

Support for two-state solution drops to historic low

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Support for a two-state solution among Israelis and Palestinians has dropped to a record low following years of a moribund peace process and several rounds of violent military confrontation.

According to a new poll conducted by Tel Aviv University and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) in Ramallah, only 43 percent of Israelis Jews and Palestinians are in favor of such a negotiated end to the conflict, a decline of 9 and 8 points since 2016, respectively.

Support for a two-state solution has been steadily eroding among Jews and Palestinians for a decade, the pollsters noted, although among Israeli Arabs support has largely remained “stable and very high” at 82 percent.

A total of 2,150 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and 1,600 Israelis were polled on their views of a hypothetical peace deal consisting of a de-militarized Palestinian state, an Israeli withdrawal to the Green Line with equal territorial exchange, family unification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees, West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall under Israeli sovereignty and the Muslim and Christian quarters and the al Haram al Sharif/Temple Mount under Palestinian sovereignty, and the end of the conflict and claims.

Only 37 percent of Palestinians and 39 percent of Israeli Jews stated that they supported such an agreement. Nineteen percent of Israeli Jews expressed support for a unitary state with equal rights for both Jews and Palestinians while 15 percent voiced their approval of annexation without rights. Eight percent supported expulsion of the Palestinians.

“A plurality or a majority of Israelis and Palestinians, respectively, believe that settlements have expanded so much that the two-state solution is no longer viable,” the pollsters wrote. “Large majorities on both sides believe the other side is untrustworthy. The perceived lack of feasibility and the lack of trust are closely connected to opposition to the plan. Findings also show a net decline over the last two years in the percentage of Israeli Jews and Palestinians who think the other

side wants peace.”

Between Jews and Arabs, nearly half of Israelis believe that a two-state solution is still viable, although 45 percent believe that settlements have spread too much to implement such an agreement. While Israeli Arabs remained highly optimistic, with 64 percent thinking this solution remained viable, only 44 percent of Israeli Jews agreed with this assessment.

Overall, trust between the two sides seems to have broken down nearly completely, with only a quarter of Israeli Jews trusting Palestinians and 11 percent of Palestinians reciprocating that trust. Both sides are extremely skeptical that a Palestinian state will be established in the next five years, with 72 percent of Palestinians and 81 percent of Israeli Jews stating that they do not expect this to happen.

The poll, which had a margin of error of 2.5 percent, was supported by the United Nations, European Union and Japan.

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