

The Benjamin Netanyahu years and the Middle East Peace Process 2009 to 2024

WAPOR Annual Conference
Seoul July 28-31

Session: Public Opinion Research in Times of War

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Inclusive, Transparent and Accountable

- Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo & Serbia, Cyprus, Israel & Palestine, Kashmir, Sudan, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Syria, Moldova & Transnistria
- Senator George Mitchel and 2008/09 Peace Poll in Israel and Palestine
- Topics covered in 2008/2009 with Mina Zemach and Nader Said
- **Problems of substance**
- Final status, Refugees, Security, Settlements, Borders, West Bank-Gaza connector, Water and natural resources, Jerusalem, Holy sites, Implementation
- **Problems of process**
- Some process solutions, Rebuilding confidence, Negotiations, Economic priorities, Reconciliation

What Happened Next

- After Obama elected questionnaire written in November and December 2008 with OneVoice, Mina Zemach and Nader Said
- Questions drafted with academics and political party representatives in the Knesset, PA Fatah and Hamas, including PM Ehud Olmert, President Shimon Peres but not leader of the opposition Benjamin Netanyahu
- Poll run after Israeli elections February 2009, Published - April 2009
- <http://www.peacepolls.org/peacepolls/documents/000571.pdf>
- Washington, House, Senate, Think Tanks, George Mitchell State Department and Norwegian Embassy - Grant Applications - June 2009
- After October 7th - Senate and House and State Department – March 2024
- Grant applications, State Department, Norway, British FCDO, German FES
- Norway, Ireland and Spain recognize State of Palestine

Peace Polls Negotiator's Scale

- **Negotiator's scale developed for Northern Ireland peace process in 1990s**
- **Essential:** You believe this option is an extremely necessary part of a solution to the Transdniestria issue and should be fully implemented
- **Desirable:** This option is not what you would consider to be 'Essential', but you think this option, or something very similar to it, is a good idea and should be put into practice.
- **Acceptable:** This option is not what you would consider to be 'Desirable', if you were given a choice, but you could certainly 'live with it'.
- **Tolerable:** This option is not what you want. But, as part of a solution to the Transdniestria issue, you would be willing to put up with it for peace.
- **Unacceptable:** This option is totally unacceptable under any circumstances. You would not accept it, even as part of a peace agreement to solve the Transdniestria issue.
- **www.peacepolls.org**



Table 20. Per cent 'unacceptable' for agreements made or proposed in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Palestine and Israel

Conflict and constitutional proposal for conflict resolution	Per cent Unacceptable
Northern Ireland – Protestant (1997) Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority	52
Northern Ireland – Catholic (1997) Power sharing with North-South institutions but no joint authority	27
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Bosniak (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	17
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Serb (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	28
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Croat (2004) Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards	39
Kosovo – Albanian (2005) Full independence and no choice of citizenship for Serbs in Kosovo (With choice of citizenship for Serbs – 52% 'Unacceptable')	13
Kosovo – Serb (2005) Full independence and no choice of citizenship for Serbs in Kosovo (With choice of citizenship for Serbs – 64% 'Unacceptable')	94
Indian administered Kashmir (2008) Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks (Muslim 27%, Hindu 40% and Buddhist 55% - 'Unacceptable')	32
Pakistan administered Kashmir (2009) Regional integration and devolution – Pakistan and Indian Kashmir should function like a Co-Federation with an open border and decentralisation/local control in all Regions, Districts and Blocks	9
Sri Lanka – Sinhala (2008) Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference	31
Sri Lanka – Tamil (2008) Enhanced Devolution – Full implementation of the 13th and 17th Amendments plus the devolution of significant powers to autonomous provinces negotiated at a peace conference	33
Palestine – Palestinian (2009) Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	24
Israel – Israeli (2009) Two state solution - Two states for two peoples: Israel and Palestine	21

The Two-State Solution February 2009 / May 16 2024

	Essential	Desirable	Acceptable	Tolerable	Unacceptable
TSS 2009 Palestine	38	15	10	11	24
TSS 2009 Israel	32	13	16	17	21
TSS May 2024 All Israel	24	8	12	13	43
TSS Voted for coalition	6	7	7	11	68
TSS Voted for opposition	37	9	17	18	19
NI Power Sharing Protestants	4	8	17	19	52
NI Power Sharing Catholics	3	13	31	26	27

Table shows a comparison between opinion polls of Palestinians and Israelis taken in 2009 and 2024 concerning the two-state solution and opinion polls taken among Protestants and Catholics concerning the power-sharing agreement.

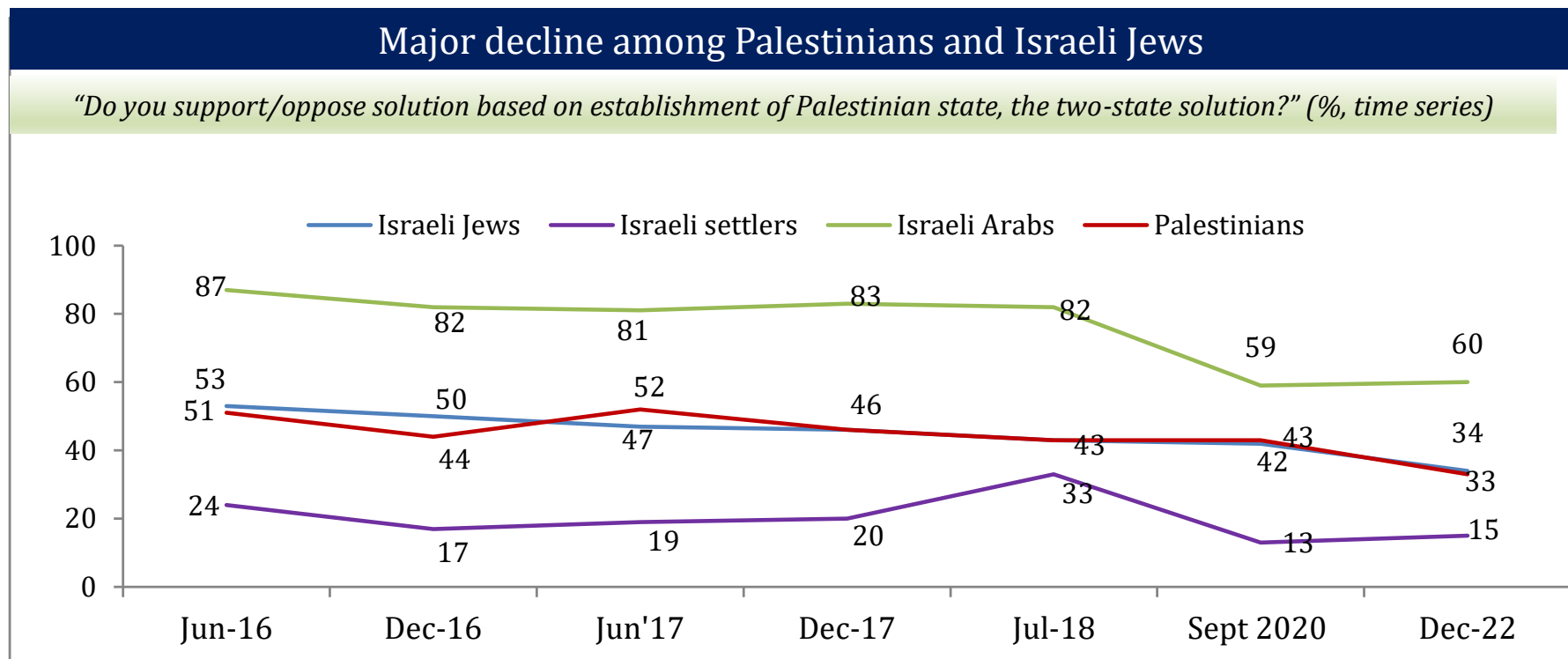
Source: [Peacepolls.org](https://www.peacepolls.org) and Mina Zemach at Midgam, Israel. 2024 poll run on May 16.

