



# Muslim Public Opinion on US Policy, Attacks on Civilians and al Qaeda

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001, there have been many studies of Islamic groups, such as al Qaeda, which oppose the United States and use violence against civilians. However there has been relatively little research into how these groups are viewed by the larger Muslim society from which they arise.

The attitudes of this larger society are important for a variety of reasons. At the broadest level, they tell us whether these groups are considered legitimate in terms of their goals as well as their methods. They also tell us how much support such groups are likely to get from the larger society, both directly and indirectly.

To understand the public's feelings about these groups, it is also critical to understand the prevailing narratives in the societies they come from. Since September 11, 2001, the United States has undertaken a "war on terrorism," introducing large numbers of troops into Islamic countries, particularly Afghanistan and Iraq. How do people in the Islamic world understand the purpose of these US efforts? Are their interpretations consonant with the interpretations offered by al Qaeda and related groups? Do Muslims perceive that US forces are a stabilizing force or a threatening one?

Al Qaeda and other groups have not emerged simply in reaction to US policies. They have a broad ideological agenda that includes transforming Islamic countries. How much do these goals resonate with the larger society? Do they favor living in an Islamic state? Do they seek the kind of isolation from Western influences that al Qaeda calls for?

The use of violence against civilians for political purposes has figured prominently in debates about al Qaeda and related groups. Do Muslims believe that it is consistent with Islam? Do they think the current situation warrants such acts?

To answer these and other questions WorldPublicOpinion.org conducted an in-depth study of public opinion in Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan, and Indonesia. The research was primarily supported by the START Consortium at the University of Maryland. Other scholars of the START Consortium participated in the development of the questionnaire.

Focus groups and surveys were conducted in all four countries. Focus groups were used to identify arguments made spontaneously by people in the region. These arguments were subsequently adapted into survey questions.

The surveys were conducted between December 9, 2006, and February 9, 2007, using in-home interviews based upon multi-stage probability samples. In Morocco (1,000 interviews), Indonesia (1,141 interviews), and Pakistan (1,243 interviews) national probability samples were conducted covering both urban and rural areas. However, the Pakistan findings discussed in this report are based only upon urban respondents (611 interviews); rural respondents were unfamiliar with many of the issues in the survey (full data is available in the questionnaire). In Egypt, the sample (1,000 interviews) was an urban sample drawn probabilistically from seven governorates. Sample sizes of 1,000 – 1,141 have confidence intervals of +/- 3 percentage points; a sample size of 611 has a confidence interval of +/-4 percentage points.

This report focuses on the general distribution of attitudes in the four countries and is limited to policy-related questions. The entire study also includes questions on a wide-range of variables that may be related to the support for such anti-American groups. Analyses of these variables will be released at a future date.

The key findings of the analysis of the general distribution of attitudes are:

**VIEWS OF US FOREIGN POLICY**

***1. Views of the US Government***

In all countries large majorities have a negative view of the US government. The United States is perceived as having an extraordinary degree of influence over world events, with majorities in all countries saying that the United States controls most or nearly all of what happens in the world. ....4

***2. Perceptions of US Foreign Policy Goals Related to the Islamic World***

Very large majorities believe the United States seeks to undermine Islam and large majorities even believe it wants to spread Christianity in the region. About the same numbers think a key US goal is to maintain access to oil. While majorities perceive the United States as seeking to prevent terrorist attacks, this is not seen as the primary purpose of the war on terror. ....5

***3. Getting the US Military Out of the Muslim World***

Majorities in all countries endorse the goal of getting the United States to remove its military bases and its forces from all Islamic countries. Consistent with this goal, support for attacks on US troops in the Muslim world is quite high in Egypt and Morocco. But Pakistanis are divided about such attacks and Indonesians are opposed to them. ....7

***4. US Support for Israel***

Majorities in all countries see United States as seeking to expand Israel’s territory. In no country does a majority believe that the US genuinely seeks to create an independent and viable Palestinian state. Majorities in all counties agree with the goal of pushing the United States to stop favoring Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians. ....8

***5. US Support for Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan***

Views are mixed on US support for the governments of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Indonesians support the goal of getting the US to stop providing such support, Moroccans and Pakistanis lean toward supporting it, while Egyptians are divided. ....9

**VIEWS OF ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS**

***6. Attacks on Civilians in General***

Large majorities in all countries opposes attacks against civilians for political purposes and see them as contrary to Islam. Attacks on civilians are seen as hardly ever effective. Politically motivated attacks against civilian infrastructure are also rejected as not justified. ....9

***7. Attacks on American and European Civilians***

Consistent with the opposition to attacks on civilians in principle, and in contrast to the significant support for attacks on US troops, majorities in all countries disapprove of attacks on civilians in the United States as well as civilians in Europe. Nearly as many disapprove of attacks on Americans working for US companies in Islamic countries. In all cases the Egyptians are the most opposed, while the Pakistanis are the least. ....12

**VIEWS OF AL QAEDA AND ITS GOALS**

***8. Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden***

Consistent with their rejection of attacks on civilians, majorities or pluralities say they oppose al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans. But many say they share some of al Qaeda’s attitudes toward the US and substantial majorities endorse many of al Qaeda’s goals. Views of Osama bin Laden are quite divided, with many expressing uncertainty. Views of al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden may be complicated by the widespread disbelief that al Qaeda committed the September 11 attacks..... 13

***9. Groups that Attack Americans***

In regard to groups that attack Americans in general, Indonesians and Moroccans are fairly negative, Pakistanis lean negative while Egyptians lean positive. Only small numbers in all countries say they would consider donating money to such groups or would approve if a family member were to join such a group..... 18

***10. Perceptions of Others’ Support***

People tend to believe that others share their feelings toward Osama bin Laden and groups that attack Americans. However those who have a favorable attitude are considerably more likely to project their attitudes than those who have negative attitudes. Those with neutral attitudes are more likely to skew in the direction of believing that others have a positive attitude. .... 20

***11. Views on Islamization and Western Cultural Influences***

Most respondents express strong support for expanding the role of Islam in their countries—consistent with the goals of al Qaeda---but also express an openness to outside cultural influences. Large majorities in most countries support the goals of requiring a strict application of sharia, keeping out Western values, and even unifying all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state. On the other hand, majorities in all countries regard the increasing interconnection of the world through trade and communication as positive and strongly support democracy and religious freedom. Majorities or pluralities also reject the idea that violent conflict between Muslim and Western culture is inevitable and say that it is possible to find common ground. .... 21

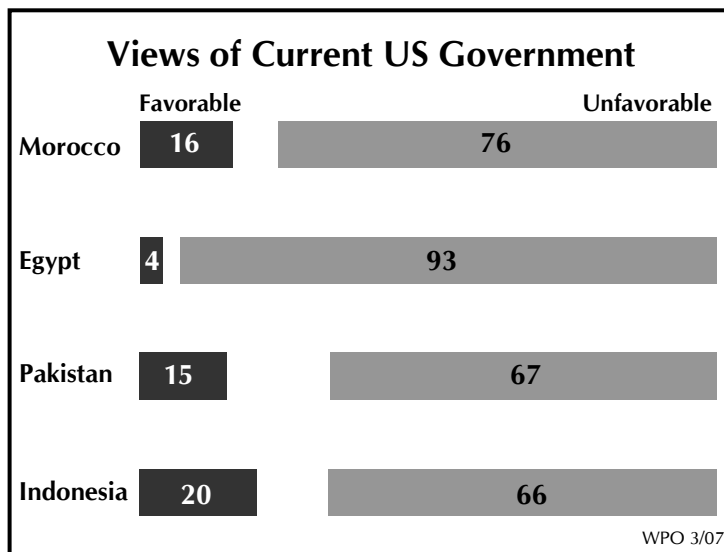
**FINDINGS**

**VIEWS OF US FOREIGN POLICY**

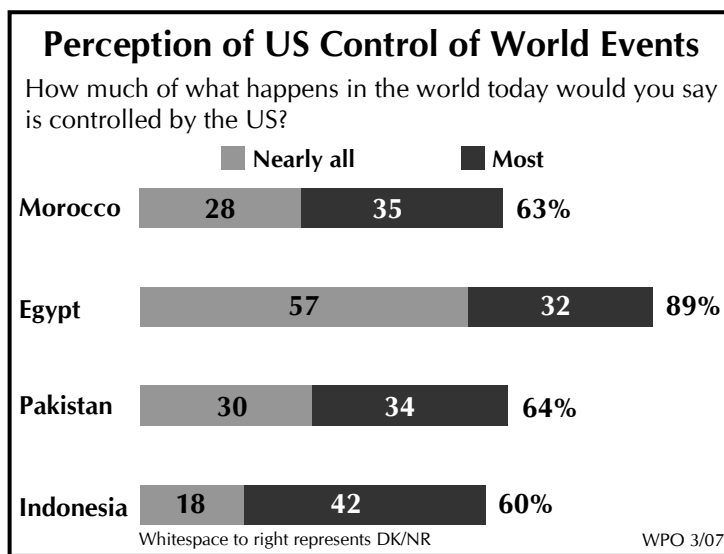
***1. Views of the US Government***

**In all countries large majorities have a negative view of the US government. The United States is perceived as having an extraordinary degree of influence over world events, with majorities in all countries saying that the United States controls most or nearly all of what happens in the world.**

Negative views of the United States government are widespread. An overwhelming majority of Egyptians (93%) expressed unfavorable attitudes toward the current US government, with most (86%) saying their opinion was “very unfavorable.” Large majorities also had unfavorable views in Morocco (76%), Pakistan (67%), and Indonesia (66%). About half of the respondents in both Morocco and Pakistan said their opinion was very unfavorable (49%) and 16 percent said this in Indonesia.



