

News Release

For immediate release

comprehensive settlement option

Jerusalem, December 25, 2006 – A new public opinion survey published this week shows that there is a strong preference by both the Israeli and Palestinian publics for a comprehensive settlement option between the two peoples.

In the most recent joint poll of Israeli and Palestinian public opinion conducted December 11 and 16 by the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Ramallah, a range of optional tracks were examined for the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian political process including the Roadmap, the Arab League (Saudi) plan, and an interim plan postponing the settlement of the refugees issue to the future. We also examined the Israeli leadership's degrees of freedom to begin negotiations with various configurations of a Palestinian government.

The findings indicate strong preference in both publics for the comprehensive settlement option with 58% of the Israelis and 81% of the Palestinians supporting this track compared to only 30% of the Israelis and 16% of the Palestinians supporting an interim track.

The joint poll further examined Israeli and Palestinian attitudes regarding a permanent settlement (along the lines of President Clinton's package for a Palestinian-Israeli final status settlement and the Geneva Initiative) against the backdrop of the Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire in Gaza. The results document a continuing decrease in support for that permanent status package and its parameters among Israelis throughout 2006, and overall stability among Palestinians. Despite the declining trend, among Israelis there is still a majority of 52% who support these parameters as a combined overall package. Among Palestinians, 48% support the package now, compared to 44% in June 2006 and 46% in December 2005 (see attached summary table).

The Palestinian sample consisted of 1270 adults interviewed face-to-face in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 127 randomly selected locations between December 14 and 16, 2006. The margin of error is 3%. The Israeli sample includes 602 adult Israelis interviewed by phone in Hebrew Arabic or Russian between December 11 and 14, 2006. The margin of error is 4%. The poll was planned and supervised by Dr. Yaacov Shamir, the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace and the Department of Communication and Journalism at the Hebrew University and Dr. Khalil Shikaki, director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR). The joint survey was conducted with the support of the Ford Foundation Cairo office and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Ramallah.

For more information, or for press contact with students, faculty or spokespersons from HU, please speak in the first instance to Jason Caplin, Communications Manager, on +44 (0)20 7691 1471 or email jason.caplin@bfhu.org.



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