The PSR Palestine-Israeli Pulse, settlement package tested in June-July 2017

- 1. (In Israel) Mutual recognition of Palestine and Israel as the homelands of their respective peoples. The agreement will mark the end of conflict, the Palestinian state will fight terror against Israelis, and no further claims will be made by either side.
- 1. (In Palestine) Mutual recognition of Palestine and Israel as the homelands of their respective peoples. The agreement will mark the end of conflict, Israel will fight terror against Palestinians, and no further claims will be made by either side.
- 2. The independent Palestinian state which will be established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be demilitarized (no heavy weaponry).
- 3. A multinational force will be established and deployed in the Palestinian state to ensure the security and safety of both sides.
- 4. The Palestinian state will have full sovereignty over its air space, its land, and its water resources, but Israel will maintain two early warning stations in the West Bank for 15 years.
- 5. The Palestinian state will be established in the entirety of West Bank and the Gaza strip, except for several blocks of settlement which will be annexed to Israel in a territorial exchange. Israel will evacuate all other settlements.
- 6. The territories Palestinians will receive in exchange will be similar to the size of the settlement blocs that will be annexed to Israel.
- 7. West Jerusalem will be the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem the capital of the Palestinian state.
- 8. In the Old City of Jerusalem, the Jewish quarter and the Wailing Wall will come under Israeli sovereignty and the Muslim and Christian quarters and Temple Mount will come under Palestinian sovereignty.
- 9. Palestinian refugees will have the right of return to their homeland whereby the Palestinian state will settle all refugees wishing to live in it. Israel will allow the return of about 100,000 Palestinians as part of a family unification program. All other refugees will be compensated.
- 10. And now after we went over the main proposed terms of the two-state solution of the Israeli Palestinian permanent settlement (demilitarization of the Palestinian state, equal territorial exchange, the family unification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees, East Jerusalem the capital of Palestine and West Jerusalem the capital of Israel, and the end of the conflict, please tell me the extent to which you support or oppose such a permanent settlement in general as one combined package?

Tracking PSR Palestine-Israel Post

Figure 1: Support for the concept of the two-state solution among Palestinians and Israelis



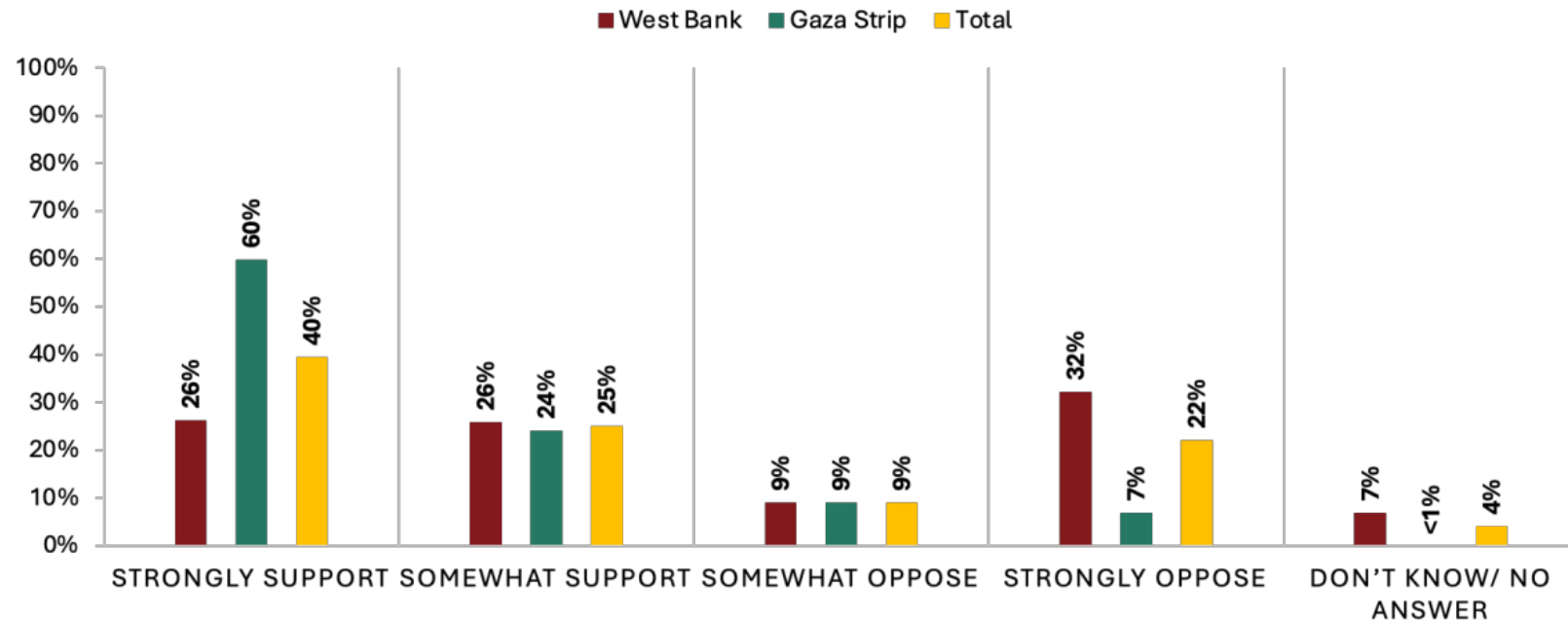
Geneva Initiative in Israel on Saudi Proposal – January 2024

- ***If an agreement was signed with US support that included: return of the hostages, agreement to establish in the future a non-militarized Palestinian state in the West Bank & Gaza, and total normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia, would you support or oppose this agreement?***
- I would support it – 51.3%
- I would oppose it – 28.9%
- Don't know – 19.8%

AWRAD 30 April - 9 May 2024

Figure 3: Support for a credible peace process and a 2-state solution

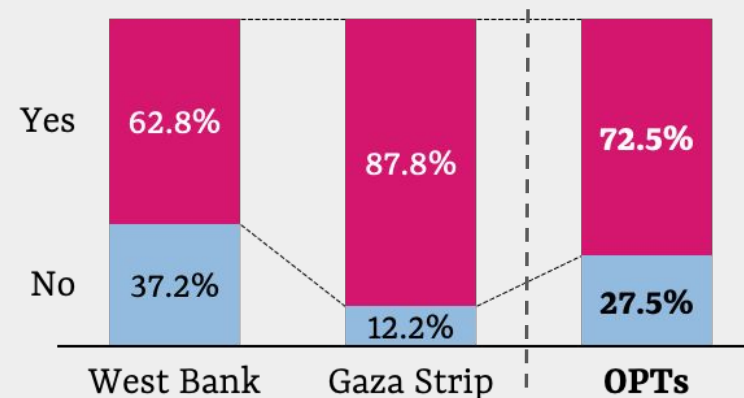
IF A MEANINGFUL PROCESS LEADING TO A PALESTINIAN STATE SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH ISRAEL WAS THE OUTCOME OF THE CURRENT CRISIS, WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE PROCESS?



