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Middle East Brief

Trump's Peace Plan: Engagement or Swift Rejection?

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The Trump administration seems intent on launching its long anticipated "ultimate deal" or "deal of the century"—its proposal for peace between Israel and the Palestinians—sometime after the April 9 Israeli elections. This invites the following inter-related and important questions: What factors will determine whether Trump's initiative will succeed or fail? Given current political circumstances, what are the odds that the initiative will succeed? Finally, with what degree of confidence can estimates about these odds be made? This Brief aims to address these questions, with a particular emphasis on the impact of the Israeli and Palestinian domestic political environments on the odds that Trump's "ultimate deal" will succeed or fail.

Addressing these important questions, however, requires that we first define what we mean by the terms "success" and "failure." The criteria we use here to define these terms are very modest. "Failure" would mean a swift rejection of the initiative by the Palestinian Authority (PA) or Israel or both. Conversely, the initiative would be considered successful if the two protagonists decide to re-engage the United States and one another in serious negotiations regarding the plan's details and the terms and conditions for its possible implementation.

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The Fate of the "Ultimate Deal"

The Trump team has made it clear that its peace plan will address all permanent status issues, including borders, settlements, security arrangements, Jerusalem, and refugees.[1] It has also affirmed that the plan is extensive and detailed, extending to some fifty pages or more. The administration's peace experts expect that when the proposal is submitted to Israel and the Palestinians, both will find "enough in it" to serve as a basis for further negotiations, even if they dislike some of its components. According to one member of the Trump peace team, rejection of the plan "will have consequences"—indicating that the administration will not kindly take "no" for an answer.

Whether the PA or Israel or both will in fact dismiss the proposed "ultimate deal" or, alternatively, express willingness to discuss its details and negotiate its possible implementation will likely be determined by four factors:

1. whether the plan presented meets the two protagonists' minimal requirements;
2. whether key Arab leaders are willing to support U.S. efforts to gain Israeli and Palestinian acceptance of the plan, at least as a basis for further detailed negotiations;
3. whether the Trump administration is viewed as willing to exercise leverage on both sides in order to garner Israeli and Palestinian acceptance of the proposed deal; and, finally,
4. the degree to which the Israeli and Palestinian domestic environments allow receptivity to the initiative.

If they are to refrain from swiftly rejecting the Trump administration's long-anticipated peace initiative, Israel and the PA would both need to see it as addressing at least their minimal requirements. For the Palestinians, the plan would need to include important elements of the so-called 2000 Clinton Parameters and President George W. Bush's 2002 commitment to Palestinian statehood, as well as key elements of the Arab League's 2002 Arab Peace Initiative. Within this framework, the deal would need to: a) promise Palestinian independent statehood; b) provide that the boundaries between Israel and the new Palestinian state would be based on the 1967 lines, with mutually acceptable changes made through territorial swaps so as to grant the new state maximum territorial contiguity; and c) commit to locating the capital of the new Palestinian state in the area of East Jerusalem that will be under its sovereignty.

From Israel's perspective, the proposed deal would need to: a) address Israel's security concerns, so that its population's safety is not compromised; b) ensure Israel's future as a Jewish state by addressing the plight of Palestinian refugees in a way that does not jeopardize Israel's demographic composition; c) stipulate that the boundaries negotiated would include the large settlement blocs; and d) provide that Jerusalem will remain united and guarantee unhindered access to its various quarters, neighborhoods, and holy sites.

A second determinant of the plan's success or failure will be whether or not key Arab leaders—primarily King Abdullah of Jordan, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and Saudi Arabia's King Salman—are willing to support U.S. efforts

to gain Palestinian acceptance of the plan, at least as a basis for further detailed negotiations. Indeed, garnering such support has been at the heart of the Trump administration's preparation of the "ultimate deal" over the past two years, in sharp contrast to all previous U.S. administrations' attempts to secure Palestinian-Israeli peace. Yet such support will likely not be forthcoming unless the Palestinians' aforementioned minimal requirements are satisfactorily addressed. Otherwise, Arab leaders will have no defense against the predictable accusation that, by pressing for Palestinian acceptance of the plan, they have betrayed the Palestinian cause.