The United States is perceived as having an extraordinary amount of control over events in the world. Respondents were asked, “How much of what happens in the world today would you say is controlled by the US?” Majorities in all four countries said “most” or “nearly all” of what happened was controlled by the United States. Eighty-nine percent in Egypt said this (57% “nearly all”), as did significant majorities in Pakistan (64%), Morocco (63%), and Indonesia (60%).\*



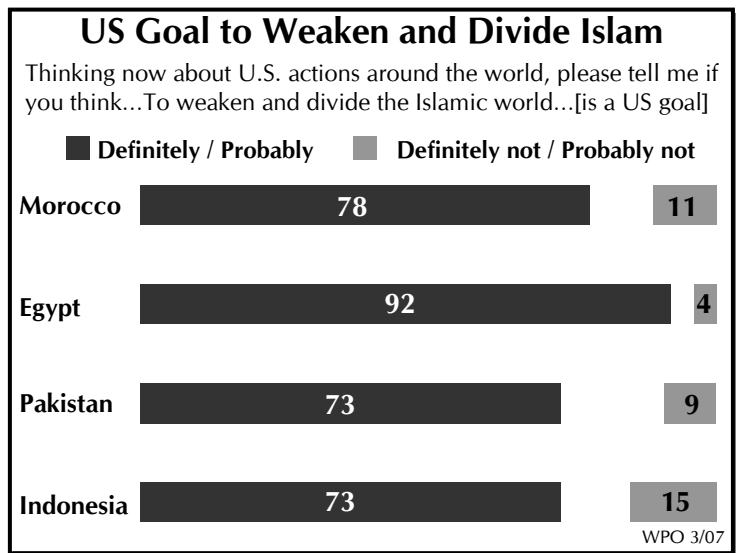
Responses were mixed when presented arguments that made the case that the United States has at times been helpful to others or compared favorably to other great powers in history. Presented the argument, “There have been times in American history where it has helped to promote the welfare of others.” A majority in Egypt (58%) and a plurality in Morocco (42%) disagreed. Pakistanis were quite divided, with 36 percent disagreeing and 33 percent agreeing, while more than a third (31%) declined to offer an opinion. A plurality of Indonesians (46%) agreed that the US had been helpful (27% disagreed).

Similar responses were elicited by the argument, “There is a lot wrong with America, but at least America has done more to promote economic development in the Middle East than past great powers like the British.” A majority of Egyptians (59%) and a plurality of Pakistanis (37% to 28%) disagreed. Moroccans were divided (39% agree, 38% disagree) and a plurality of Indonesians (44%) agreed that the United States had promoted development. Indonesia received substantial and very obvious US help following the December 2004 tsunami, which may explain the large numbers of Indonesians who agree that the United States has at least promoted development.

**2. Perceptions of US Foreign Policy Goals Related to the Islamic World**

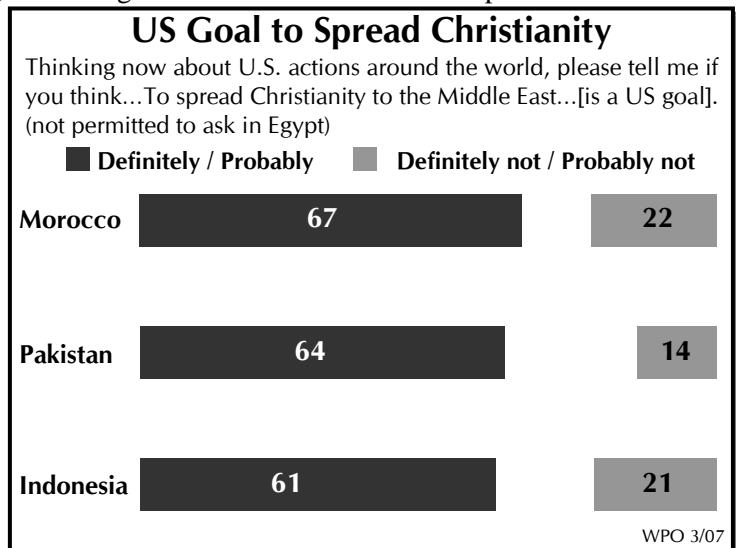
**Very large majorities believe the United States seeks to undermine Islam and large majorities even believe it wants to spread Christianity in the region. About the same numbers think a key US goal is to maintain access to oil. While majorities perceive the United States as seeking to prevent terrorist attacks, this is not seen as the primary purpose of the war on terror.**

Respondents were presented a series of possible foreign policy goals related to the Islamic world and asked to evaluate whether each was a goal of the United States. Large majorities across all four countries believe that a goal of US foreign policy is to “weaken and divide the Islamic world.” On average 79 percent said they believed this was a US goal, including a very large majority in Egypt (92%) and large majorities in Morocco (78%), Indonesia (73%) and Pakistan (73%).



Respondents believe that the United States wants to weaken Islam out of a feeling of being threatened by Islam. In a separate series of questions, large majorities agreed with the statement, “It is America’s goal to weaken Islam so that it will not grow and challenge the Western way of life.” This attitude was most widespread in Egypt, where 87 percent agreed followed by Morocco (69%) and Pakistan (62%). Although Indonesians were more skeptical about whether the United States sought to weaken Islam, an overall majority (57%) agreed that it did.

US leaders are seen as having a pro-Christian agenda. Large majorities (average 64%) said they believed that the United States wanted “to spread Christianity in the Middle East,” including two-thirds in Morocco (67%) and significant majorities in Pakistan (64%) and Indonesia (61%). Egyptians were not asked this question.



Equally large majorities think the United States pursues the more traditional strategic goal of protecting its access to oil. An overwhelming majority in Egypt (93%) said that maintaining “control over the oil resources of the Middle East” was a goal of the United States (84% definitely), as well as strong majorities in Morocco (82%), Indonesia (74%) and Pakistan (68%). On average 79 percent had this perception.

Respondents also endorsed an argument that framed US efforts to gain access to Middle Eastern oil as illegitimate and exploitive. In all four countries, most respondents agreed that “America pretends to be helpful to Muslim countries, but in fact everything it does is really part of a scheme to take advantage of people in the Middle East and steal their oil.” On average across all four countries, two thirds of respondents (67%) thought this was the case. Egyptians (87%), Moroccans (62%), Indonesians (61%), and Pakistanis (56%) agreed with this. These majorities were a bit smaller than those believing the United States wanted to maintain control over Mideast oil, however, perhaps because some felt that saying the US sought to “steal” Middle Eastern oil overstated the case.

The stated US goal of preventing “more attacks such as those on the World Trade Center in September 2001” was seen as a genuine objective by more modest numbers (average 58 percent). Seventy-one percent of Moroccans and 68 percent of Indonesians said this was a US goal. Only 58 percent of Egyptians said this was a US goal and 39 percent said it was not. Pakistanis were even more uncertain: just 48 percent said the US wanted to prevent such attacks and 29 percent disagreed, while 33 percent did not answer.

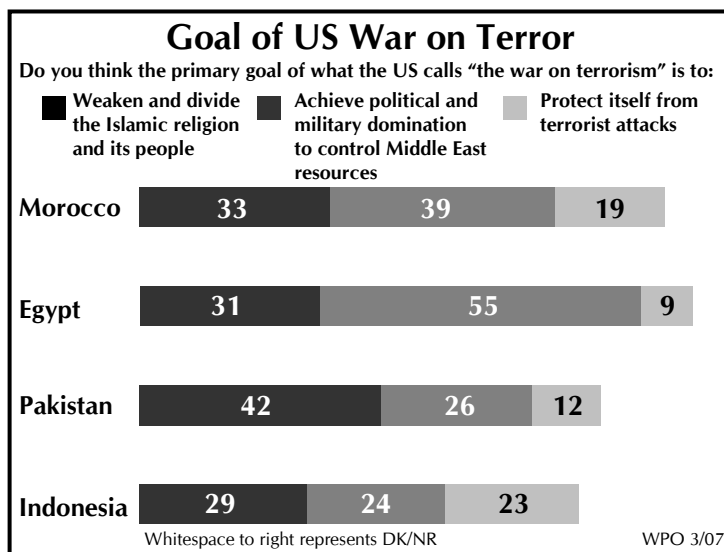
Only minorities said that the US sought to ensure that their country “does not fall into the hands of extremist groups” (average 35%). The highest percentage was in Indonesia (41%) followed by Morocco (38%) and Pakistan (38%). Just 24 percent of Egyptians concurred.

**Primary Goal of the War on Terrorism**

Respondents were also asked what they thought “the primary goal” of the US war on terrorism was. They were given three possible responses: 1) “to protect itself from terrorist attacks;” 2) “to achieve political and military domination to control Middle East resources;” and, 3) “to weaken and divide the Islamic religion and its people.”

The US government’s stated goal—to protect the United States from terrorist attacks—received short shrift. On average, just 16 percent saw this reason as primary, ranging from 9 percent in Egypt to 23 percent in Indonesia.

Roughly equal numbers thought the other two possibilities were the United States’ primary goals. Over all four countries, 36 percent selected achieving political and military domination, while 34 percent chose weakening and dividing the Islamic religion and its people. Achieving political and military domination was highest in Egypt (55%) and Morocco (39%), while weakening and dividing Islam was highest in Pakistan (42%) and Indonesia (29%).





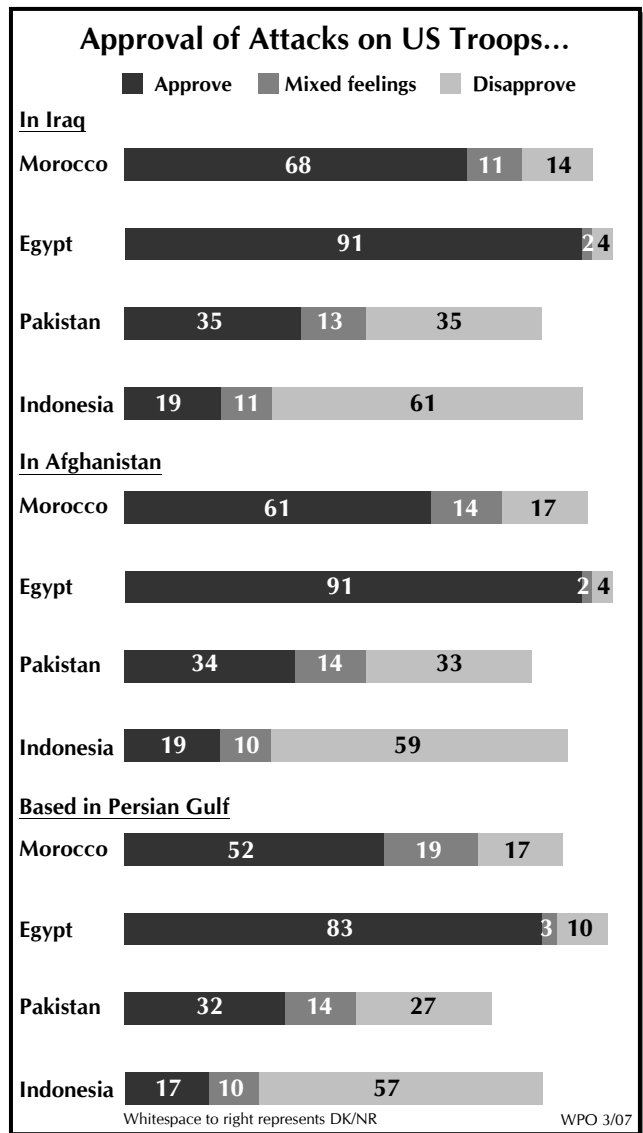
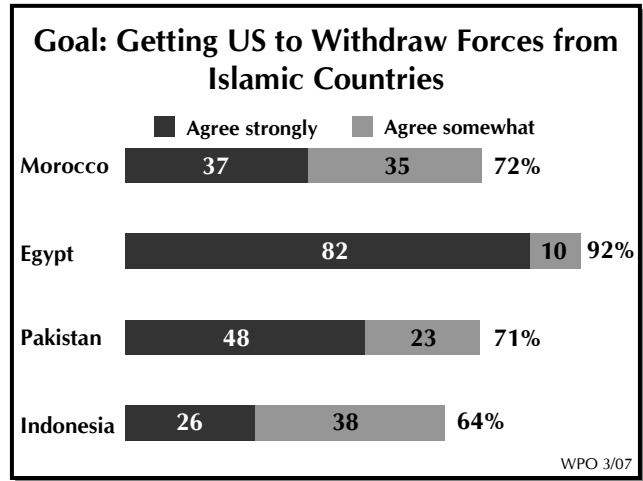
**3. Getting the US Military Out of the Muslim World**

Majorities in all countries endorse the goal of getting the United States to remove its military bases and its forces from all Islamic countries. Consistent with this goal, support for attacks on US troops in the Muslim world is quite high in Egypt and Morocco. But Pakistanis are divided about such attacks and Indonesians are opposed to them.

