine how Americans would evaluate the arguments presented on both sides, respondents heard two arguments in favor of the Israeli position and two arguments in favor of the Palestinian position. These arguments were written in close consultation with the representatives of the Embassy of Israel and the Palestinian UN Mission. The order of presentation of arguments was randomly reversed.

As shown above, a Palestinian argument based on international law did fairly well, with 57% finding it convincing, while another argument was found

convincing by 51%. One of the Israeli positions was found convincing by a modest majority of 54%, and the other by just 51%.

After hearing the arguments, opposition to the settlements was slightly higher at 54%.

Support for US Participation in a Peacekeeping Operation

A very strong majority would support US participation in a peacekeeping operation to monitor and enforce a peace agreement, if it is a UN-sponsored, multilateral operation.

Other polls have asked about the US contributing troops to a future peacekeeping operation in the Middle East, and in most cases have found a divided response. In the PIPA focus groups, participants emphasized that they were concerned about whether other countries would be involved and whether the operation would be sponsored by the UN.

In the current poll the question spelled out that the operation would follow a peace agreement, would

be UN-sponsored, and that other countries would be contributing troops as well. With these conditions clarified, an overwhelming 77% said they would then support the US contributing troops.

U.S. Participation in Peacekeeping Operation

If Israel and the Palestinian Authority were to come to a peace agreement, would you support or oppose the U.S. participating, together with a number of other countries, in a UN-sponsored peacekeeping force to monitor and enforce the agreement?



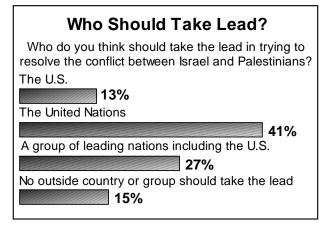
Numerous polls that have asked about contributing US troops to peacekeeping operations in a variety of other regions have also found that support varies widely, depending on whether it is spelled out that the US would be one nation among others contributing troops, that the operation would have a UN imprimatur, and that the operation would be the result of the parties reaching an agreement.

Support for More Multilateral Approach

Only a small minority favors the US taking the lead in trying to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. A very strong majority favors either the UN (preferred by a plurality), or a group of leading nations including the US, taking the lead. As mentioned, an overwhelming majority favors convening an international conference.

Very strong majorities favor a more multilateral approach to trying to solve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. As shown below, when asked who should take the lead, only 13% favored the US taking the lead. A very strong majority of 68% favored a multilateral approach, with 41% favoring the UN taking the lead and 27% favoring "a group of leading nations including the US." Just 15% said that "no outside country or group should take the lead."

Consistent with this position, as mentioned above,



an overwhelming majority supports the idea of an international conference

Want UN to Play Major Role

A strong majority favors the UN playing a major role in trying to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. If the parties are not able to resolve the dispute over East Jerusalem, a robust majority favors giving the UN interim control over the disputed areas. Strong majorities also favor bold proposals for having the UN determine where to draw the borders between Israel and a new Palestinian state, and for the UN to step in and effectively make the territories a UN trusteeship.

A key point of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has been over areas of East Jerusalem which both parties want to control. This conflict was the key sticking point in the negotiations at Camp David and Taba and led to the breakdown of the peace process. Asked, "are you more inclined to believe that Israel should have control, the Palestinians should have control, or that both sides should allow the UN to have control unless they later come to some other compromise," 57% supported giving the UN control over the disputed areas, while 26% said Israel should have control and 7% said the Palestinians should have control. In the November 2001 PIPA poll, respondents were also asked about a proposal that "Jerusalem become an international city that would be policed by an international police force, so that they can each have their capitals in different parts of the

Support for Proposals Giving UN a Stronger Role

--Percent Approving--

Give UN interim control over disputed areas of East Jerusalem

57%

Have UN Security Council decide border between Israel and Palestinian state

67%

Have UN offer to temporarily govern Palestinian territories and develop state structures

58%

city." Fifty-one percent supported the idea, with 34% opposed.

Americans also show support for other bold proposals for the UN to take a major role in resolving the conflict. Respondents were presented the following option:

To resolve the conflict over the borders between Israel and a future Palestinian state, the United Nations Security Council could hear both sides' arguments and then decide where the borders should be.

Sixty-seven percent favored the idea, while 27% thought this was not a good idea.

In an even bolder proposal, respondents considered the idea of having the UN temporarily govern the Palestinian territories, rather like a UN trusteeship. Respondents were asked:

The UN could make an offer to Israel and the Palestinians, that if Israel withdraws from the Palestinian territories, the UN would then temporarily take over the governance of the territories, like the UN has in Kosovo, and gradually develop the structures of a Palestinian state. Do you think this would be a good idea or not a good idea?

Fifty-eight percent thought this was a good idea, with 34% saying it was not.

Misperceptions

Only one quarter of Americans know that a majority of countries are more sympathetic to the Palestinian position, while only four in ten know that a majority of countries disapprove of US Middle East policy. Only one in three are aware that more Palestinians than Israelis have died in the recent conflict.

Many Americans appear to have a number of key misperceptions about the situation in the Middle East. When asked for their impressions on whether "more countries in the world are more sympathetic to the Israeli or the Palestinian position, or is it roughly balanced?" only 27% knew that more countries are more sympathetic to the Palestinian position. Sixty-one percent mistakenly thought that a majority of countries were either more sympathetic to the Israeli position (22%), or that sympathies were "roughly balanced" (39%). Twelve percent did not give an answer.

Only 43% knew that more countries disapprove "how the US has generally dealt with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." Forty-seven percent mistakenly believed that more countries approve (18%) or that the numbers of countries approving and disapproving were "roughly balanced" (29%). Another 9% did not answer.

Asked whether "so far this year, more Israelis or more Palestinians have died in the conflict, or is the number roughly equal?" only 32% of respondents were aware that more deaths have occurred on the Palestinian side than on the Israeli side. Half believed that either more Israelis had died (15%), or that the deaths suffered by Israelis and Palestinians had been roughly equal (35%). Another 18% did not answer.

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The Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) is a joint program of the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland and the Center on Policy Attitudes. PIPA undertakes research on American attitudes in both the public and in the policymaking community toward a variety of international and foreign policy issues. It seeks to disseminate its findings to members of government, the press, and the public as well as academia.

The Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM), at the University of Maryland's School for Public Affairs, pursues policy-oriented scholarship on major issues facing the United States in the global arena. Using its research, forums, and publications, CISSM links the University and the policy community to improve communication between scholars and practitioners.

The Center on Policy Attitudes (COPA) is an independent non-profit organization of social science researchers devoted to increasing understanding of public and elite attitudes shaping contemporary public policy. Using innovative research methods, COPA seeks not only to examine overt policy opinions or positions, but to reveal the underlying values, assumptions, and feelings that sustain opinions.

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