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Poll: Large Majority of Palestinians Want Immediate Elections

Palestine News Network

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A large majority of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank support holding immediate presidential and legislative elections, a new poll published Thursday said.

The poll, by the Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) and reported by WAFA, said 95% of Gaza residents and 82% of West Bank residents support the holding of immediate legislative and presidential elections.

The results found that support for Fatah is back to the same level as it was in July 2012 and reached 42%, up from 37% in December 2012, while support for Hamas has declined by four percentage points to 18% since December.

Approval rate for President Mahmoud Abbas stood at 58% in the new poll compared to 45% for Hamas leader in Gaza Ismail Haniyeh. Approval rate for Prime Minister Salam Fayyad stood at 39%.

In a two-way presidential race, Abbas could receive 64% of the votes compared to 36% for Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal or Haniyeh.

For the position of a prime minister in a national unity government, 28% prefer Haniyeh while 23% prefer Fayyad.

Fayyad is more popular in Gaza than in the West Bank, so is Fatah, according to the poll results.

The poll said 68% of respondents support a return to negotiations with Israel if it were to stop settlement building in the West Bank.

At the same time, 69% said popular protest activities such as the erection of the Bab al-Shams camp could have real impact on ending the Israeli occupation, while at the same time 65% said they oppose a new Intifada.

The belief that the UN vote admitting Palestine as a non-member observer state has advanced the Palestinian cause declined from 68% to 44%.

The poll included 1200 Palestinians from around the West Bank and Gaza from across socioeconomic groups. It has a margin of error of 3 percentage points.

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