Large majorities in all countries agreed with the goal of getting “the US to remove its bases and its military forces from all Islamic countries”—on average 74 percent. In Morocco, 72 percent agreed (37% strongly). In Egypt, agreement was 92 percent (82% strongly). In Pakistan, 71 percent agreed that the US should be pushed to remove its bases from Islamic countries (48% strongly); only 9 percent disagreed. Indonesians, too, agreed with this goal by 64 percent to 16 percent.

Consistent with their support for the goal of driving US military forces out of Islamic countries, respondents express significant—but not universal—approval of attacks on US troops in Islamic countries, including both those that are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan and those that are based in the Persian Gulf. On average, for each area, approximately half favored such attacks, with three in 10 opposed, but there were substantial variations between countries. Very large majorities in Egypt said they supported such attacks, as did robust majorities in Morocco. Pakistanis tended to be divided and Indonesians were mostly opposed.

Majorities in Egypt and Morocco expressed approval for attacks on US troops in Muslim countries. Egyptians were those most likely to support such actions. Nine out of ten Egyptians approved of attacks on US military troops in Iraq (91%) and in Afghanistan (91%). Four out of five Egyptians (83%) said they supported attacks on US forces based in Persian Gulf states. Substantial majorities of Moroccans were also in favor of attacks on US troops in Iraq (68%), in Afghanistan



(61%) and slightly smaller majorities supported attacks on those based in Persian Gulf states (52%).

Pakistanis were divided about attacks on US troops, though only a third expressed outright disapproval. A third (35%) of respondents in Pakistan approved of attacks on US troops in Iraq and another 13 percent expressed mixed feelings. A third (35%) disapproved. About the same percentages endorse attacking US forces in neighboring Afghanistan: 34 percent approved and 14 percent were ambivalent. One third (33%) disapproved. In the Persian Gulf, about a third (32%) approved of attacks on US forces while 14 percent had mixed feelings and 27 percent disapproved.

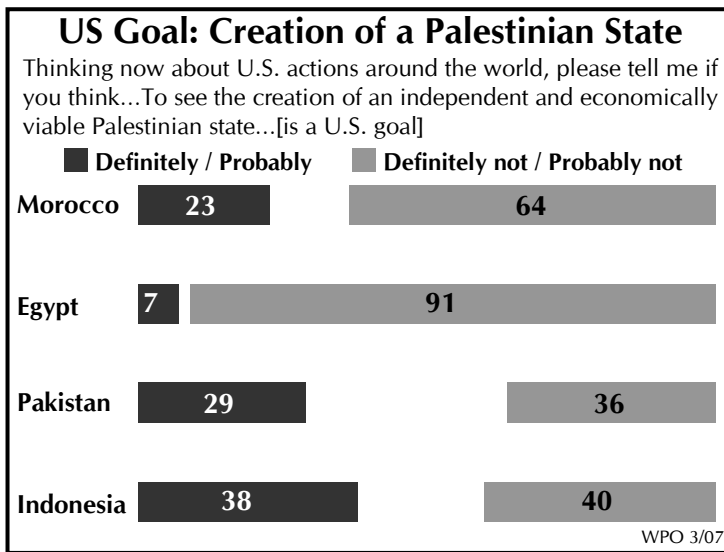
Indonesians stand out for their opposition to such attacks. Sixty-one percent disapproved of attacks on US troops fighting in Iraq and nearly as many (59%) disapproved of attacks on US forces in Afghanistan. Fifty-seven percent rejected attacks on US military troops based in the Persian Gulf states. Fewer than one in five said they were in favor of attacking US forces in any of the three locations.

#### 4. US Support for Israel

**Majorities in all countries see United States as seeking to expand Israel’s territory. In no country does a majority believe that the US genuinely seeks to create an independent and viable Palestinian state. Majorities in all counties agree with the goal of pushing the United States to stop favoring Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians.**

Consistent with the view that the United States does not respect Islamic interests, majorities in all four countries believe that the United States supports the expansion of Israel’s borders. More than nine in 10 Egyptians (91%) and roughly three in five in Morocco (64%), Pakistan (62%), and Indonesia (58%) said they believed this was a US goal.

In no country did a majority or plurality believe that “the creation of an independent and economically viable Palestinian state” was a goal of the United States. The numbers asserting this was not a US goal varied considerably among the countries polled, however. Egyptians took the strongest position: 91 percent said that this was not a US goal. A majority of Moroccans (64%) agreed. Pakistanis tended to agree: 36 percent said the US did not want this and 29 percent said it did. Indonesians were divided, with 38 percent (the largest number) saying that US wanted a Palestinian state and 40 percent saying it did not.



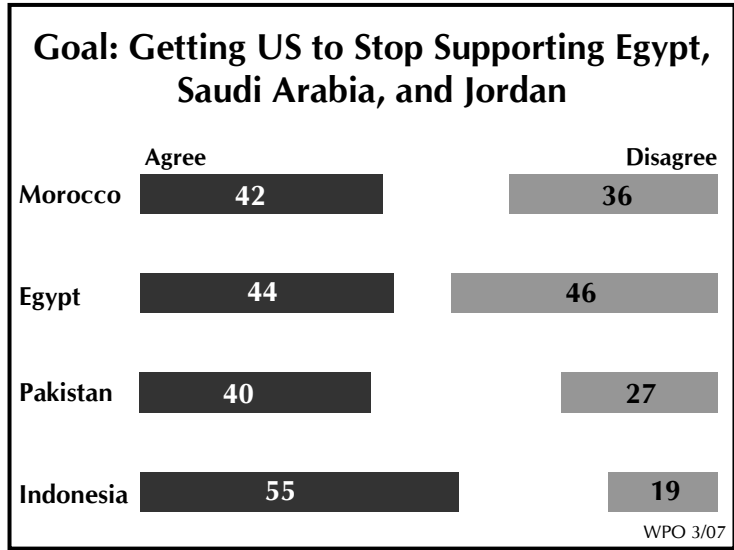
Two-thirds or more of those polled in all four countries said that they supported the goal of trying “to push the United States to stop favoring Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians.” In Egypt, an overwhelming 95 percent agreed and in Morocco, 75 percent did. In both Pakistan and Indonesia, 65 percent agreed, though Pakistanis were more emphatic (42% believed strongly) than Indonesians (29% strongly).

**5. US Support for Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan**

Views are mixed on US support for the governments of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Indonesians support the goal of getting the US to stop providing such support, Moroccans and Pakistanis lean toward supporting it, while Egyptians are divided.

In contrast to the strong support shown overall for pushing US military forces out of Islamic countries, views were much more mixed about whether it was a good idea to try “to push the United States to stop providing support to such governments as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.”

Indonesia is the only country where a majority expressed support for this idea (55%). It is also the country that is the most distant—both geographically and culturally—from the Arab countries named. In Morocco, respondents tended to agree, but by a narrow margin of 42 percent to 36 percent. Although their government is also a major recipient of US aid, Pakistanis tended to agree that such aid should be stopped by 40 percent to 27 percent. The question asked of Egyptians was worded slightly differently in that Egypt was not named. Egyptian respondents were divided: 44 percent agreed but 46 percent disagreed. Egypt is the largest recipient of US bilateral aid after Israel.

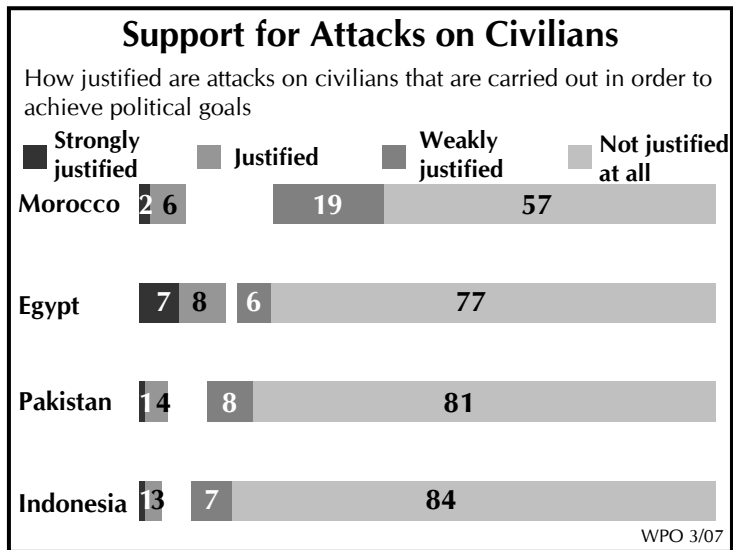


**VIEWS OF ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS**

**6. Attacks on Civilians in General**

Large majorities in all countries oppose attacks against civilians for political purposes and see them as contrary to Islam. Attacks on civilians are seen as hardly ever effective. Politically motivated attacks against civilian infrastructure are also rejected as not justified.

Most respondents in all four countries believe that politically-motivated attacks on civilians, such as bombings or assassinations, cannot be justified. Respondents were given four options for evaluating such attacks: “strongly justified,” “justified,” “weakly justified,” and “not justified at all.” In all countries a majority—in most cases an overwhelming majority—took the strongest position, saying



that such attacks could not be justified at all. More than four out of five Indonesians (84%), Pakistanis (81%), and Egyptians (77%) said such attacks were completely inexcusable, as well as 57 percent of Moroccans (an additional 19 percent of Moroccans said they could only be “weakly justified”). On average 75 percent said that such attacks could not be justified at all.