Institute4progress 3-10 March 2024

A majority in both the West Bank and Gaza is willing to accept a two-state solution

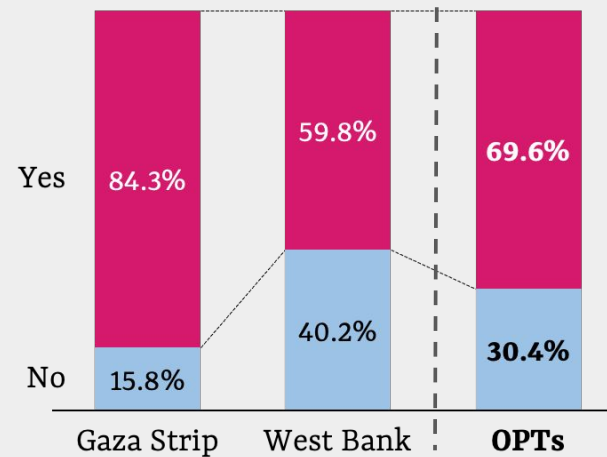
If serious negotiations took place, would you accept a Palestinian state along 1967 borders?



Institute4progress 1-6 June 2024

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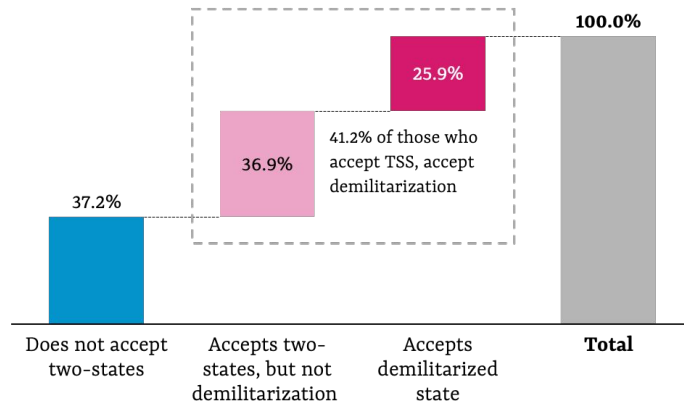
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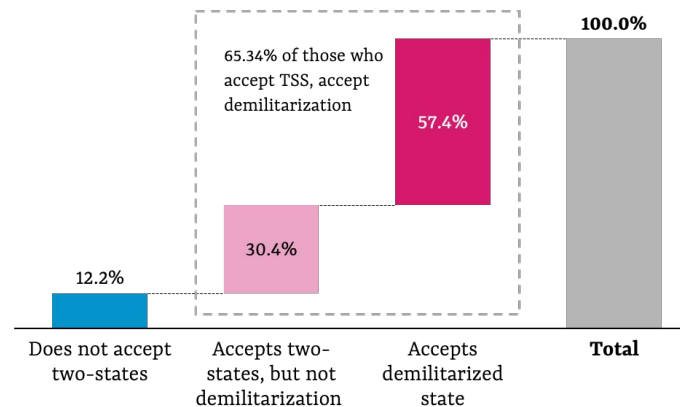
Institute4progress 3-10 March 2024

A small minority in the West Bank would accept a Palestinian state if it was demilitarized, compared to a majority in the Gaza Strip

West Bank*



Gaza Strip*



Question: Would you accept a state if it was demilitarized?

Unpacking “Serious Negotiations” – Peace Process

Table 1. Problems in the peace process expressed as per cent ‘Very significant’.

	PALESTINIAN per cent	Very Significant	ISRAELI per cent	Very Significant
1 st	The freedom of Palestinians from occupation/Israeli rule	94	Terror has reinforced the conflict	65
2 nd	The settlements	89	Maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel	62
3 rd	The substandard living conditions of the people in Gaza	88	Incitement to hatred	52
4 th	The security wall	88	Agreements not implemented for lack of trust between Palestinians and Israelis	48
5 th	The Independence of the Palestinian economy	87	Israel can not have security without peace	46
6 th	Lack of employment opportunities in Palestine/the West Bank and Gaza	84	Anti-Israeli attitude amongst Palestinians	44
7 th	The attitude of the Settlers towards Palestinians	76	The problem has become global	42
8 th	Unbalanced conflict for Palestine with Israel having more power	74	The two sides will never reach an agreement without active intervention of other outside parties	38
9 th	Discrimination against the 1948 Palestinians/Arab minority in Israel	70	Israelis believe the State of Palestine will become a terrorist state	38
10 th	Lack of health care services in Israel/Palestine	67	No vision of a shared future	38

Table 2. Problems of responsibility for lack of progress in the peace process expressed as per cent ‘Very significant’.

	PALESTINIAN per cent	Very Significant	ISRAELI per cent	Very Significant
1 st	Israel is not ready to make peace	85	Weak Palestinian government	52
2 nd	Lack of US resolve to establishing a Palestinian state	82	Islamic extremists are changing a political war into a religious war	52
3 rd	UN failure to implement resolutions	80	Arming of Palestinian militants	49
4 th	Israel’s refusal to accept 67 borders	79	Palestinians have no accountable single partner for peace	48
5 th	(PALESTINIANS ONLY) The lack of progress in the peace process led to Palestinian division	73	(ISRAELIS ONLY) Palestinians divided by Hamas and Fattah	43
6 th	Israel’s refusal to directly negotiate with Hamas	71	Israel evacuated Gaza without making a peace agreement	38
7 th	Arming of settlers	71	UN failure to implement resolutions	38
8 th	Arab states divided on the future of Palestine	71	Arab states divided on the future of Palestine	37
9 th	The Quartet (US, EU, UN and Russia) is ineffective in promoting the peace process	71	Weak Israeli government	36
10 th	The failure of the international community to address the security of Israel in the Middle East	69	The failure of the international community to take account of the asymmetry of the conflict between Israel and Palestine	35
11 th	The failure of the international community to address the security of Israel in the Middle East	67	The failure of the international community to take account of the asymmetry of the conflict between Israel and Palestine	34

Table 3. Priorities for rebuilding confidence in the peace process

Palestinian per cent	Essential or Desirable	Israeli % Unacceptable
1. Lift the siege of Gaza	99	48
2. Remove all check points	99	57
3. Release Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons	98	47
4. Israel should freeze settlements as a first step to deal with the settlements	98	23
5. Israel should demolish the wall	96	56
6. The new US Administration should place a high priority on Middle East peace	91	11
7. The UN should hold Israel and Palestine accountable and impose sanctions for all violations of international law	91	36
8. The UN should make recommendations for the resolution of the conflict	90	30
9. The EU should establish their own policies for the Middle East	87	26
10. EU and US should work with Egypt to end conflict between Hamas and Fatah	80	17

