

WORLDPUBLICOPINION.ORG

World Public Opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

July 1, 2008

COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY RESULTS:

AMERICAS:

MEXICO

[Reforma](#)

Mexicans have the largest majority of all nations polled saying that their country should not take either side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While disapproving the performances of all the major actors, Mexicans' disapproval of the US performance showed the most intensity of all nations polled, with 63 percent saying it was performing "not well at all."

- Nine in ten (88%) say Mexico should not take sides in the conflict. Only 3 percent say Mexico should take Israel's side, and only 4 percent say it should take the Palestinians' side.
- About three in five Mexicans think none of the main actors in the conflict are doing their part well in the effort toward a resolution, but even more think this in regard to the United States. This view among Mexicans holds for Israel (57%), the Palestinians (61%), the Arab countries (55%), and especially the United States (77%).
- Clear majorities support the UN Security Council offering to take a strong role in an eventual peace agreement. Eighty-two percent would support an offer to send a peacekeeping force; 57 percent would support proposing a commitment to protect Israel if attacked by the Arab countries; and 66 percent would support such a commitment to Arab countries if attacked by Israel.

PERU

[Grupo de Opinión Pública](#), Universidad de Lima

Three in four Peruvians think their country should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this they responded similarly to people in Mexico, and in European countries such as France and Britain. (Peruvians were not asked the other questions in this study.)

- Seventy-six percent think Peru should not take either side in the conflict. Only 4 percent each would rather see Peru take Israel’s side, or the Palestinians’ side.

UNITED STATES

[Program on International Policy Attitudes](#) / [Knowledge Networks](#)

Seven in ten Americans think the US should take neither side in the conflict. However the number who thinks the US should take Israel’s side is relatively high among the other nations polled—second only to India. Americans are divided over whether their own nation is doing its part and six in ten think that Israel is not. Their ratings of Palestinian efforts, and Arab countries’ efforts, are the lowest of all nations polled. Half oppose the Security Council offering to protect Arab countries in the event of a settlement—the highest resistance to the idea of any nation in the study.

- Seven in ten Americans (71%) think the United States should take neither side in the conflict. Twenty-one percent think the United States should take Israel’s side and 3 percent think it should take the Palestinians’ side.
- Three in five (59%) think Israel is not doing its part well in making efforts to resolve the conflict; 30 percent think it is. A larger 75 percent think the Palestinians are not doing their part well; only 15 percent think they are. Even more—78 percent—think the Arab countries are not doing their part well (12% think they are).
- Americans are sharply divided about the United States’ own performance: 46 percent think it is not playing its part well (15%, “not well at all”), while 44 percent think it is doing so—though only 7 percent say “very well.”
- Americans support the idea of the UN Security Council offering a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement, 61 to 31 percent. A modest majority supports offering a commitment to protect Israel (53 to 37%); but only four in ten support offering a commitment to Arab countries (38% favor, 50% oppose).

EUROPE:

FRANCE

[Efficiency 3](#)

Though the French are sometimes characterized as sympathetic to the Palestinians, a large majority opposes taking sides in the conflict. They are among the publics most in favor of the UN Security Council offering Israel a security guarantee in the event of a peace agreement.

- Four in five of the French (79%) say their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Only 4 percent think France should take Israel's side and only 6 percent think it should take the Palestinians' side.
- Two thirds or more are critical of the performance of most of the major actors, with somewhat softer criticism for the European Union. Sixty-four percent think Israel is not doing its part well, with only 18 percent disagreeing. Sixty-six percent think the same about the Palestinians' performance (13% disagree); 69 percent think so about the Arab countries (10% disagree); and 71 percent think so about the United States (15% disagree). Asked the same question about the European Union, 48 percent are critical but 33 percent think it was doing its part at least somewhat well (2%, "very well").
- Large majorities support all three ideas for the UN Security Council taking a greater role. Seventy-four percent favor the idea of a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement (21% oppose); 65 percent support a commitment to protect Israel if attacked by Arab countries (25% opposed); and 61 percent support an equivalent commitment to Arab countries (25% oppose).