Most believe that attacks on civilians are contrary to Islam. Respondents were asked about the “position of Islam regarding attacks against civilians,” and asked whether it supports or opposes such attacks. They were offered the additional options of saying that it “certainly” supports or opposes such attacks. Most took the strongest position of saying that Islam “certainly” opposes targeting civilians. On average, 63 percent took this position including 83 percent of Egyptians, 72 percent of Pakistanis, and 61 percent of Moroccans. A more modest 37 percent of Indonesians said that Islam certainly opposes such attacks, though an additional 38 percent said simply that Islam opposes them.

Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “Groups that use violence against civilians, such as al Qaeda, are violating the principles of Islam. Islam opposes the use of such violence.” Large majorities agreed in Egypt (88%), Indonesia (65%) and Morocco (66%).

Pakistanis, however, were much more equivocal on this question. Only 30 percent said they agreed that such attacks violated Islam and 35 percent disagreed (35 percent did not answer). This appears to contradict the majority view in Pakistan,

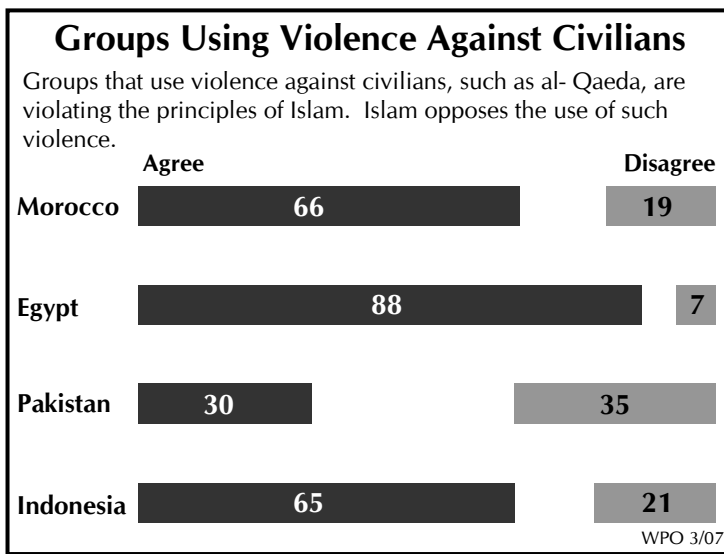
discussed earlier, that attacks on civilians could never be justified and that Islam certainly opposes such attacks. It may be that some Pakistani respondents are reacting negatively to the assertion that al Qaeda uses violence against civilians. As discussed below, Pakistanis are particularly likely to reject the idea that al Qaeda had a role in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.

Three of the publics polled see targeting civilians as not only morally unacceptable but also largely ineffective. Respondents were asked to judge whether attacking civilians was an effective tactic “often,” “only sometimes,” or “hardly ever.” A majority of Moroccans (55%) and Pakistanis (53%) considered such attacks hardly ever effective, while 17 percent of both publics said they were only sometimes effective. A plurality in Indonesia (42%) also said they were hardly ever effective, while 19 percent called them only sometimes effective. Just eight percent called them often effective, while 31 percent did not answer.

Egyptians, however, took quite a different view. While 37 percent said such attacks were hardly ever effective, a majority of 58 percent said they were at least sometimes effective. It should be noted, however, that Egyptians show greater opposition to the use of such attacks than other publics.

**Attacks on Civilian Infrastructure**

Majorities in all four countries also think that attacks on civilian infrastructure—even if no civilians are killed—are completely unjustifiable. Respondents were asked about “politically motivated

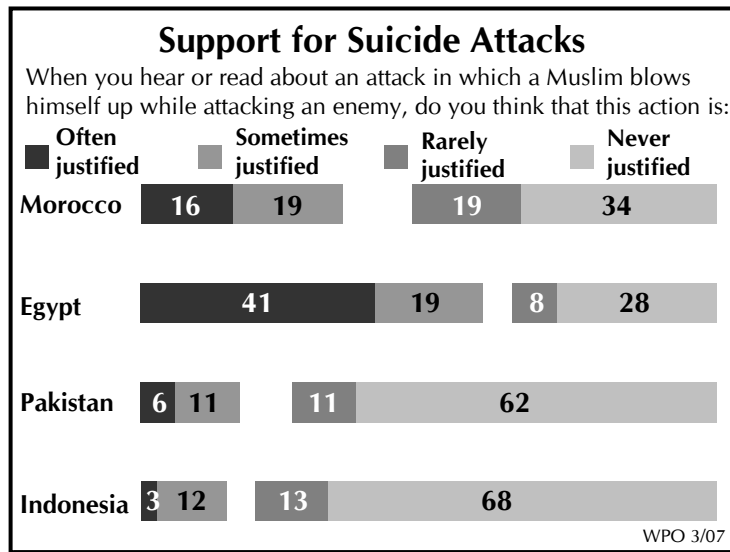


attacks” that do not inflict casualties, such as “destroying a pipeline or bombing a radio transmitting tower.” On average 69 percent said that such attacks could never be justified, including 80 percent of Indonesians, 77 percent of Pakistanis, 62 percent of Egyptians and 56 percent of Moroccans. On average another 12 percent said such attacks could only be weakly justified, while just 10 percent said they could be justified.

**Suicide Attacks**

Attitudes about suicide attacks are more complex. It should be noted that suicide attacks do not necessarily target civilians; many are directed against military targets. Nonetheless, majorities in three of the four countries said that suicide attacks were rarely or never justified. Egyptians, on the other hand, tended to believe they were justified sometimes or often.

Respondents were asked what they thought when they heard or read about “an attack in which a Muslim blows himself up while attacking an enemy.” In two countries majorities said such suicide bombings were “never justified:” Indonesia (68%) and Pakistan (62%). An additional 13 percent of Indonesians and 11 percent of Pakistanis said suicide bombings were rarely justified. Moroccans also tended to think such attacks were unjustified, though less emphatically: 34 percent said they were never justified and 19 percent said rarely.



Three in five Egyptians (60%), however, considered suicide bombings to be “often” (41%) or “sometimes” (19%) justified. About a quarter (28%) said they were never justified and 8 percent called such actions rarely justified. The fact that Egyptian respondents also said they were strongly opposed to attacks on civilians suggests that Egyptians may tend to think of suicide attacks as being against non civilian targets.

**Terrorism**

In three of the four countries polled, most respondents indicate that they consider terrorism a serious challenge. They were asked to choose whether they viewed “terrorism” as a “very big problem,” a “moderate problem,” a “small problem” or “not a problem.” Very large majorities said they saw terrorism as a problem, and large majorities saw it as a very big one.

The highest level of concern was in Pakistan where 83 percent saw terrorism as a very big problem and an additional 10 percent saw it as a moderate problem. Two-thirds of Indonesians (67%) also said terrorism was a big problem and an additional 21 percent called it a moderate problem. Among Egyptians, 62 percent said it was a very big problem, plus eight percent saw it as a moderate one.

Morocco diverges dramatically. More than four fifths (84%) said terrorism was either only a “small problem” (78%) or “not a problem” (6%). Only 13 percent of Moroccans called it either a very big problem (1%) or a moderate problem (12%).

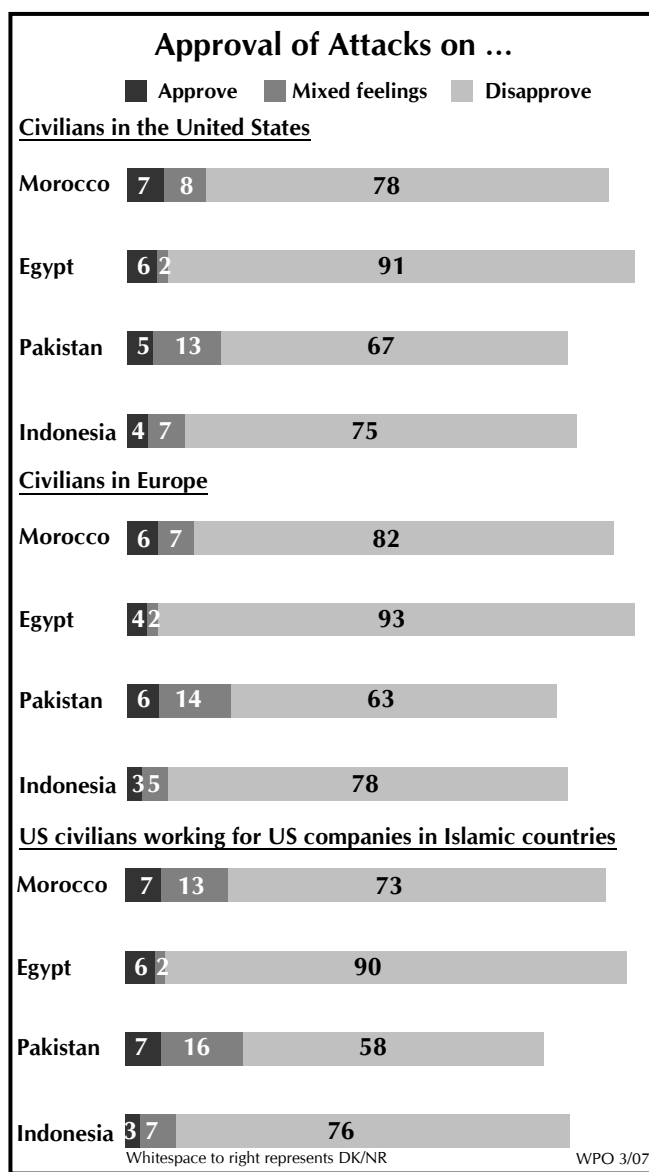
All four countries have suffered major terrorist attacks in recent years, though Morocco has suffered fewer casualties than the other countries polled. Pakistan—the country where respondents were most likely to consider terrorism a significant problem—has lost about 35 people in two suicide bombing attacks so far this year and Islamic militants trained there are blamed for suicide attacks in neighboring Afghanistan. In Indonesia, more than 200 people died in the 2002 suicide bombings at nightclubs in Bali, Indonesia, and since then about 40 more people have died in attacks on foreign targets. Bombings in the Egyptian resort cities of Dahab in 2006 and Sharm el Sheikh in 2005 killed more than a hundred people. In Morocco, suicide bombings carried out in Casablanca in 2003 killed 45 people.

**7. Attacks on American and European Civilians**

Consistent with the opposition to attacks on civilians in principle, and in contrast to the significant support for attacks on US troops, majorities in all countries disapprove of attacks on civilians in the United States as well as civilians in Europe. Nearly as many disapprove of attacks on Americans working for US companies in Islamic countries. In all cases the Egyptians are the most opposed, while the Pakistanis are the least.