A third important determinant of the plan's prospects for success would be the extent to which the Trump administration is willing to exercise leverage on both sides, by offering incentives for its acceptance and presenting costs for its rejection out-of-hand. Trump's capacity to punish the PA has already been demonstrated by the one-sided U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, by the decisions to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and to end the special status of the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem as the de facto U.S. Embassy to the Palestinians, and by ending U.S. funding of UNWRA, the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees. Yet these punishments can now also provide the U.S. with an opportunity to present the Palestinians with new incentives, such as orchestrating an international project, with strong regional participation, to settle Palestinian refugees or formally promising that once its proposal for the future of Jerusalem is implemented, the new U.S. Embassy to Palestine will be located there.

At the same time, the PA will also have to assume that its swift rejection of the Trump proposal would lead to considerable additional punishment. The financial consequences of further punitive measures would likely include significant economic deterioration in the West Bank and a gradual destabilization of the PA. Major public outrage might also turn against the PA, just as deteriorating economic conditions have recently resulted in mass demonstrations against Hamas in Gaza.[2] The departure of Abbas from the scene under these circumstances could destabilize conditions even more, perhaps bringing the PA to collapse. And any further worsening of U.S.-Palestinian ties would provide ideal conditions for the pro-annexation elements in Israeli politics to advance their case even more effectively than before, which could generate an abrupt termination of PA-Israeli security coordination.

On Israel's side, having benefited so far from Trump's unilateral steps, the country's leaders would likely be wary of risking a reversal of their gains—the most recent

of which was the administration's recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights on March 25—by rejecting the administration's peace initiative. While he has been generous in providing such gains, America's mercurial president has already shown that, once crossed, he is willing to use his Twitter account as a weapon of mass destruction and to unleash his wrath even against traditional U.S. allies, such as Canada, France, and Germany.

Exercising such U.S. leverage on Israel would not be unprecedented. In 1974, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger announced a "reassessment" of U.S.-Israeli relations when then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin refused at first to make the concessions necessary for reaching a second disengagement agreement with Egypt in the aftermath of the 1973 War. Similarly, under the presidency of George H. W. Bush, the U.S. withheld 10 billion dollars of U.S. government loan guarantees necessary for absorbing a million Soviet refugees in order to compel Israel to halt settlement construction.

The U.S. also exercised leverage in 1999–2000 to compel Israel to avoid exporting sensitive military technology—especially the Phalcon Airborne Warning and Command System—to China. And in recent weeks, even the Trump administration began to threaten sanctioning Israel over this same issue. Thus, visiting Israel on March 21, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issued a stark warning that the close security ties between the two countries—especially in the realm of intelligence sharing and co-location of security facilities—could be reduced over Israel's growing cooperation with China. "If certain systems go in certain places," Pompeo remarked to Israeli television, "then America's efforts to work alongside you will be more difficult, and in some cases, we won't be able to do so."[3]

Palestinian Domestic Conditions

How would the current Palestinian domestic environment affect the odds that the Trump initiative would succeed or fail? For more than a year now, the PA and all other Palestinian factions have waged a pre-emptive political campaign against the Trump administration and its efforts to present a peace plan. This campaign has been largely propelled by the perception of most, if not all, Palestinians that the U.S. is siding fully with the Netanyahu government and that it has taken the Jerusalem and refugees issues off the table. Thus, a March 2019 poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research shows that up to 80 percent or more of Palestinians do not expect the

Trump plan to meet any of the top vital Palestinian needs in any peace agreement.[4] This has led to the "ultimate deal" (touted by Trump as the "deal of the century") being referred to by Palestinians as a *curse*—and it is so referred to by various Palestinian players as a way of discrediting their opponents, regardless of who they are.