GREAT BRITAIN

[Chatham House \(Royal Institute of International Affairs\)](#) / [GlobeScan](#)

The British are exceptionally even-handed in their criticism of all of the various main actors in efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They also show no favoritism in their willingness to support security guarantees for Israel on one hand and for the Arab countries on the other. A plurality is critical of how well Britain is doing its part in efforts toward a resolution.

- Four in five Britons (79%) say their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Only 2 percent would take Israel's side, and only 8 percent would take the Palestinians' side.
- Britons show no favoritism in their low ratings of the various actors' efforts in trying to resolve the conflict. Only 24 percent give Israel good marks, while 57 percent say it is not doing its part well; for the Palestinians, 21 percent give good marks, and again 57 percent say they are not doing their part well. Fifty-nine percent are likewise negative about the United States (22% positive), as are 51 percent about the Arab countries (23% positive).
- In addition, a 45 percent plurality gives the European Union low marks, though 31 percent disagree—and a similar 47 percent is critical of Britain's own performance (33% disagree).
- Two thirds (67%) favor the idea of the UN Security Council offering a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement. A bare majority of 51 percent

favor the idea of committing to protect Israel (30% oppose), but this is about the same as the 54% who favor the equivalent commitment for Arab countries (29% oppose).

RUSSIA

[Levada Center](#)

Given the history of Russia's role in the Middle East, the Russian public is strikingly even-handed in the Israel-Palestinian conflict and shows little sympathy for the Arab countries. However Russians show some of the lowest levels of support for a United Nations role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- A majority of Russians (58%) think that their nation should not take side in this conflict. Just 7 percent favor taking the Palestinians side: the same number that favors taking Israel's side.
- Russians give all of the main actors low marks on their efforts to resolve the conflict: none receive more than 14 percent approval. However, there are significant differences in the size of the percentages disapproving. This public is most critical of the United States, with a plurality (49%) saying they think it is not doing its part well. Pluralities also say that Israel (41%), the Palestinians (41%), and the Arab countries (37%) are not doing their part well.
- An unusually small plurality of Russians (47%) favor sending a UN peacekeeping force to enforce a possible Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement and pluralities oppose offering UN commitments to protect Israel (36% to 28%) or Arab countries (34% to 27%) from attack.

SPAIN

[Elcano Royal Institute](#)

Spain is among the nations with a clear majority preferring that their government not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Spanish public is also among the nations with a clear majority favoring sending a UN peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement between the two parties.

- A majority of Spaniards (64%) feel that their nation should not take a side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Only 12 percent say that Spain should take the Palestinians' side while 7 percent say it should take Israel's side.
- Six in ten Spaniards (60%) support the United Nations Security Council taking a stronger role in the conflict by offering to send a peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement. Less than a quarter (23%) opposes this idea.

UKRAINE

[Kiev International Institute of Sociology](#)

Ukrainians stand out in giving very low levels of approval to all of the parties of the conflict and giving low levels of approval to a potential role for the United Nations.

- Just 6 percent of Ukrainians say Arab countries are doing their part well, 7 percent say both the United States and the Palestinians are doing their part well, and 10 percent feel this way about Israel.
- Ukrainians are skeptical about whether the United Nations Security Council should take a stronger role in the conflict. Pluralities oppose a proposed commitment to protect Israel if attacked by the Arab countries (39%) and vice versa (38%). On a proposed UN peacekeeping force to enforce an eventual peace agreement, Ukrainians are divided—35% in favor, 32% opposed.
- Nearly seven in ten Ukrainians (69%) feel that their nation should not take sides in the conflict. Only 4 percent feel that either Israel or the Palestinians' side should be taken.

MIDDLE EAST/EURASIA:

AZERBAIJAN

International Center for Social Research

Azerbaijanis express exceptionally high support for possible UN roles in working to mitigate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- Majorities of Azerbaijanis favor all three proposed ideas for the United Nations Security Council to take a stronger role in this conflict. The strongest support (74%) is for a peacekeeping force to enforce an eventual peace agreement between the two parties. Sixty-three percent of Azerbaijanis favor a proposed a commitment to protect Arab countries if attacked by Israel, and 57 percent favor the reverse proposal.
- A majority of Azerbaijanis (54%) say that their nation should not take sides in this conflict. Two in ten in Azerbaijan (19%) say that their nation should take the Palestinians' side, while 6 percent say it should take Israel's.
- Majorities or pluralities of Azerbaijanis say each of the main actors is not doing their part well in trying to resolve the conflict. Majorities see Israel (59%) and the United States (58%) this way, while pluralities take the view that the Palestinians (50%) and Arab countries (49%) are not doing their part well. Nineteen to 25 percent of Azerbaijanis say that these actors are doing their part well.