Large majorities in all countries reject violence that targets civilians in the United States or in Europe, with large majorities in three of the countries rejecting them strongly. On average 78 percent said they disapproved of attacks on American civilians (60% strongly), while 79 percent disapproved of attacks on European civilians (62% strongly). Just 4-5 percent approved of such attacks while 7-8 percent had mixed feelings.

Egyptians were the most strongly opposed. Nine out of ten disapproved of attacks on both Americans (91%) and Europeans (93%) and most of them disapproved strongly (79% for Americans, 84% for European). Eight out of ten Moroccans (78%) opposed attacks on Americans (57% strongly) and slightly more (82%) opposed attacks on Europeans (61% strongly). Indonesian responses were similar. Three-quarters (75%) disapproved of attacks on Americans (57% strongly) and 78 percent rejected attacks on Europeans (60% strongly). Because of the large number of non responses in Pakistan, percentages there were smaller: 67 percent opposed attacks on Americans (46% strongly) and 63 percent opposed attacks on Europeans (44% strongly).



Exceedingly small numbers in all countries—ranging from 3 percent to 7 percent—expressed approval for attacks on either American or European civilians. Respondents were also offered the option of saying they had mixed feelings about such attacks, though relatively small numbers chose it: 2 percent to 8 percent in three of the countries and 13-14 percent in Pakistan for Europeans and Americans. The minorities who approved of or had mixed feelings about such attacks were also largest in Pakistan: 18 percent said they either approved (5%) or had mixed feelings (13%) about attacks on Americans and 20 percent either approved (6%) or had mixed feelings (14%) about attacks on Europeans. In Morocco, this number reached 15 percent for attacks against Americans (7% approve, 8% mixed), and 13 percent for Europeans (6% approve, 7% mixed). Those approving in Indonesia and Egypt were even fewer.

Most respondents also opposed attacks on US civilians working for US companies in Muslim countries. In Egypt, nine out of ten disapproved, including 78 percent who chose “strongly disapprove.” Three out of four Indonesians (76%) disapproved, 57 percent strongly, as did three out of four Moroccans (73%), 49 percent strongly. A majority of Pakistanis also rejected attacks on such workers (58%), though only 39 percent did so strongly.

The percentage expressing approval or “mixed feelings” about attacks on US civilians working for US companies in the Muslim world was highest in Pakistan (23%) and Morocco (20%). One tenth or less expressed either ambivalence or approval in Indonesia (10%) and Egypt (8%).

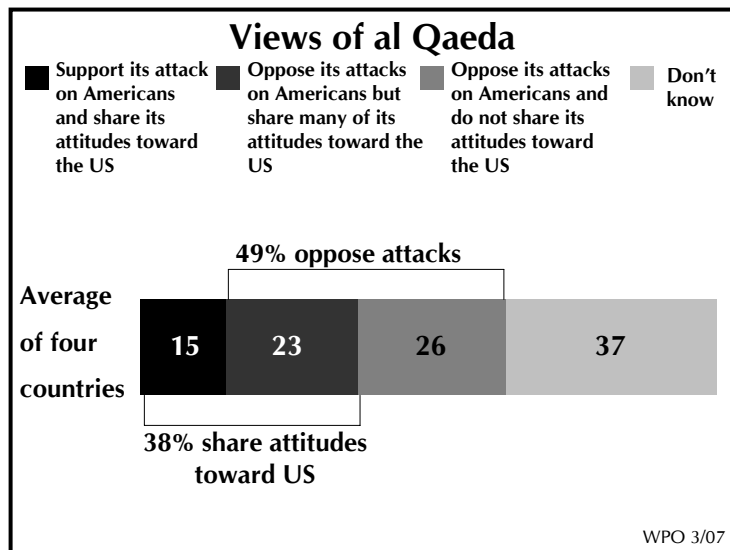
**VIEWS OF AL QAEDA AND ITS GOALS**

**8. Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden**

**Consistent with their rejection of attacks on civilians, majorities or pluralities say they oppose al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans. But many say they share some of al Qaeda’s attitudes toward the US and substantial majorities endorse many of al Qaeda’s goals. Views of Osama bin Laden are quite divided, with many expressing uncertainty. Views of al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden may be complicated by the widespread disbelief that al Qaeda committed the September 11 attacks.**

Views of al Qaeda are not simply positive or negative. Just as respondents reject attacks on civilians, most reject al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans. Nonetheless, they agree with some of its views of the United States and sympathize with many of its goals.

To differentiate between their views about al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans and their views about al Qaeda’s attitudes toward the United States, respondents were offered three statements: 1) “I support al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans and share its attitudes toward the US;” 2) “I oppose al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans but share many of its attitudes toward the US;” and, 3) “I oppose al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans and do not share its attitudes toward the US.”

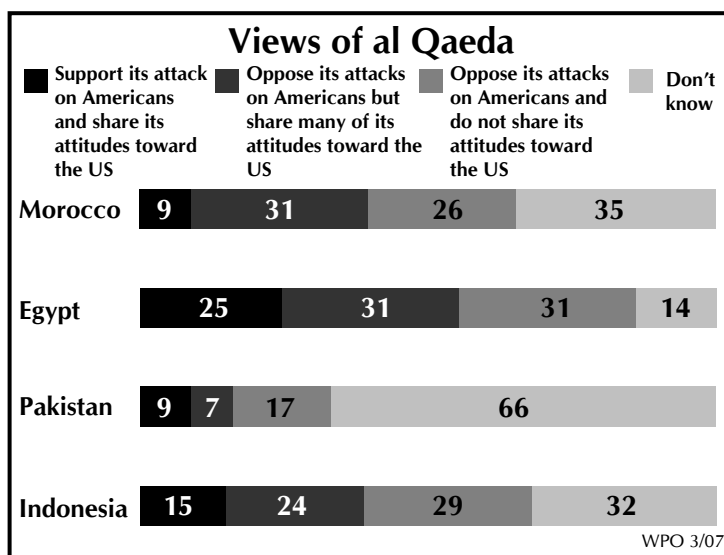


Respondents confirmed once again their opposition to attacks on civilians (discussed above). No more than one in four endorsed al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans. However, majorities or pluralities in all countries said they shared al Qaeda’s attitudes toward the United States. Remarkably high numbers declined to take a position in all countries except Egypt, however.

The highest percentage saying that they supported al Qaeda’s attacks and also shared its attitudes toward the United State was found in Egypt, though even there it reached only 25 percent. Lower levels of support were found in Indonesia (15%), Morocco (9%), and Pakistan (9%).

Relatively high percentages fully rejected both al Qaeda’s attacks and its views of the United States. This was the most common position in Indonesia (29%) and Pakistan (17%), one of the highest in Egypt (31%), and the second highest in Morocco (26%).

The mixed position—rejecting the al Qaeda’s attacks, but sharing its views of the United States—was the most common in Morocco (31%), one of the highest in Egypt (31%), the second highest in Indonesia (24%), but the lowest in Pakistan (7%).



In summary, every country except Pakistan (where two out of three declined to answer) had substantial majorities who rejected al Qaeda’s attacks on Americans (Egypt 62%, Indonesia 53%, Morocco 57%) though majorities or pluralities also expressed agreement with al Qaeda’s attitudes toward the United States (Egypt 56%, Indonesia 39%, Morocco 40%).

**Al Qaeda’s Goals**

Perhaps most significantly, large majorities endorsed goals that they also perceived to be the objectives of groups such as al Qaeda. Respondents were presented a series of seven goals and asked whether they were the goals of “groups such as al Qaeda and groups inspired by al Qaeda that have conducted attacks on American and European civilians.” Respondents could say whether they thought each one was definitely or probably a goal, or definitely or probably not a goal. In a second series of questions, they were presented the same series of seven goals and asked whether they personally agreed with each one.

Large majorities in all countries personally agreed with six of the seven goals and believed, correctly, that they were objectives of al Qaeda and similar groups. The one goal majorities neither perceived as being one of al Qaeda’s objectives nor supported themselves was “to push the US to stop providing support to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.”

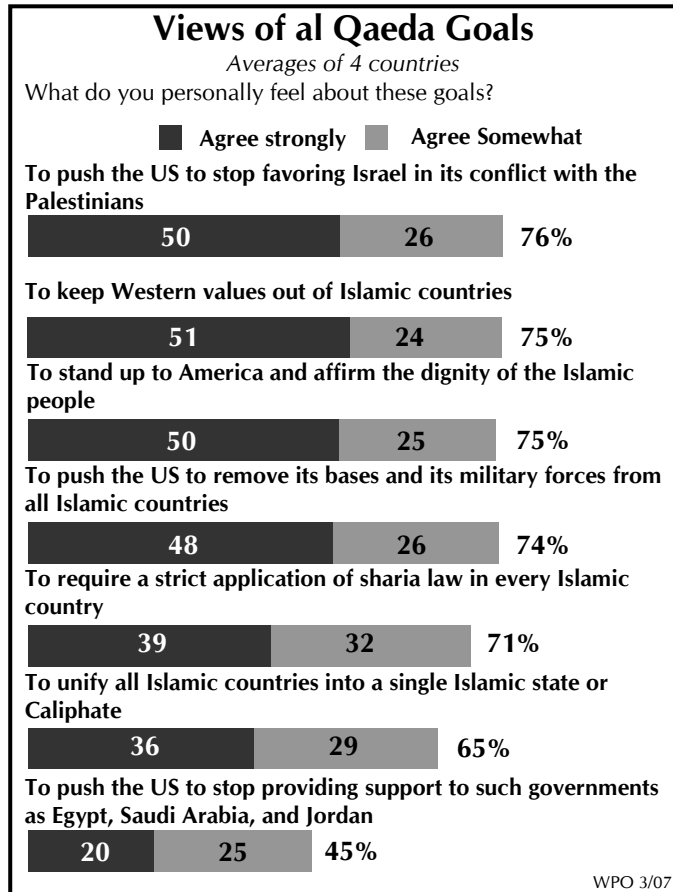
Majorities in all four countries expressed very strong support for keeping “Western values out of Islamic countries:” Egypt (91%), Indonesia (78%), Pakistan (67%) and Morocco (64%). Majorities—ranging from 56 percent in Pakistan to 75 percent in Egypt—also rightly perceived that this was one of al Qaeda’s goals.



Similar majorities also endorsed the goal “to push the US to remove its bases and its military forces from all Islamic countries:” Egypt (92%), Pakistan (71%), Morocco (72%) and Indonesia (64%). Again, large majorities also correctly believed that this was an al Qaeda goal, ranging from 59 percent in Pakistan to 81 percent in Egypt.