Israeli per cent	Essential or Desirable	Palestinian % Unacceptable
1. Stop all suicide/attacks against civilians	90	24
2. Stop firing rockets from Gaza	87	23
3. Release Gilad Shalit	85	32
4. Achieve peace through negotiation	79	8
5. Palestinians and Israelis should explain themselves to each other	69	
6. The new US Administration should place a high priority on Middle East peace	59	3
7. Civil society should get more involved in the peace process	58	6
8. Palestinians should declare a unilateral stop of attacks against Israeli targets to put pressure on Israel	57	
9. Israel should freeze settlements as a first step to deal with the settlements	56	1
10. EU and US should work with Egypt to end conflict between Hamas and Fatah	55	9

Table 4. Priorities for negotiations⁶

Palestinian per cent	Essential or Desirable	Israeli % Unacceptable
1. Fatah and Hamas should reconcile their differences before negotiations	98	16
2. Address the roots of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians as an integral part of the negotiations	97	12
3. The people should be kept informed of progress in the negotiations	94	5
4. Targets, timetables and milestones should be set for negotiations	91	7
5. Negotiators should recognize each others just aspiration	86	7
6. The US should negotiate with all Palestinians including Hamas	77	37
7. Bring the Israeli pro-peace parties into the negotiations	72	22
8. The Arab Peace Initiative should be the bases for negotiations	69	41
9. Multilateral negotiations should include Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and the Arab League	69	35
10. Saudi Arabia should take a leading role	64	56

Israeli per cent	Essential or Desirable	Palestinian % Unacceptable
1. The people should be kept informed of progress in the negotiations	74	1
2. Targets, timetables and milestones should be set for negotiations	68	2
3. Negotiators should recognize each others just aspiration	66	5
4. Fatah and Hamas should reconcile their differences before negotiations	58	1
5. Civil society should play a role in negotiations	54	
6. Address the roots of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians as an integral part of the negotiations	51	0
7. Bring the Israeli pro-peace parties into the negotiations	42	9
8. Women's groups should be involved at all levels in negotiations	41	
9. Negotiations should be hosted in a neutral country	37	
10. Multilateral negotiations should include Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and the Arab League	32	7

Table 5. Priorities for economic development

Palestinian per cent	Essential or Desirable	Israeli % Unacceptable
1. Remove check points	100	61
2. Establish a permanent corridor between Gaza and the West Bank	98	40
3. Open an airport in Palestine	98	42
4. Ease security measures in the Occupied Territories/West Bank and Gaza so that the economy can develop	97	22
5. Develop the economy for all Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza'	96	23
6. Achieve a peace agreement so that the Palestinian economy can develop	95	17
7. Open boarder crossings between Gaza and Egypt	95	46
8. Open boarder crossings between Palestine and Israel	95	
9. Work on the peace process and economy together	92	11
10. Provide Palestinians with access to the ports of Haifa and Ashdod	91	64

Israeli per cent	Essential or Desirable	Palestinian % Unacceptable
1. Agreements on water and economic development should be signed without delay	56	
2. Cooperate on environmental issues	54	4
3. Work on the peace process and economy together	53	1
4. Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries should develop their common interests	49	10
5. Develop the Palestinian economy to help achieve peace	46	
6. Achieve a peace agreement so that the Palestinian economy can develop	45	1
7. Develop the economy for all Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza'	43	0
8. Eliminate all forms of discrimination in Israel and Palestine	43	
9. Ease security measures in the Occupied Territories/West Bank and Gaza so that the economy can develop	41	1
10. Develop the economies of Jordan, Palestine and Israel together	33	12

Table 6. Reconciliation

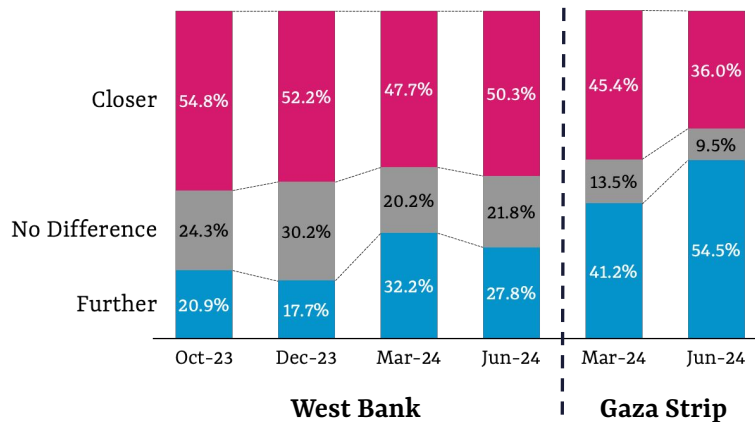
Palestinian per cent	Essential or Desirable	Israeli % Unacceptable
1. Reach an understanding on all core issues and start implementation under international supervision without delay	92	17
2. Both sides should use all possible means to build confidence and trust between the two communities	80	3
3. A peace agreement must lead to living side by side as good neighbours	78	6
4. Teach Hebrew in Palestinian schools	74	18
5. Teach Spoken Arabic in Israeli schools	58	19
6. Establish two completely separate states without any interaction	39	35
7. [Both sides should publicly take responsibility for the harm they have done to the other]		17
8. [Prohibit all forms of incitement to hatred]		4

Israeli per cent	Essential or Desirable	Palestinian % Unacceptable
1. Prohibit all forms of incitement to hatred	81	
2. Both sides should use all possible means to build confidence and trust between the two communities	79	5
3. A peace agreement must lead to living side by side as good neighbours	73	5
4. Reach an understanding on all core issues and start implementation under international supervision without delay	58	4
5. Both sides should publicly take responsibility for the harm they have done to the other	51	
6. Teach Hebrew in Palestinian schools	49	10
7. Teach Spoken Arabic in Israeli schools	47	17
8. Establish two completely separate states without any interaction	31	37

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In contrast with the West Bank, a majority in Gaza now believes that the end of occupation is further away