One of the consequences of this environment is the unavoidable negative framing that will accompany the release of the plan: Even if it includes many positive elements for the Palestinians, its release will be met with great suspicion if not its out-of-hand rejection. Indeed, the same recent PSR poll indicates that more than 50 percent of Palestinians would reject a Trump peace plan even if it meets their top vital needs.[5]

The domestic Palestinian environment is indeed a substantially negative one with respect to any possible peace proposal. To begin with, there is considerable public distrust in Abbas's leadership, with 61 to 70 percent of the public wanting him to resign and only about a quarter of respondents in recent surveys viewing him as a credible leader who keeps his word.[6] Up to 80 percent of respondents fully disagree with his entire Gaza policy (sanctions; demand for immediate and full, rather than gradual and partial, transfer of control; demand to disarm Hamas).[7] The PA's and Abbas's legitimacy are also questioned on account of the expiration of Abbas's electoral mandate and that of the Palestinian Legislative Council some years ago. In turn, this lack of legitimacy reduces the willingness of non-Fatah factions and the public at large to defer to the PA leadership.

The split between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, along with the measures imposed by Abbas in early 2018 against Gaza,[8] are widely seen as having damaged national unity, thereby making it difficult for Palestinians to develop more coherent responses to possible peace proposals. Thus, Hamas will surely frame the expected Trump initiative in the most negative possible terms and might even resort to violence to impede its possible acceptance or implementation. And the split will make it even more difficult to conduct elections that would either produce a new leadership or grant legitimacy and a renewed mandate to the existing one.

Palestinian civil society and the public at large are very critical of Abbas, seeing him as having dissolved the Palestinian Legislative Council in clear violation of the Basic Law and as having weakened the judiciary by dismissing the Chief Justice and appointing a new one without any basis in law. Other controversial steps that Abbas has taken include proposing amendments to change the Judiciary Law in order to deprive it of its independence; interfering in judicial decisions; and creating a political court, dubbed a Constitutional Court, with powers exceeding those of the High Court—which had served in the past *as* a constitutional court. Abbas has also attacked freedom of the press (via the Cyber Crime Law) and arrested journalists and activists for negative media reports or negative posts on social media. He has also weakened civil society and destroyed its independence and pluralism by requiring NGOs to seek permission before receiving funding for research or other purposes.[9]

The effects of these negative developments have been compounded by a significant hardening of Palestinian public attitudes on issues related to peacemaking. This can be seen most clearly in sharply decreased support for the two-state solution and increased support for a one-state solution; decreased willingness to support the compromises that would be necessary in any resolution of the various issues subject to permanent status negotiations; and greater support for violence, particularly on the part of youth.[10]

Several developments have contributed to this negative trajectory. First, the viability of the two-state solution is seen as having declined as a result of Israeli settlement expansion and other factors. Today, about 60 percent of Palestinians believe that Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank has made it impossible to separate the two peoples into two states. Developments in Israel, such as the outcomes of national elections during the past decade, are seen as having further strengthened right-wing and hardline tendencies that deny the legitimacy of Palestinian aspirations to independence and self-determination. Perceptions that the Arab world no longer cares about the Palestinian cause and that the Trump administration is wholly committed to Israel's right-wing agenda have contributed to growing Palestinian despair. As a result, some 75 percent of Palestinians now believe that the chances for a Palestinian state emerging alongside the state of Israel are slim or non-existent.[11]

A second driver of the hardening of Palestinian attitudes is public distrust of the Israeli Jewish side. An overwhelming majority view what it sees as Israel's long-term aspirations—annexing the West Bank and expelling its population or denying them their civil and political rights—as existential threats. Most Palestinians believe that most Israelis do not want peace and do not support a two-state solution.