Majorities said they considered pushing the United States “to stop favoring Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians” to be one of al Qaeda’s goals and also said it was a goal they supported. In Egypt, 81 percent thought al Qaeda was striving to accomplish this and an overwhelming 95 percent said they agreed with this objective. In Morocco, 76 percent believed this was an al Qaeda objective and 75 percent supported it themselves. In Indonesia, 65 percent said it was an al Qaeda goal and the same percentage said they agreed with it personally. In Pakistan, a slim majority said it was an al Qaeda goal (51%) and a larger one (65%) said they shared the goal.

Majorities in all countries said they believed al Qaeda tries “to stand up to America and affirm the dignity of the Islamic people.” This was also the goal most widely shared overall by respondents across all countries. Three-quarters or more said this was al Qaeda’s goal in Egypt (78%), Indonesia (76%) and Morocco (75%) as did a majority in Pakistan (57%). Large majorities across all four countries said they personally agreed with this goal: 90 percent in Egypt (80% strongly), 72 percent in Indonesia (38% strongly), 69 percent in Morocco (40% strongly) and 65% in Pakistan (41% strongly).



Majorities in all four countries—though smaller ones—said that al Qaeda sought “to require a strict application of Shari’a law in every Islamic country.” Seventy-four percent of Moroccans said this was an al Qaeda objective and 65 percent of Indonesians and 62 percent of both Egyptians and Pakistanis agreed. This goal was strongly supported by respondents themselves in every country except Indonesia. Three-quarters or more personally supported the application of Islamic law in Pakistan (79%), Morocco (76%) and Egypt (74%). A narrow majority of Indonesians (53%) also expressed support for this goal, though 40 percent said they disagreed with it. About one in five disagreed in Egypt (22%) and Morocco (19%). Less than one in ten disagreed in Pakistan (8%). (It should be noted that there is no Islamic equivalent to the Roman Catholic papacy. No single religious leader or institution in the Islamic world has the authority to define sharia).

The two remaining goals represent potential threats to governments in the Islamic world. The first is “to unify all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state or caliphate.” Majorities in all countries polled perceived correctly that al Qaeda wanted to achieve this: 67 percent in Morocco, 61 percent in

Indonesia, 60 percent in Egypt and 52 percent in Pakistan. Majorities in three countries also agreed with this objective themselves: Pakistan (74%), Morocco (71%), and Egypt (67%). Indonesia was the exception: only 49 percent agreed that Islamic countries should be united into a caliphate.

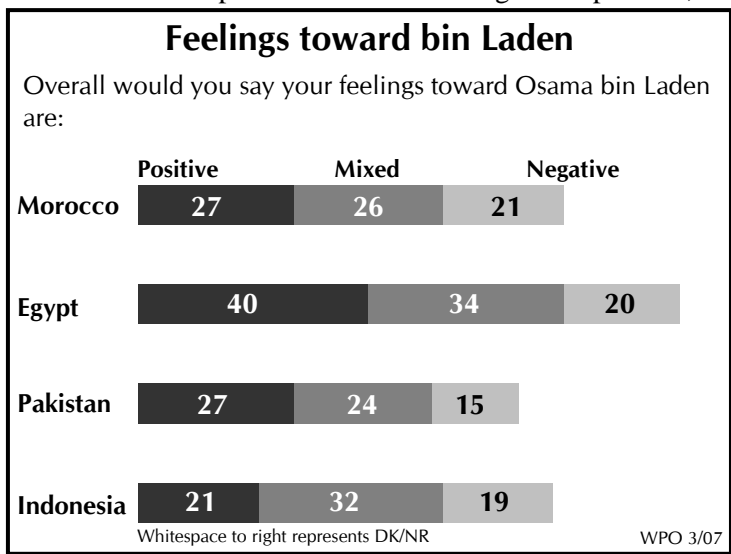
The second goal that might threaten existing regimes is to push the United States to “stop providing support to such governments as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.” (The Egyptian government was not named when this question was asked in Egypt). Although al Qaeda leaders have expressed this goal, majorities in only two of the four countries said it was one of al Qaeda’s objectives: Indonesia (54%) and Morocco (51%). The Egyptian public was divided: 41 percent agreed that it was an al Qaeda goal and 43 percent disagreed. In Pakistan, only 35 percent saw the withdrawal of US support for certain governments as an al Qaeda goal.

Respondents’ personal views about this objective are mixed. Only in Indonesia did a majority express support (55%). Of the four countries polled, Indonesia is the most distant—both geographically and culturally—from the Arab countries named. In Morocco, respondents agreed by only a narrow margin of 42 percent to 36 percent. Although their government is another major recipient of US aid, Pakistanis tended to agree by 40 percent to 27 percent. In Egypt, respondents were divided: 44 percent agreed but 46 percent disagreed. Egypt, one of the countries named in the question, is the largest recipient of US bilateral aid after Israel.

**Osama bin Laden**

Views of Osama bin Laden are roughly balanced in all four countries, though they tilt positive in three countries. Respondents were offered the option of saying whether their feelings were positive, negative, or mixed. On average 30 percent were positive, 19 percent negative, 29 percent mixed and 23 percent declined to answer. No more than 40 percent endorsed any one of these categories in any country. Once again in all countries except Egypt, very large numbers declined to answer.

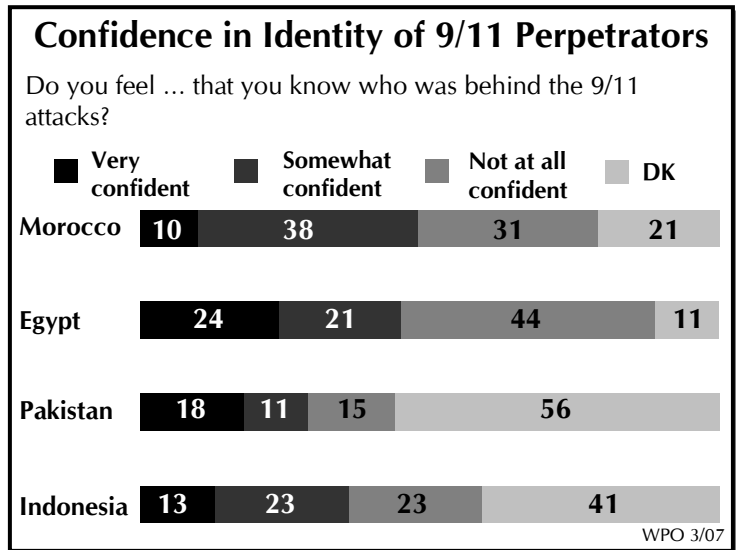
Egyptians had the most positive opinion of bin Laden: 40 percent said their feelings were positive, 20 percent negative and 34 percent mixed. Moroccans were slightly more positive (27%) than negative (21%), though 26 percent had mixed feelings and 25 percent did not answer. Pakistanis also tended to be more positive (27%) than negative (15%), though 24 percent expressed mixed feelings and 35 percent did not answer. Indonesians were the most uncertain of the four publics polled: 21 percent said their feelings toward bin Laden were positive, 19 percent negative, 32 percent mixed. Twenty-six percent of Indonesian respondents would not answer.



**Beliefs about the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks**

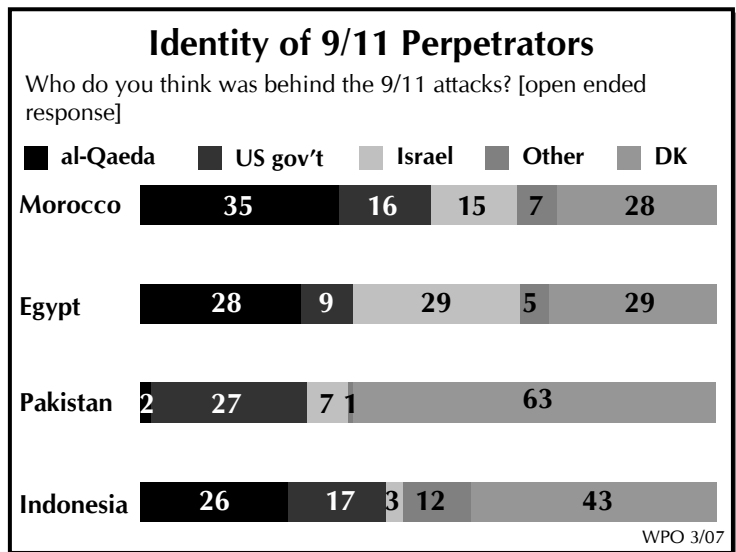
Views of al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden may be complicated by the high levels of uncertainty about whether al Qaeda carried out the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. This could explain the large numbers who would not answer (up to 66%) questions about al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

When asked how confident they were that they knew who was behind the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, majorities in all four countries either said they were “not at all confident” or declined to answer. In Egypt, 44 percent were not at all confident and an additional 11 percent had no opinion. In Morocco, 31 percent were not at all confident and 21 percent had no opinion. In Indonesia, 23 percent were not at all confident and 41 percent expressed no opinion. Pakistan had the lowest percentage saying they were not at all confident (15%) but a majority (56%) would not answer.



All respondents were then asked to either name who they thought was responsible for the 9/11 attacks or to make their best guess. The largest percentages, but still much less than a majority, identified al Qaeda as responsible. This included 35 percent of Moroccans, 28 percent of Egyptians and 26 percent of Indonesians.

Pakistan is a special case. Only 2 percent of Pakistanis named al Qaeda, while 27 percent said the US government was behind the attacks. A very large 63 percent would not answer.

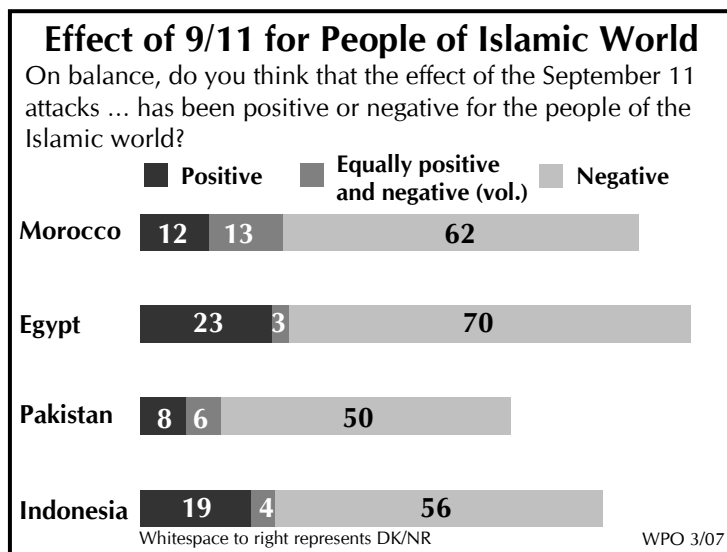


The US government was considered responsible for the attacks by 16 percent of Moroccans, 9 percent of Egyptians, and 17 percent of Indonesians. Israel was also mentioned as responsible, especially in the two Arab countries: 15 percent of Moroccans and more than a quarter of Egyptians (29%) said Israel was behind the attacks (Egyptians cited Israel more often than the United States). Only 7 percent of Pakistanis and 3 percent of Indonesians said they believed Israel was responsible for 9/11.