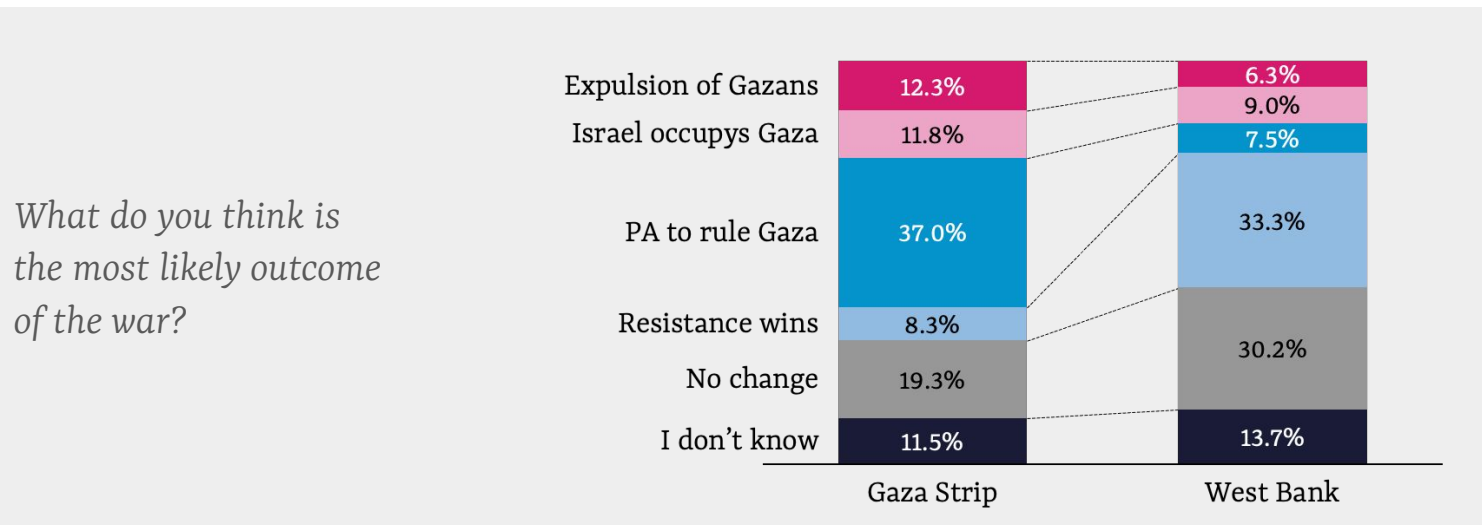
Based on recent developments, do you think the end of occupation is closer or further away?



- In the West Bank, around half continue to believe that the current war will bring the end of occupation closer
- Only one in three Gazans expect the same outcome, with a significant drop compared to March

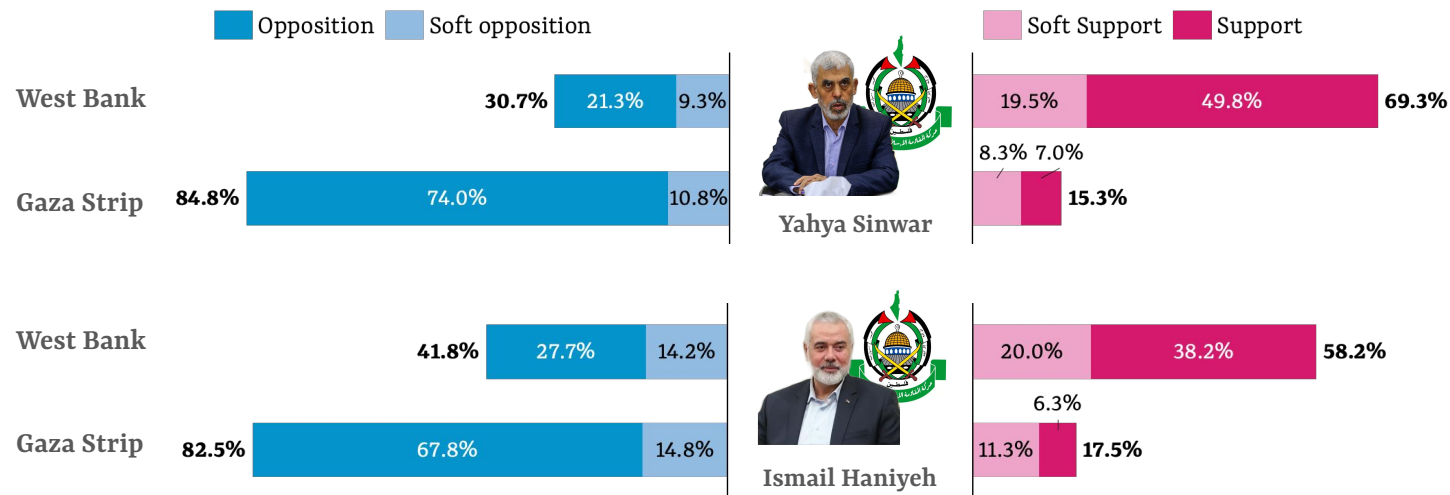
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Similarly, expectations of post-war outcomes differ significantly when comparing West Bank and Gaza respondents



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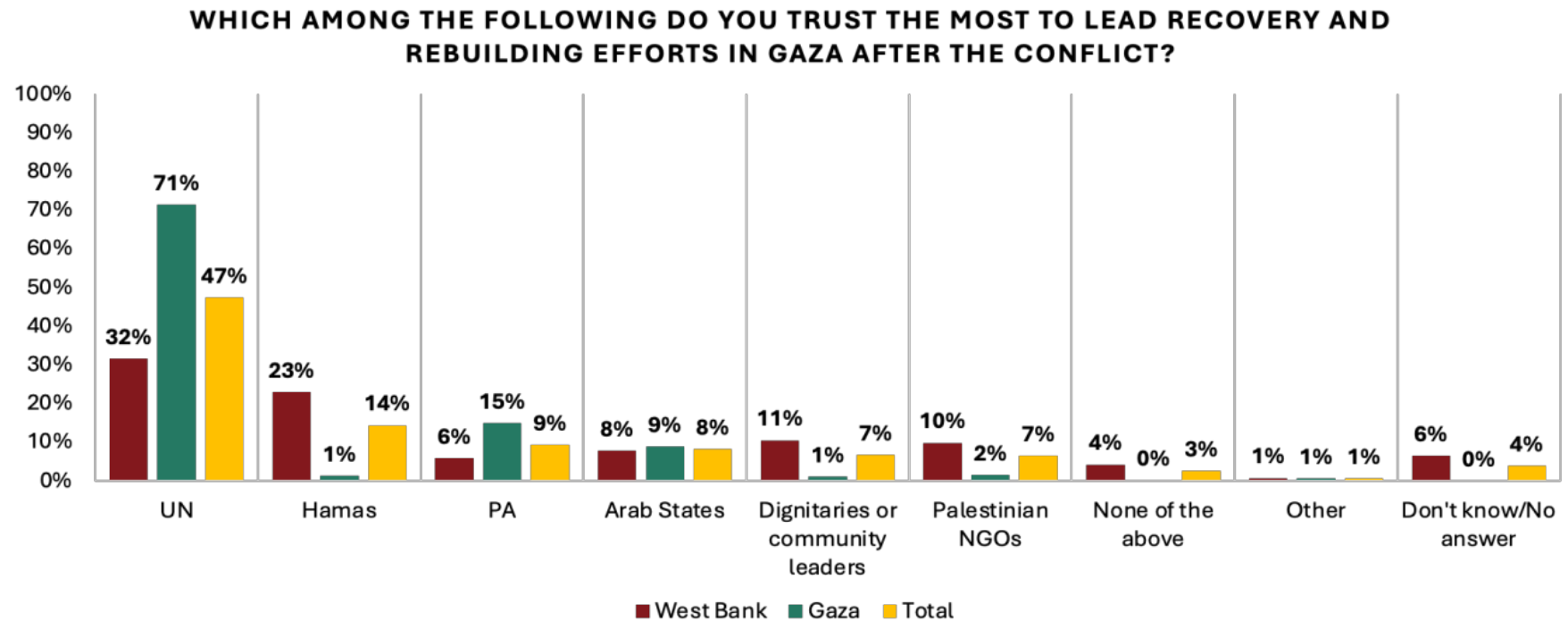
While figures associated with Hamas are popular in the West Bank, they are very unpopular in the Gaza Strip



Question: Evaluate the extent of your support or opposition for the following leaders (rate from 1 to 6).