EGYPT

Attitude Market Research

Out of all nations polled, Egypt is the only nation with an overwhelming majority favoring taking the Palestinians' side. After the Palestinians themselves, Egyptians have the strongest majority out of all nations polled giving the Palestinians good marks. Egyptians are the most negative about Israel—even more than the Palestinians. Besides the Palestinians, Egyptians are the only public polled to have a majority opposing a UN commitment to protect Israel if it is attacked by its Arab neighbors.

- Eighty-six percent say that their nation should take the Palestinians' side, while only 9 percent say it should take neither side and 5 percent say it should take Israel's side. Egypt is 23 points higher than Iran (63%), the only other nation with a majority expressing this view.
- Similarly, a majority of Egyptians (63%) say that the Palestinians are doing their part well in attempting to resolve the conflict. This number is 8 points higher (71%) for the efforts of Arab countries—with Egypt likely being seen as part of this group. Still, a substantial minority of Egyptians (37%) say, rather, that the Palestinians are not doing their part well, and 29 percent say this about Arab countries. Almost nine in ten Egyptians (88%) say Israel is not doing its part well in resolving the conflict and are about equally critical of the United States (86%).
- At the same time, a majority of Egyptians does support two of the proposed ideas for the United Nations Security Council to take a stronger role in the conflict. If Israel and the Palestinians were to come to a peace agreement, a majority of Egyptians (64%) favor enforcing this agreement by a UN peacekeeping force. Not surprisingly, eight in ten Egyptians (82%) also support a commitment from the UN to protect Arab countries if they came under attack by Israel. However, the reverse scenario is rejected by roughly the same number of Egyptians: 84 percent oppose a UN commitment to protect Israel if attacked by the Arab countries.

IRAN

WorldPublicOpinion.org

Iran is one of two countries (along with Egypt) to have a majority saying that its government should take the Palestinians' side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (Iranians were not asked the other questions in this study.)

- A majority of Iranians (63%) favor their government taking the Palestinians' side in this conflict. Nearly two in ten (18%) prefer for their government to take neither side, and only 3 percent say it should take Israel's side.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

[Palestinian Center for Public Opinion](#)

A majority of Palestinians are critical of the efforts of their Arab neighbors and the United States, as well as Israel, in their efforts to resolve the conflict. While Palestinians would like the UN to play a greater role in other ways, they show the highest levels of opposition to a UN commitment to protect Israel if it is attacked by its Arab neighbors.

- Eight in ten Palestinians think that Israel is not doing its part well in trying to resolve the conflict, and 61 percent say “not well at all.” Palestinian opinion is only slightly less critical of the United States; more than three-quarters (77%) say that the US is not doing its part well, with a majority (55%) saying “not well at all.” Palestinians are also critical of the efforts of their Arab neighbors: a majority (57%) says that they are not doing their part well, while one-third (33%) says that they are. On the other hand, three-quarters of Palestinians (75%) say that their own nation is doing its part well in its attempts to resolve the conflict, and 40 percent say “very well.”
- Palestinians support the United Nations taking a stronger role in the conflict in two out of the three proposed ways. Sixty-three percent support an offer to send a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement, with 35 percent opposed. Seventy-five percent would support the Security Council offering a commitment to protect Arab countries if attacked by Israel, while 20 percent oppose. However, 85 percent would oppose such a commitment to protect Israel if it were attacked by its Arab neighbors.

TURKEY

[ARI Foundation](#) / [Infakto Research Workshop](#)

Turks are unusual in that they are divided about whether to take the Palestinians’ side or neither side. Turks are also exceptionally negative about the efforts of Arab countries, the US, and Israel. A plurality is also critical of the Palestinians, and the percentage of Turks saying Palestinians are doing their part “not well at all” is second only to that of Americans.