Finally, the Palestinian public's questioning of the legitimacy of their own political system—concerns

about the status of their governance and the future of a Palestinian transition to democracy—are on the rise. This is important because public opinion data show a correlation between Palestinians' negative evaluation of the status of democracy in the PA and reduced support for the two-state solution.[12]

Nevertheless, the domestic Palestinian environment is not entirely negative. On the positive side, Abbas's own positions on three main sets of issues—the terms of a peace agreement, violence against Israelis, and normalization and reconciliation with Israel and the Israeli public—remain moderate. And though there are various rumors and claims with respect to his health, no evidence exists pointing to any serious illness. Finally, despite suffering a significant loss of public trust, Abbas remains quite popular and trusted within Fatah ranks, and his control and influence vis-à-vis the Fatah leadership remain highly effective.

For its part, Fatah is still the Palestinian party pushing for negotiating peace and reconciliation with Israel. It remains relatively strong, with approximately 35–40 percent of the Palestinian public supporting it. More broadly, the balance of power within the Palestinian domestic scene continues to favor nationalist securalist forces, comprised of Fatah and leftist factions (some 50 percent), as opposed to Hamas and other Islamists (totaling some 30 percent), with a minority of some 20 percent remaining "undecided."[13]

For this reason, it is so important that Fatah's elite remains strongly behind Abbas on matters dealing with Israel, the U.S., and the peace process, despite some disagreement with him on details. Consequentially, should Abbas decide to return to negotiations based on the Trump plan, he will be supported by the entire Fatah leadership and base.

A final positive aspect of the Palestinian internal environment is the strong and effective security sector, which has achieved a notable level of professionalism. This allows it not only to continue to enforce order and to secure and protect Abbas, but also to continue security cooperation with the Israeli defense and intelligence establishments so long as Abbas continues to instruct them to do so.

The Israeli Domestic Environment

The receptivity on the Israeli domestic side to renewed peace efforts looks equally troubling. As is the case with Palestinians, support for a two-state solution among Israelis has declined considerably: from 68 percent in 2006 to 49 percent in June 2018.[14] This is the lowest level of support for this concept among Israelis in more than a decade—when a steady decline in support began—and the lowest in almost two decades of joint Palestinian-Israeli survey research.

The most troubling aspect of the decline in the level of support for the two-state solution among Israeli Jews is that young people—between the ages of 18 and 24—are the least supportive of the idea. Thus, only 27 percent of Israeli youth, compared with 51 percent of those who are 55 years or older, are currently supportive of this approach.[15] And the future may bring even lower levels of support for this solution.

Another facet of this decline in support for a two-state solution, from a solid majority to a mere plurality, is the growing gap between the supporters and opponents of a peace deal with respect to the *intensity* with which their opposing opinions are held. One of the most important consequences of the failed peace efforts and recurring eruptions of violence since the signing of the 1993 Oslo Accords has been a decline in the confidence among supporters of a two-state solution in the viability of their still preferred policy option. Not surprisingly, opponents of a two-state solution have repeatedly demonstrated greater commitment, superior mobilization, and better organization than have the proponents of this solution. This also explains why those opposed to a two-state framework—especially the Israeli settler community—seem to have succeeded in setting the country's agenda, even as their views have never been held by the majority of Israelis.

This points to a broader proposition: namely, that changes in policy preferences can be affected by assessments of feasibility and viability even when no discernible change in public opinion regarding basic relevant values has taken place. This is reflected in a recent survey conducted by the Van Leer Institute in cooperation with the Citizens Accord Forum and the Shaharit Institute. Seventy-one percent of Jewish Israeli respondents opined that "there is a moral problem with Israel's control over the Palestinians"; when the question invoked biblical terms (for the West Bank), an even higher number—78 percent—believe that "control over the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria is not good for Israel." So why do those large majorities not support changing what they perceive to be a negative reality? The answer is that fully 66 percent of the same respondents think that, as the *Jerusalem Post* puts it, "there is no alternative at present."[16]

This hardening of views among Israelis about the prospects of peace with their Palestinian neighbors seems to currently guide Israel's political elite as it navigates the turbulent waters of the 2019 elections. Long gone are the days in 1996-99 when, in his first term as prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu negotiated with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at least two important implementation agreements within the framework of the Oslo Accords: the 1997 Hebron Agreement and the 1998 Wye River Accords. Also gone are Netanyahu's pledges to a two-state solution, such as the much-touted speech he delivered on June 14, 2009, at Bar Ilan University, in which he expressed his support for and commitment to this solution. All such references are absent from Likud's Netanyahu-controlled 2019 election campaign.