No other state or organization garnered more than 2 percent of responses in any of the four countries. Given Osama bin Laden’s public disclosure that al Qaeda was behind the attacks on New York and

Washington, it is striking that more than five years later, majorities do not identify al Qaeda as the perpetrator.

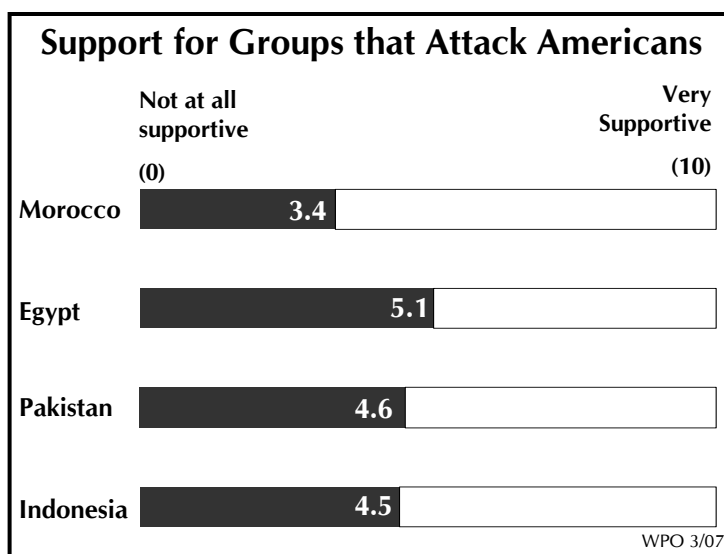
In all countries, the most common view is that the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks “have been negative for the people of the Islamic world.” Majorities in Morocco (62%), Egypt (70%), and Indonesia (56%), and a plurality in Pakistan (50%) said the attacks had had a negative effect. Large numbers went further and said their effect had been “very negative:” 53 percent in Egypt, 39 percent in Morocco, 31 percent in Pakistan and 22 percent in Indonesia. The largest minority calling the attacks positive was in Egypt (23%), followed by Indonesia (19%), Morocco (12%) and Pakistan (8%).



### 9. Groups that Attack Americans

In regard to groups that attack Americans in general, Indonesians and Moroccans are fairly negative, Pakistanis lean negative while Egyptians lean positive. Only small numbers in all countries say they would consider donating money to such groups or would approve if a family member were to join such a group.

Respondents in most countries tend to have more negative than positive views of groups that attack Americans in general, with the exception of Egypt. Respondents were asked to rate “groups in the Muslim world that attack Americans” on a 0-10 scale with “with 0 meaning they do not feel at all supportive and 10 meaning they feel very supportive.” In three countries the mean score is below the midpoint: Morocco 3.4, Indonesia 4.5 and Pakistan 4.6. Egypt is the exception with a mean score of 5.1, just a hair above the midpoint.



Respondents were also given the opportunity to differentiate between various “groups in the Muslim world that attack Americans.” In this context significant numbers expressed support for at least some such groups. Respondents were given three possible responses: “disapprove of all of these groups,” “approve of some but disapprove of others,” and “approve of all or most of these groups.” A majority of Indonesians (52%) said they disapproved of all such groups while a quarter (24%) approved of at least some of them (6% most) and another quarter declined to answer. In Morocco, 44 percent

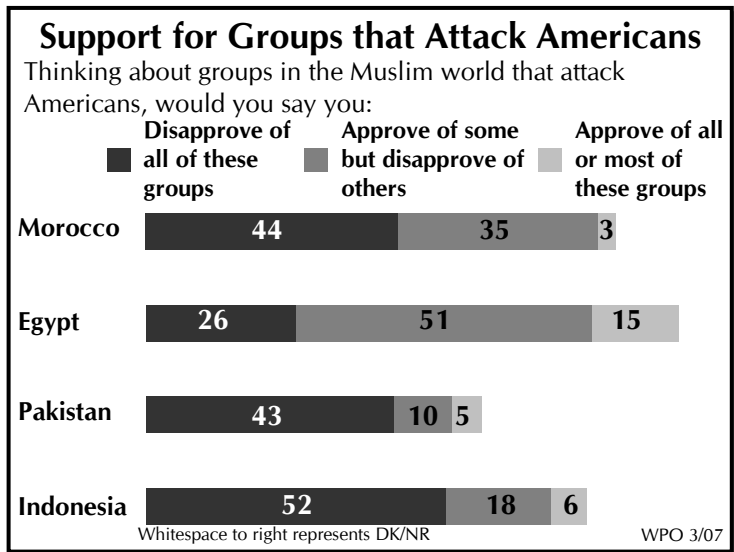
expressed blanket disapproval while 38 percent approved of some (3% most). About a fifth of Moroccan respondents (19%) did not answer. In Pakistan, 43 percent completely rejected such groups while 15 percent approved of some (5% most). However, 42 percent of respondents in Pakistan declined to answer.

In contrast, two-thirds of Egyptians (66%) said they approved of at least some of these groups. This included 51 percent who said they endorsed some and rejected others and 15 percent who said they approved of all or most groups that attack Americans.

Those who said they approved of at least some groups that attack Americans or would not answer, were also asked a number of questions to gauge their support for such groups, such as whether they would speak favorably about them with family or friends and whether they would consider giving money to them or encouraging others to do so.

Fairly small minorities said they would sometimes speak favorably about groups that attack Americans to family or friends (all percentages are of the full sample). Egypt had the largest numbers (24%) saying they would do so, though it also had the largest numbers refusing to express such opinions (41%). Indonesia was next with 16 percent saying they would speak favorably (21% no answer) followed by Morocco with 12 percent and Pakistan with 6 percent.

Respondents in three countries (excluding Egypt) were asked whether they “would ever consider” contributing money to “an organization that may send some of its funds to a group that attacks Americans.” Very small numbers said they would do so, but substantial numbers would not answer, which may mean that respondents felt



uncomfortable answering such a question. In Pakistan, 7 percent said they would consider contributing money (27% no answer), as did 8 percent in Indonesia (19% no answer) and 5 percent in Morocco (11% no answer).

Respondents in three countries were asked (again excluding Egypt) whether they would approve if a family member were to join a group that attacks Americans. In every case the most common response was that they would disapprove, and only small minorities said they would approve of such a decision.

However, large numbers—those who approve plus those who express mixed feelings or refuse to answer—did not say they would disapprove of a relative's decision to join a violently anti-American group. Among Indonesians, these answers total 19 percent. Among Moroccans, those unwilling to disapprove add up to 24 percent and among Pakistanis to 33 percent.

### ***10. Perceptions of Others' Support***

**People tend to believe that others share their feelings toward Osama bin Laden and groups that attack Americans. However those who have a favorable attitude are considerably more likely to project their attitudes than those who have negative attitudes. Those with neutral attitudes are more likely to skew in the direction of believing that others have a positive attitude.**

Respondents were asked to assess the attitudes of others in their country toward groups that attack Americans and Osama bin Laden. Because these questions followed the same format as questions about themselves, it is possible to compare respondents' perceptions of themselves to their perceptions of others. Overall there is a strong tendency of respondents to believe that most others agree with them, but this tendency is generally stronger among those who approve of groups that attack Americans, of Bin Laden and of suicide bombing than among those who disapprove.

Respondents were asked to rate both themselves and the average person in terms of support for groups that attack Americans on a 0-10 scale, where 0 means not at all supportive and 10 very supportive. In Indonesia, 70 percent of those indicating that they felt relatively little support for such groups (scores of 0-4) also assumed that the average person in their country felt relatively little support. However, of those who indicated relatively high support (scores of 6-10) a much higher 86 percent assumed that others agreed with them. This tendency was even stronger in Egypt where 63 percent of those with 0-4 ratings assumed that the average Egyptian agreed with them, while 87 percent of those with 6-10 ratings assumed agreement. Pakistan followed a similar pattern: 74 percent of those indicating they felt lower support for such groups thought their feelings were shared but 80 percent of those showing higher support thought so. In Morocco, the results were similar though the differences are barely significant.

In all countries majorities or pluralities of those who rated their own feelings at the scale's midpoint (5), assumed others felt equally neutral about groups that attack Americans. But they were far more likely to assume that the average person in their country would feel relatively positively toward such groups (scores of 6-10) than negatively (0-4). Thus even in this neutral group, perceptions were skewed toward believing others favor groups that attack Americans.

Responses to questions about Osama bin Laden followed the same pattern. Respondents tended to project their views on others, especially those with positive views of bin Laden. In Egypt, overwhelming majorities of those with a positive view of bin Laden projected these views (82%) while less than half (47%) of those with negative views assumed their opinions were shared. The

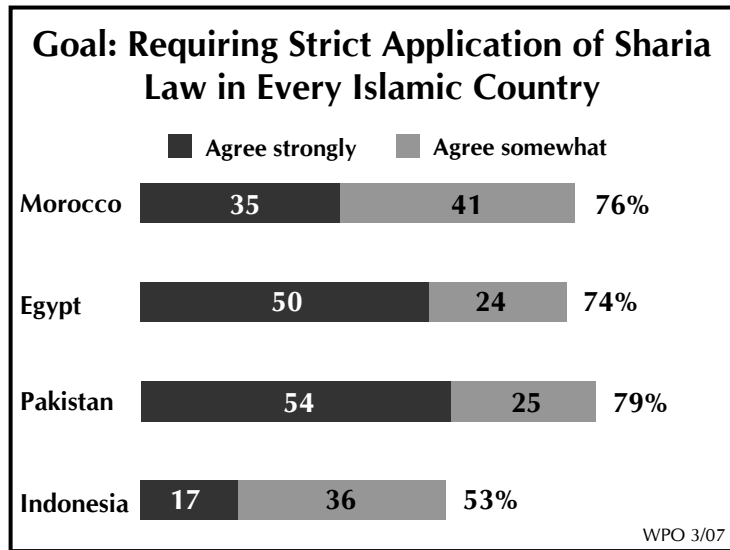
same contrast is found in Morocco (74% to 49%) and Pakistan (72% to 47%). In Indonesia, however, equal numbers of those with positive and negative views assumed their feelings were shared by the average Indonesian (66%).