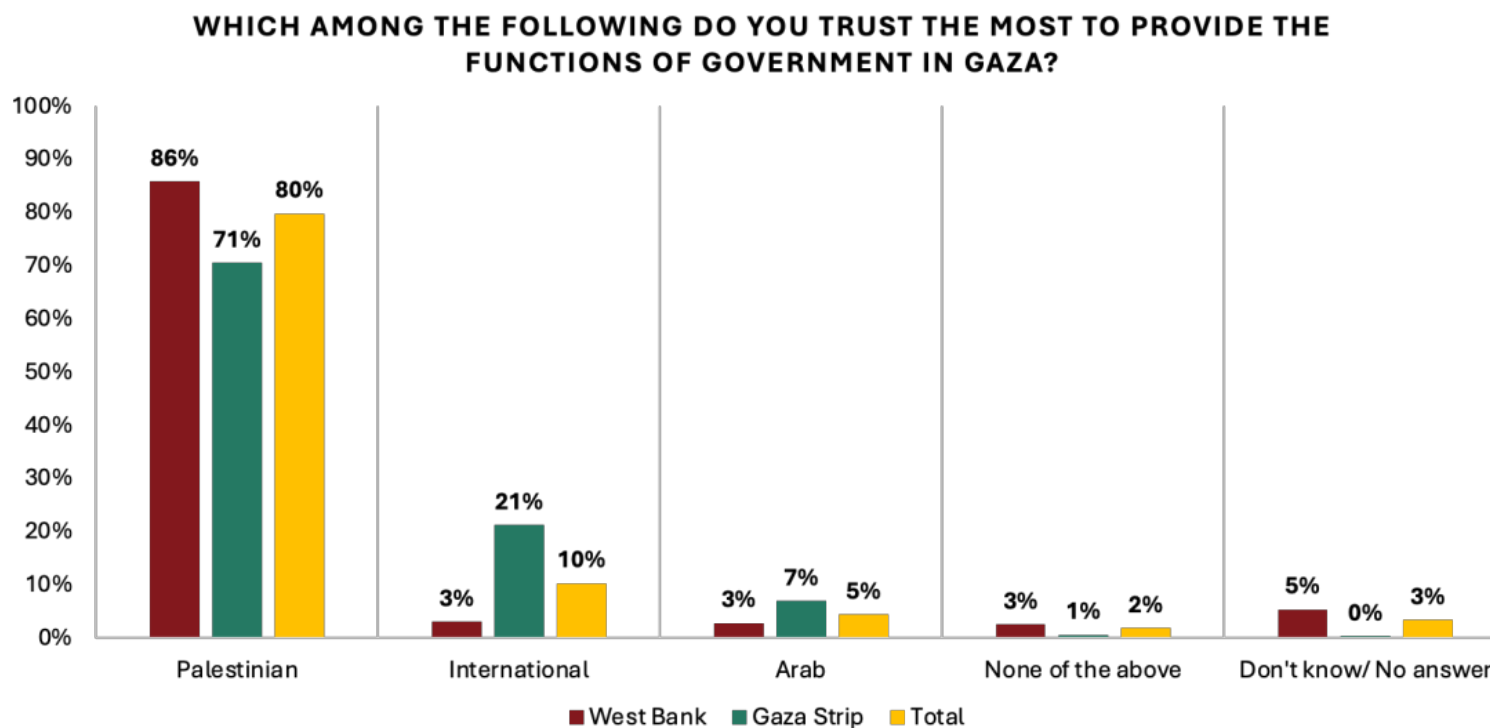
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Figure 6: Trust levels in actors to lead recovery and rebuilding efforts in Gaza by region



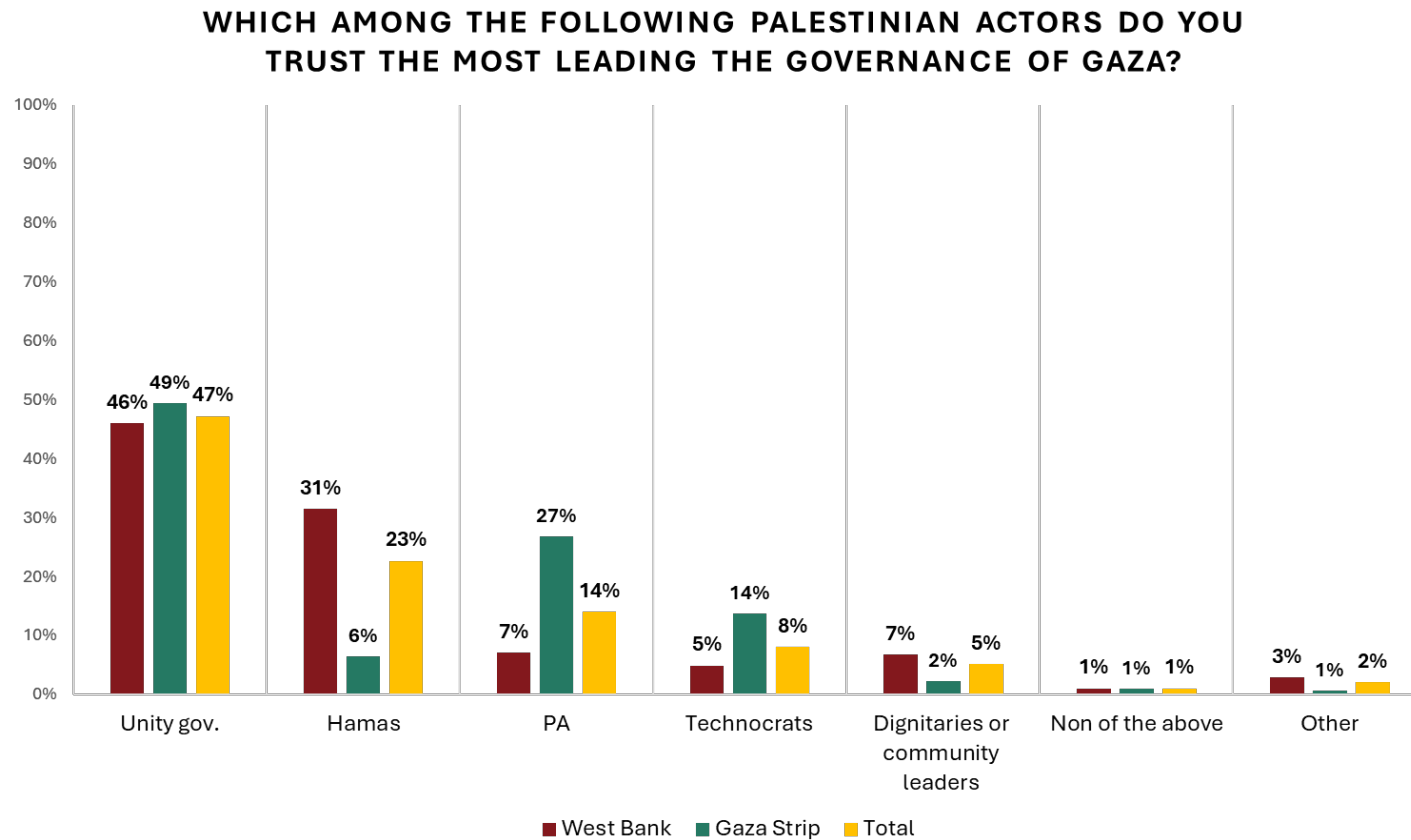
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Figure 7: Support levels for varying governance arrangements in Gaza by region