Equally indicative of this negative change in support for a two-state solution is that references to a two-state solution are equally absent from the rhetoric of the leaders of the centrist challenge to Likud in these elections: the Blue-White alliance headed by former IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. (ret.) Benny Gantz. Indeed, so far Gantz has shown remarkable discipline in avoiding any expression of support for this solution, an omission that was especially noteworthy in his recent meeting with Ambassadors representing European Union member states.[17] Not surprisingly, the Blue-White alliance's platform published in early March has engaged in verbal acrobatics, stating the need to preserve Israel's character as a Jewish state by "separating from the Palestinians" while "avoiding disengagement" from the areas where those same Palestinians reside.[18]

Such verbal gymnastics demonstrate two things: first, that even Likud's centrist opponents are not fully committed to a deal based on a two-state framework. And second, that those who have crafted the Blue-White alliance's campaign strategy assess support for a two-state solution as weak even among their target audience and constituency—the center of Israel's political map—and hence as of insufficient size to merit the adoption of such a goal as a core aspiration.

The aforementioned characteristics of the current Israeli domestic political reality are likely to be reflected in the composition and leanings of the next Israeli Knesset. For the moment, the two blocs—the Likud-led Right and Ultra-Right and the Blue-White-led Center-Left and Left—seem destined to divide the Knesset roughly equally. But dividing the expected post-April 9 Knesset composition this way ignores the fact that even if the Center-Left and Left bloc wins a small post-election majority, it would only be able to prevent the Center-Right and Right camp from governing by essentially constituting a "veto bloc" that could win repeated "no confidence" votes in the Knesset. It would not be able to form a governing coalition, as its majority would rest on non-Zionist Arab parties that Blue-White has excluded as potential partners.

A second reason why seeing the two blocs as enjoying roughly equal size may be misleading is that at least one faction within the Blue-White alliance—Telem, headed by former IDF Chief of Staff and former Minister of Defense Moshe (Bogi) Yaalon—might just as well be counted as belonging to the Likud-led Right and Ultra-Right camp. This faction includes not only individuals who, like Yaalon, believe that Israel currently lacks a Palestinian partner able to conclude and implement a two-state deal, but also some—like former journalist Yoaz Hendel—who are firmly opposed *to* such a deal on ideological grounds. Telem is amply represented in the Blue-White list of candidates to the Knesset, so its possible defection in response to a Trump-proposed peace deal would deprive any potential Center-Left and Left coalition of its numerical majority.

And a third reason why the assessment that popular support for the Likud-led and Blue-White-led blocs is roughly equal may be misleading is that it ignores an important aspect of current Israeli political reality: the much greater commitment of Likud followers as opposed to those who say they intend to vote for Blue-White. In a recent opinion poll, almost 70 percent of those who stated their intention to vote for Likud said they are certain that they would do so; in sharp contrast, only 38 percent of respondents who said they intended to vote for Blue-White expressed similar certainty.[19] This is a reflection of the broader phenomenon noted earlier: namely, the asymmetry in the intensity with which views are held about the Center-Right and the Center-Left. On Election Day, this disparity may translate to a gap in turnout between those currently expressing their support for each of the two camps.

Finally, predictions based on these aspects of the Israeli domestic scene as to how Israel might react to a Trump peace initiative understate the uncertainty regarding what this scene might look like through the rest of 2019. Much of this uncertainty is associated with Netanyahu's legal predicaments and their possible political ramifications. Thus, while public support for Netanyahu is currently roughly equal to that of Gantz, in a recent survey, more than two-thirds of Israelis opined that Netanyahu should leave office either now or if he is actually indicted.[20] As of this writing, an indictment is quite likely to materialize following a hearing now set by Israel's attorney general for July. Even if Netanyahu's

continued tenure were legally possible—his ardent supporters will surely argue that he should be considered innocent until proven guilty—it would prove politically impossible, as a growing number of Likud leaders who for now continue to "circle the wagons" will increasingly see his leadership as a political liability.