This tendency to assume that others have positive views of the groups that attack Americans and bin Laden is not derived from a correct perception. In fact, there is no majority position on either question in any country. Views of Osama bin Laden tilt slightly to the positive (though it is a minority position in each case) while views of groups that attack Americans tilt to the negative.

**11. Views on Islamization and Western Cultural Influences**

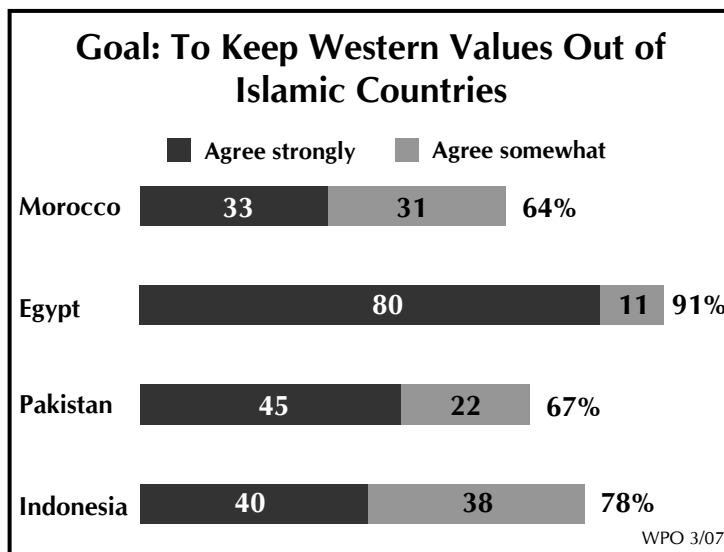
Most respondents express strong support for expanding the role of Islam in their countries—consistent with the goals of al Qaeda—but also express an openness to outside cultural influences. Large majorities in most countries support the goals of requiring a strict application of sharia, keeping out Western values, and even unifying all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state. On the other hand, majorities in all countries regard the increasing interconnection of the world through trade and communication as positive and strongly support democracy and religious freedom. Majorities or pluralities also reject the idea that violent conflict between Muslim and Western culture is inevitable and say that it is possible to find common ground.

Most respondents express strong support for expanding the role of Islam in their societies, a view that is consistent with the goals of al Qaeda. Large majorities in most countries—an average of 71 percent (39% strongly)—agree with the goal of requiring “strict application of Shari’a law in every Islamic country.” Pakistanis were the most enthusiastic with 79 percent agreeing. About three in four Moroccans (76%) and Egyptians (74%) also agreed. Indonesians showed the lowest support: 53 percent agreed and 40 percent disagreed.



Closely related to the goal of expanding the role of Islam is the aim “to keep Western values out of Islamic countries.” This objective, too, got wide support (overall average 76%). In Egypt, an overwhelming 91 percent agree (80% strongly). Nearly four out of five (78%) also agreed with this objective in Indonesia as did two out three Pakistanis (67%) and Moroccans (64%).

Majorities in three of the four countries—Indonesia (79%), Pakistan (66%) and Egypt (55%)—also expressed an unfavorable view of American culture. A majority of Moroccans, however, expressed a favorable view (64%).

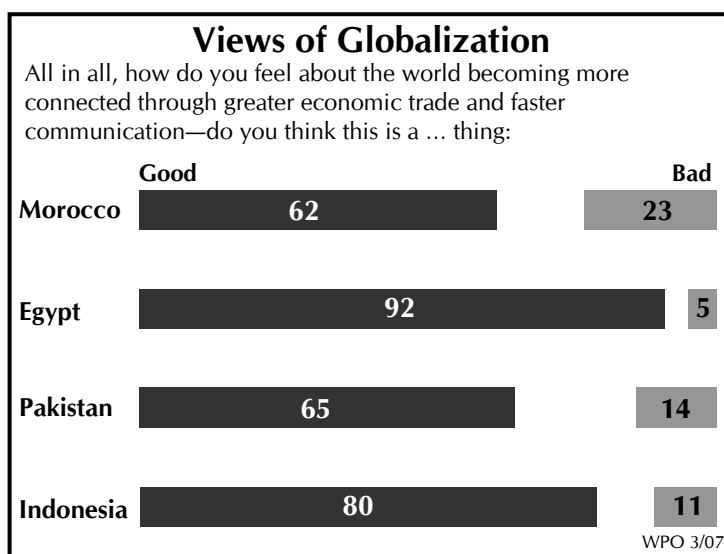


Majorities even agree with the ambitious goal “to unify all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state or caliphate” (overall average 65%). Seventy-four percent of Pakistanis agreed with this goal, as did 71 percent of Moroccans and 67 percent of Egyptians. However, in Indonesia only 49 percent agreed while 40 percent disagreed.

**Openness to Western Influences: Globalization, Democracy and Human Rights**

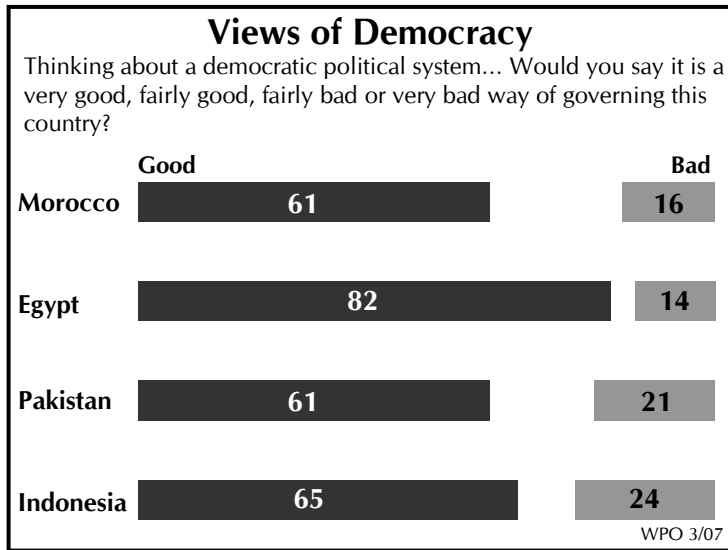
While respondents said they wanted to keep Western values out of Islamic countries, they also expressed a surprising degree of openness to some Western influences, suggesting their opposition to Western culture may be limited to certain intensely felt issues.

Asked how they felt about “the world becoming more connected through greater economic trade and faster communication,” an average of 75 percent considered this positive. Ninety-two percent of Egyptians, 80 percent of Indonesians, 65 percent of Pakistanis and 62 percent of Moroccans said they thought that this was either a “very good” or a “somewhat good” thing for their country. Only marginal numbers called globalization a “somewhat bad” or a “very bad thing.” Morocco had the highest percentage of respondents expressing negative attitudes toward globalization (23%).





In all four countries polled, strong majorities (67% overall) said they considered “a democratic political system” to be a good way of governing their country. Support for democracy was highest in Egypt, where an overwhelming 82 percent saw it as good and a 52 percent majority called it “very good.” In Indonesia, democracy was endorsed by 65 percent, though with less intensity (only 14 percent said very good). In Morocco, 61 percent called democracy a good way of governing their country (28% very good). In Pakistan, 61 percent called democracy a good way to govern (20% very good).



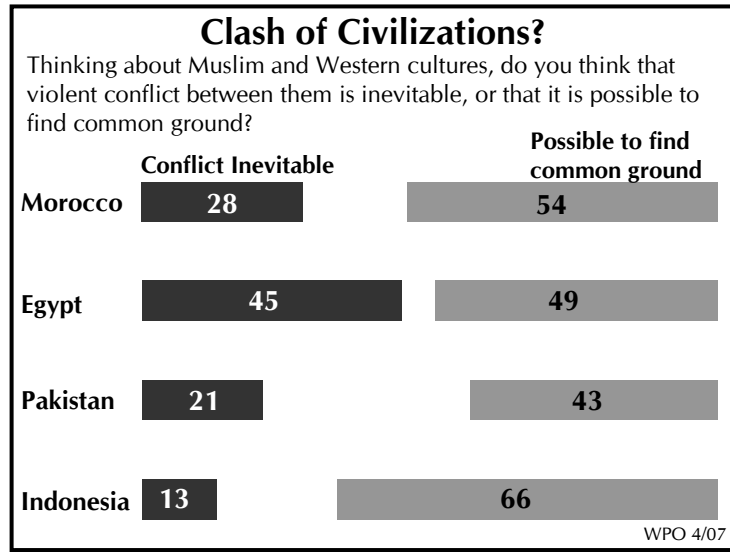
Support for human rights appears to be strong, even extending to the freedom to practice any religion. Respondents were asked whether in their own country, “people of any religion should be free to worship according to their own beliefs.” On average 82 percent said they should (63% strongly). Indonesians were the most emphatic supporters of freedom of religion: 93 percent supported it (82% strongly). In Egypt almost nine out of ten (88%) agreed, including 78 percent who agreed strongly. Pakistanis also strongly affirmed freedom of worship: 84 percent agreed (64% strongly). The only country that did not express overwhelming support for this principle is Morocco, though a robust 63 percent majority of Moroccans agree (29% strongly).

However, views are mixed about whether it is acceptable to try to convince others to change their religion. Respondents were asked whether they agreed that in their own country, “people of any religion should be free to try to convert members of other religions to join theirs.” In Morocco, 60 percent rejected this right (30% strongly), while 23 percent favored it. In Indonesia, 85 percent rejected the freedom to proselytize (65 percent strongly). However in Pakistan, three in five accepted such a freedom (35% strongly), though 31 percent did not. (This question was not asked in Egypt.)

Even when human rights issues are associated with the United States some Muslims express support. Asked their opinions about “the laws permitting freedom of expression in the US” majorities in Egypt (57%) and Morocco (68%) had favorable views. However a majority in Indonesia (74%) and a plurality in Pakistan (49%) had unfavorable views.

**Clash of Civilizations?**

The idea that a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West is inevitable receives little support in the four countries polled, though it is clearly rejected in only two of them. Asked whether “violent conflict is inevitable” between Muslim and Western cultures or whether “it is possible to find common ground,” majorities in Indonesia (66%) and Morocco (54%) chose the latter. Only 13 percent of Indonesians and 28 percent of Moroccans felt that conflict was inevitable, however about 20 percent of each public would not answer the question.



Egyptians and Pakistanis also tended to reject the idea that conflict was inevitable, though less emphatically. Pluralities of Egyptian (49%) and Pakistani (43%) respondents said they believed common ground could be found between Western and Muslim cultures. A relatively large minority of Egyptians (45%) thought that conflict was inevitable, however. In Pakistan, 21 percent predict conflict, though larger numbers (36%) would not answer.



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