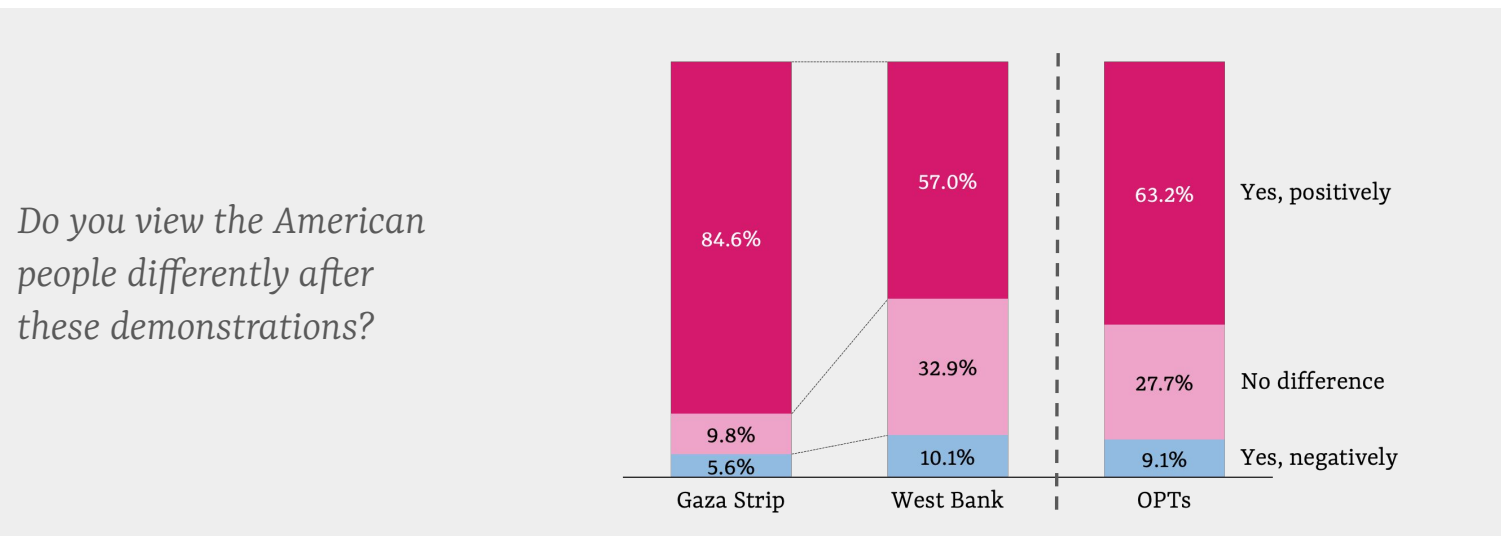
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Figure 8: Most trusted Palestinian actors for leading the government in Gaza



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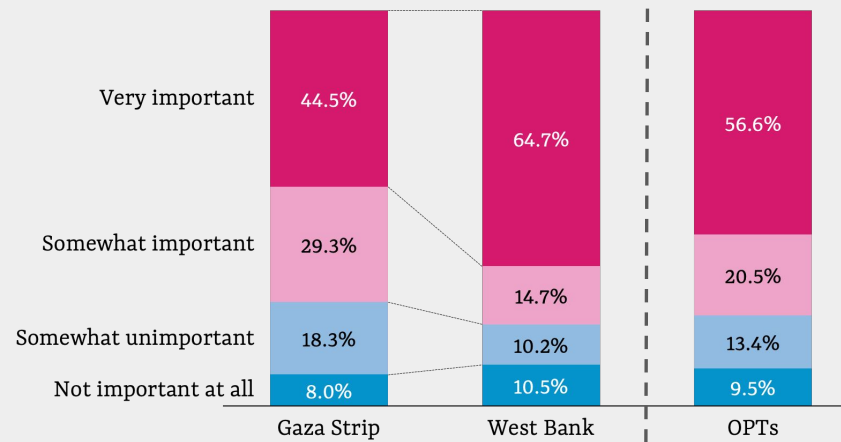
A majority of those aware of the protests state that their views of the American people have improved as a result, especially in Gaza



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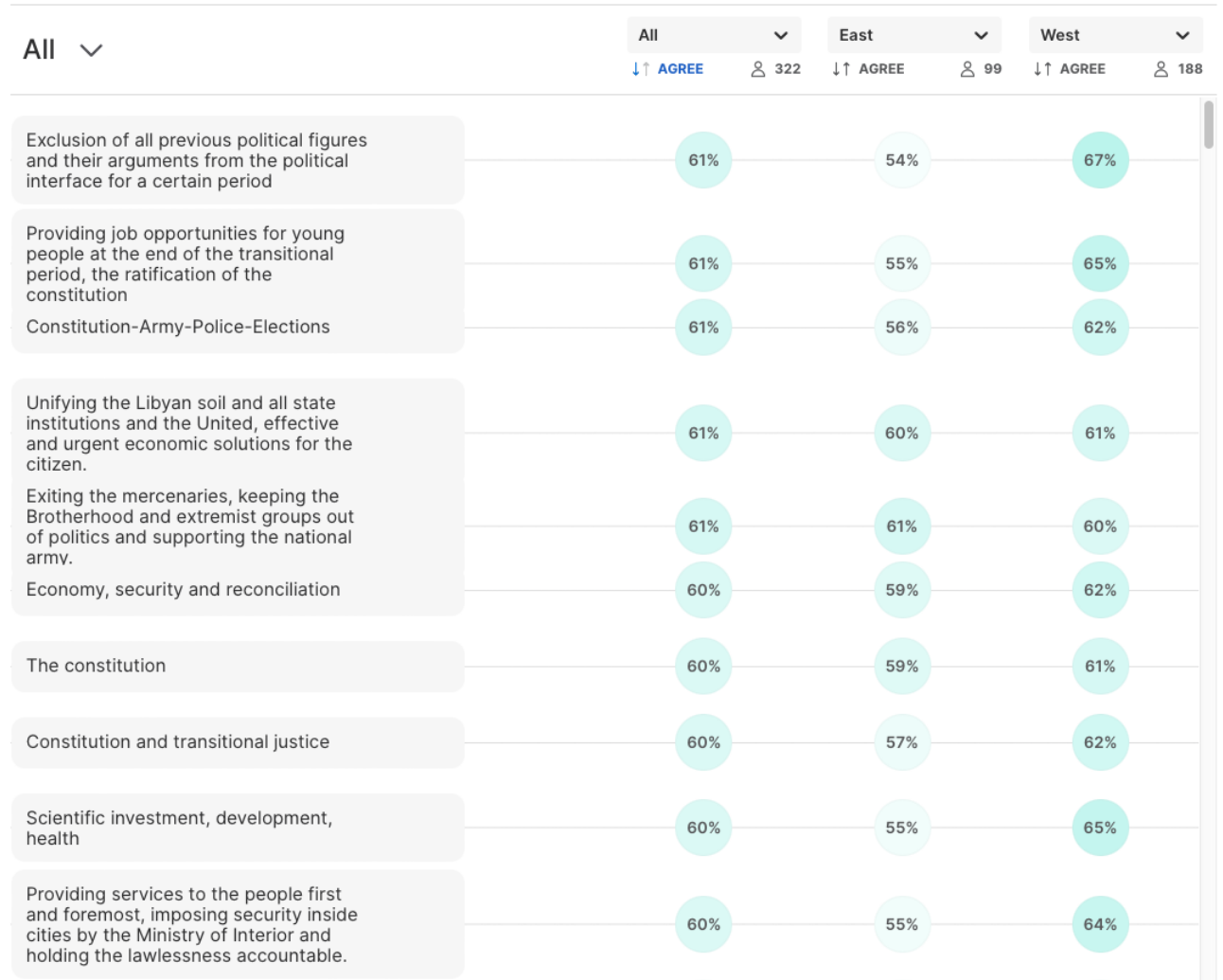
International statehood recognitions are also widely known and seen as important development for the Palestinian cause