Yet the political ramifications of Netanyahu's possible departure from the Israeli political scene are far from certain. The loss of a charismatic leader may well lead to a weakening of the Center-Right and Right bloc. But Netanyahu's departure would just as likely reopen a competition within that bloc with respect to who would represent a more "authentic Right" leader—and such a competition might well produce a further hardening of views among the bloc's supporters, as leaders who have situated themselves to the right of Netanyahu make possibly compelling cases for their positions. Moreover, Netanyahu's replacement by a Likud leader like Gideon Sa'ar, who is seen as clean of corruption, might actually strengthen the Right. All of this may make Israel's Center-Right even less open to the compromises that would have to be made in the framework of a Trump-proposed peace initiative.

Adding Incentives?

While these portraits of the Palestinian and Israeli domestic scenes do not justify optimistic assessments of the odds that the "ultimate deal" can succeed, there are some measures that the Trump administration could take to decrease the odds of a swift rejection by Palestinians or Israelis or both. The first, assuming that the proposed deal does indeed meet the minimum requirements of both sides, is to accompany the deal with a set of incentives that will address associated issues about which Israelis and Palestinians care. On the Palestinian side, surveys show that gaining the Palestinians' support for a deal to a level that exceeds two-thirds could be achieved by suggesting that its implementation would be associated with a total release of Palestinian prisoners. This incentive alone is likely to cause over half of the opposition to change their minds and support an agreement, thereby increasing support for a comprehensive deal to some 70 percent.[21]

A similar effect might be achieved by associating the deal with Palestinian access to the Israeli labor market and by promising free movement for the two peoples between the two states. Intangible incentives, such as an Israeli acknowledgment of the historic and religious roots of the Palestinians in historic Palestine and recognition of the Arab and Islamic character of the Palestinian state, might have a comparable impact.[22]

Similarly, Israeli public support could be increased by associating the core deal with Palestinians changing textbooks to remove incitement against Jews, by the U.S. offering a defense treaty with Israel, and by Arab countries agreeing to provide some compensation to Israeli Jews who left property behind when they immigrated to Israel after 1948. Indeed, research shows that a combination of any two such incentives could increase support for a deal among Israeli Jews to more than 60 percent.[23] Intangible incentives, such as Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish state and an acknowledgment of the Jewish historic and religious ties to the land, might also have a significant impact.

A second set of steps that the Trump administration could take to significantly increase support for the proposed deal is to mobilize key Sunni Arab states to present Israel and the Palestinians with a linked, regional economic development and integration plan. The plan should be rolled out with great drama while making it clear that its implementation and expected benefits, including regional prosperity, would remain contingent on Palestinian and Israeli acceptance of the "ultimate deal," at least as a basis for detailed negotiations.

Closing Remarks

The Trump administration's "ultimate deal" will be dead on arrival unless its core content meets the minimum requirements of both sides. Yet any assessment of the administration's conduct toward Israel and the Palestinians over the past two years cannot avoid the prediction that the proposed deal will most likely fail to meet the Palestinians' minimal requirements. What remains to be seen is whether or not it will also fail to meet the Israelis' minimal requirements.

It is more difficult to assess how the plan will fare regarding the second determinant of the odds that it will succeed or fail: the reaction of key Arab leaders. This is because it seems that, as of this writing, the plan has yet to be shared with these U.S. allies. Under these conditions, no Arab leader will be willing to lend support for the plan should Abbas reject and dismiss it out of hand. Furthermore, given the track record of the Trump administration's imbalanced treatment of Israel and the Palestinians, it is likely that any U.S. leverage will target the Palestinians but not Israel. Yet imposing additional sanctions against the Palestinians will bring the PA to the verge of collapse.