- Turks are divided on whether their government should take either the Palestinian’s side (42%) or neither side (38%) in this conflict. Only 4 percent of Turks say Turkey should take Israel’s side.
- Turks give all the main actors low marks on how well they are doing their part to resolve the conflict. Turks are about equally critical of Israel as of the United States: 63 and 64 percent say that Israel and the US are not doing their part well, respectively, with 55 and 57 percent saying that Israel and the US are doing their part “not well at all.” A majority of Turks (58%) also say that the Arab countries are not doing their part well (not well at all: 49%). Positive views of the main

actors are strongest for the Palestinians, but this is still only a 31 percent minority of Turks. Rather, 42% say the Palestinians are not doing their part well. Support for the other three actors' efforts ranges from 8 to 12 percent.

- Turks show varying levels of support for different ideas that would give the UN Security Council a stronger role in resolving the conflict, but all ideas get at least plurality support. Two in three (65%) support the UN offering to send a peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement, and pluralities support proposing a commitment to protect Israel if attacked by the Arab countries (43%) and the reciprocal commitment to Arab countries (50%).

AFRICA:

NIGERIA

Market Trends Research International

Nigerians are the only public with a majority saying the United States is doing its part well in trying to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; this number is even higher than American opinion. Nigerians have one of the largest numbers, though still a minority, approving Israel's efforts.

Of the three proposed ways the United Nations Security Council could take a stronger role in the conflict, Nigeria has the strongest majority out of all nations polled to favor sending a peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement.

- A majority of Nigerians (55%) thinks their nation should take neither side in this conflict. Nearly one quarter (23%) favors taking the Palestinians' side while 15 percent favor taking Israel's side.
- The largest percentage of Nigerians (53%) says that the United States is doing its part well in attempting to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 38 percent think it is not. On the other hand, a plurality of Nigerians (50%) says that Israel is not doing its part well, while 38 percent say it is. Nigerians are divided about how well the Palestinians (46% well, 43% not well) and the Arab countries (45% well, 43% not well) are doing their part.
- Strong majorities support all three ideas for the UN Security Council taking a greater role. A robust majority of Nigerians (89%)—the largest number out of all 17 nations polled—supports the idea of the UN Security Council offering a peacekeeping force in the event of a peace agreement. Only 9 percent of Nigerians oppose this idea. There is also majority-level support among Nigerians for a Security Council commitment to protect Israel if it were attacked by its Arab neighbors, as well as the opposite scenario. Sixty-one percent favor protecting Israel, with roughly one third (32%) opposing, and 67 percent favor protecting Arab countries, with roughly one quarter (27%) opposing.

ASIA/PACIFIC:

CHINA

WorldPublicOpinion.org

The Chinese, though divided, have the largest percentage out of all nations polled saying that Israel is doing its part well in attempting to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Asked about ways the United Nations Security Council can take a stronger role in the conflict, Chinese are the public strongest in their support for a commitment to protect both Israel and Arab countries, if one attacked the other.

- A strong majority of Chinese (74%) says that their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Just 10 percent say that China should take the Palestinians' side and only 2 percent say that it should take Israel's side.
- Seven in ten Chinese (69%) say that the United States is not doing its part well in trying to resolve the conflict, while these numbers are divided concerning Israel (41% well, 39% not well). Modest pluralities are positive about the Palestinians (40% well, 36% not well) and about Arab countries (40% well, 30% not well).
- The Chinese are equally strong in their support for all three ideas on how the UN Security Council could take a greater role in the conflict. Robust majorities favor the UN: sending a peacekeeping force to enforce a peace agreement by a margin of 81 to 11 percent; protecting Israel if it comes under attack by its Arab neighbors by a margin of 80 to 11 percent; and protecting Arab countries if they are attacked by Israel by a margin of 84 to 9 percent.

INDIA

[Team CVoter](#)

India has one of the largest percentages who think that the United States and Israel are doing their part well in trying to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Indians are one of the few publics who do not take the clear position that their government should not take sides in the conflict.