Some European countries recognized Palestine and others may follow soon. In your view, how important or unimportant is this for the Palestinian cause?

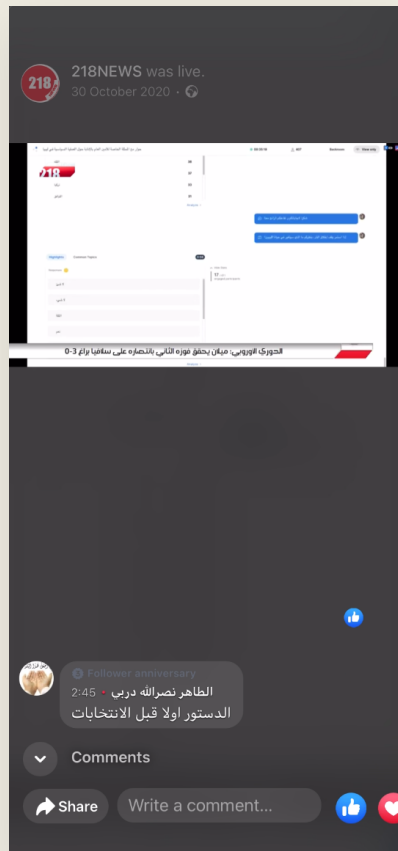


RemeshAI live UN Digital Dialogue

What are the most important issues to focus on in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum - remember them?



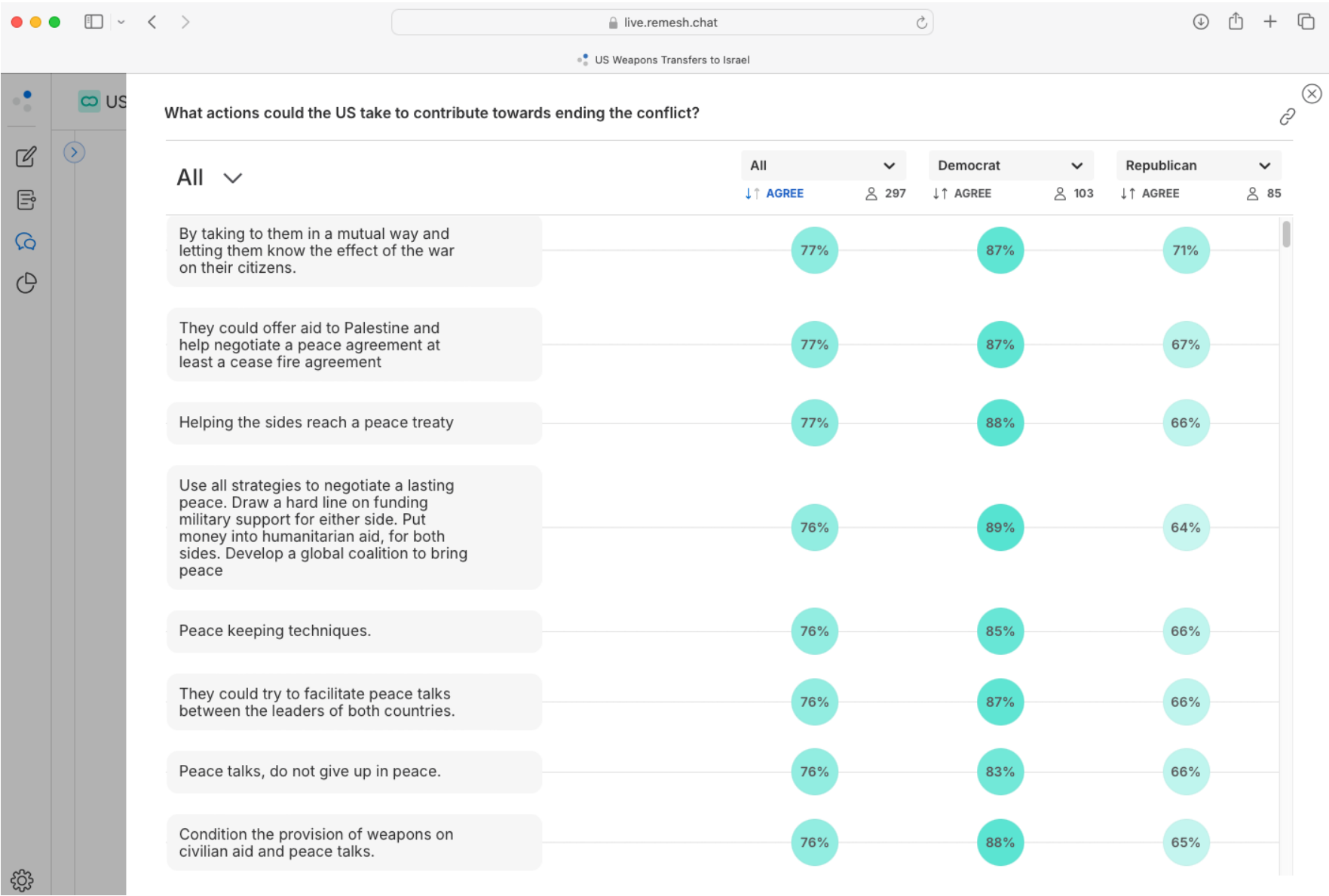
1.2 M Libyans followed this AI Dialogue on Facebook and TV



Clips from the Libya peace dialogue broadcast leading to a ceasefire



Notre Dame
Digital
Democracy
Workshop



“Inclusive and Transparent” – Thank You!

- Peace Polls website
- <http://www.peacepolls.org>
- Peace Polls book
- <http://www.peacepolls.org/peacepolls/documents/008880.pdf>
- Israel and Palestine peace process
- <https://theconversation.com/how-israel-failed-to-learn-from-the-northern-ireland-peace-process-220170>
- Institute4Progress
- <https://institute4progress.org/polls>
- AWRAD
- <https://www.awrad.org/files/server/polls/Poll%202024/AWRAD%20-%20Report%20-%20Palestinian%20Public%20Opinion%20Poll%20-%20May%202024.pdf>