Any attempt to assess the likely reactions among Israelis and Palestinians to Trump's much-anticipated "ultimate

deal" to resolve their conflict must take the full array of considerations presented here into account. Yet the multiplicity of these different considerations, combined with uncertainty as to their relative weight, will make any such assessment speculative at best. On the one hand, especially within both the Palestinian and Israeli domestic arenas, there has been a considerable hardening of views about the conflict, making the two publics deeply and increasingly skeptical of a deal, even if they are not ideologically opposed to one. At the same time, research has shown that such skepticism might be overcome by adding incentives to the proposed deal that address what Israelis and Palestinians respectively care about most.

Moreover, as we have pointed out, much of the hardening of views in both camps in recent years has stemmed not from changes in ideological predispositions but rather from the cumulative effect of political and military developments on both peoples' assessments of the viability of peace proposals. But, if this is the case, would *not* a peace plan dramatically presented by the president of the United States and supported by key Arab state leaders change Israelis' and Palestinians' assessments regarding the feasibility of an alternative to current policies?

Endnotes

1   See the full transcript of Jared Kushner's interview with Sky News Arabia TV on February 25, 2019.

2   Fares Akram, "Rare Protests Erupt against Hamas' 12-Year Rule over Gaza," *Associated Press*, March 19, 2019.

3   Joel Gehrke, "Pompeo: China Threatens US-Israel Intelligence Sharing," *Washington Examiner*, March 21, 2019.

4   Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Public Opinion Poll No (71), March 19, 2019, (See "6) Trump's Peace Plan.").

5   Ibid.

6   Between December 2017 and December 2018, public demand for Abbas's resignation ranged between 61% and 70%. For Palestinian polls during this period, see "Index PSR Polls."

7   Ibid.

8   See Israel Hayom, "Abbas Planning to Impose Additional Sanctions on Gaza," *The Algemeiner*, September 28, 2018.

9   Khalil Shikaki, "The PA in 2019: Challenges and Sources of Threat" (Ramallah: Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Strategic Analysis Unit, Critical Policy Brief, Number 1, February 2019).

10   Khalil Shikaki and Dahlia Scheindlin, "Role of Public Opinion in the Resilience/Resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict" (Ramallah: Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Palestinian-Israeli Pulse: A Joint Poll (2016–2018): Final Report, December 2018), pp. 2–3.

11   Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Public Opinion Poll No (71), March 19, 2019, (See "5) The peace process.").

12   For example, analysis of PSR's March 2018 poll shows a correlation between positive assessment of Palestinian democracy and a higher level of support for the two-state solution: Among those who assessed Palestinian democracy as good or very good, support for that solution stood at 63%, while among those who assessed Palestinian democracy as bad or very bad, support dropped to 41%. See Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Public Opinion Poll No (67), March 27, 2018.

13   For the most recent data on the domestic Palestinian balance of power, see Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, Public Opinion Poll No (71).

14   Shikaki and Scheindlin, "Role of Public Opinion in the Resilience/Resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," p. 2.

15   Ibid.

16   Maariv Online, "71% of Israeli Jews Find Israeli Control over the Palestinians Immoral," *Jerusalem Post*, March 15, 2019.

17   Yisrael Price, "Gantz Sidesteps Two-State Solution in E.U. Meeting," *Hamodia*, March 12, 2019.

18   Yuval Karni, "Without a Palestinian State and with Transportation on Shabbat: Blue-White's Platform Uncovered" (Bli medina palestinit ve'im tachbura beshabat: matza'a kahol levan nechsaf) *Ynet*, March 6, 2019, [in Hebrew].

19   Yossi Verter, "Haaretz Election Poll: Support for Gantz Drops Dramatically, Right-wing Bloc in the Lead," *Haaretz*, March 11, 2019.

20   "Poll Shows Two-Thirds of Israelis Think Netanyahu Should Resign if Indicted," *Times of Israel*, March 1, 2019.

21   Shikaki and Scheindlin, "Role of Public Opinion in the Resilience/Resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," p. 8.

22   Ibid.

23   Ibid., p. 9.

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