- Indians are divided about whose side their nation should take in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Twenty-four percent say India should take Israel's side, 23 percent say the Palestinian's side, and 22 percent say their nation should take neither side.
- Indian opinion is also divided about how well the two parties are doing their part in the effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: the United States (33% say well, and 34% say not well) and Arab countries (34% say well, and 31% say not

well). Small pluralities of Indians say the two main actors, Israel (35%) and Palestine (34%), are doing their part well, while one quarter (25% and 26%, respectively) disagrees.

- Indians show modest support for the UN Security Council taking a greater role in the conflict. A plurality of Indians (50%) favors the idea of the UN Security Council offering a peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. While more Indians support a UN Security Council commitment to protect Israel if it were to come under attack by Arab countries than if the scenario were reversed, they are still divided about the idea (34% favor, 34% oppose). Support for a Security Council commitment to protect Arab countries against an attack from Israel is quite low (28% favor, 19% oppose).

INDONESIA

[Synovate](#)

Indonesians have the greatest percentage thinking the Palestinians are doing their part well in trying to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (apart from the Palestinians themselves). Out of all nations polled, Indonesians also have the second highest percentage saying that Arab countries are doing their part well. Indonesians' exceptionally high support for the UN Security Council offering a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement ranked second highest (after Nigeria).

- A plurality of Indonesians (43%) say that their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while 38 percent say Indonesia should take the Palestinian side. Only 7 percent say that it should take Israel's side.
- Indonesians are critical of the efforts both the United States and Israel are taking to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and by similar margins. Sixty and 66 percent of Indonesians say the United States and Israel, respectively, are not doing their part well, as opposed to 20 and 14 percent who say they are. On the other hand, pluralities think both the Palestinians and Arab countries are doing their part well—by a margin of 49 to 30 percent in the case of the Palestinians, and 50 to 26 percent in the case of the Arab countries.
- Indonesians show strong support for UN involvement in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in two of the three cases proposed. First, nine in ten (88%) favor the idea of a UN peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement—only 4 percent oppose. Second, a large majority (71%) supports a commitment to protect Arab countries if attacked by Israel. Though support for an equivalent commitment to protect Israel is much lower, it is still a plurality; 48 percent favor this and 34 oppose.

SOUTH KOREA

[East Asia Institute](#)

South Koreans have the second largest majority saying that their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While South Koreans are critical of all the main actors attempting to resolve the conflict, they are the second highest in expressing criticism of the Palestinians' efforts (after the United States).

- A robust majority (82%) of South Koreans—the second largest out of all 18 nations polled—says that their nation should not take sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ten percent of South Koreans say that their nation should take Israel's side, and only 5 percent say that it should take the Palestinians' side.
- By similar margins South Koreans are critical of all the major actors' efforts to resolve the conflict. The largest number of South Koreans (76%) say Arab countries are not doing their part well, though they say the Palestinians (74%), the United States (70%), and Israel (69%) are not doing their part well either. Only 19 to 28 percent of South Koreans say that these actors are doing their part well.
- South Koreans show strong support for all three ideas for the UN Security Council taking a greater role in resolving the conflict. Eighty-three percent would support an offer to send a peacekeeping force; 65 percent would support proposing a commitment to protect Israel if attacked by the Arab countries; and 63 percent would support such a commitment to Arab countries if attacked by Israel.

THAILAND

[ABAC Poll Research Center, Assumption University](#)

Two in three Thais think that Thailand should not take either side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While many did not give answers to other questions, pluralities are supportive of a greater UN Security Council role in trying to resolve the conflict, especially in offering to supply a peacekeeping force in the event of an agreement.

- A majority of Thais (64%) prefers that their government not take sides in this conflict. Only 6 percent think their nation should take Israel's side and 7 percent think it should take the Palestinians'.
- A plurality of Thais (32-33%) think none of the main actors in the conflict are doing their part well in the effort toward a resolution, with the exception of the United States, about whom they are divided (27% say well, 26% not well).
- Thais show modest support for the UN Security Council taking a greater role in the conflict. Pluralities (31% and 32%) would support proposing commitments to protect Israel if it were attacked by the Arab countries, and vice versa. A stronger

plurality of Thais (50%) would support a UN offer to send a peacekeeping force to enforce a potential peace agreement.