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Obama's Middle East Trip

Public Remains Supportive of Israel, Wary of Iran

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Obama's Middle East Trip Public Remains Supportive of Israel, Wary of Iran

As Barack Obama arrives in the Middle East this week, the sympathies of the American public remain firmly with Israel in its dispute with the Palestinians. And when it comes to Iran, the public continues to say it is more important to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons than to avoid a military conflict.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted March 13-17 among 1,501 adults, finds that 49% say they sympathize more with Israel, while just 12% sympathize more with the Palestinians and the same percentage (12%) volunteers that they sympathize with neither side.

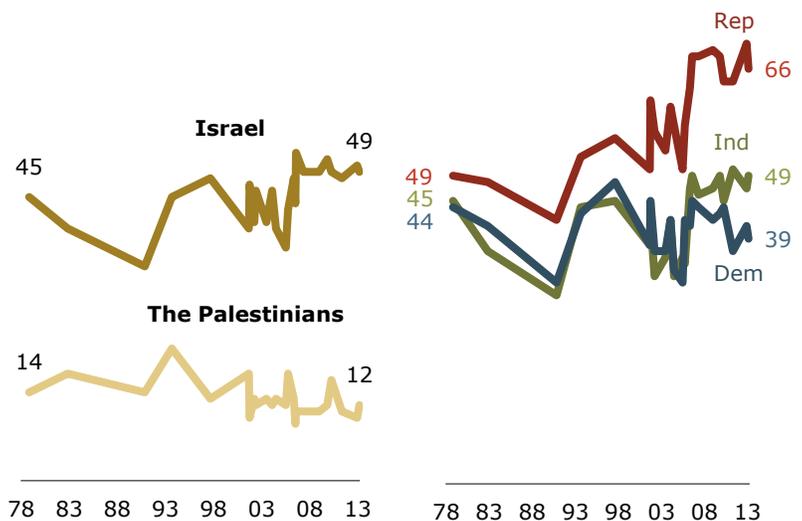
Dating back to 1978, just prior to the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, the public has consistently sympathized more with Israel than the Palestinians. But the partisan differences in sympathies are much wider today than they were 35 years ago.

In the current survey, 66% of Republicans say they sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians, compared with 49% of independents and 39% of Democrats. In the 1978 survey, conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 49% of Republicans, 45% of independents and 44% of Democrats sympathized more with Israel than the Palestinians.

35 Years of Middle East Sympathies

In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, who do you sympathize with more?

Sympathize more with Israel by party



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.
1978-1990 Data from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.
1993-2013 Pew Research Center.

The survey finds that 21% of Americans say that Obama favors the Palestinians too much while 9% say he favors Israel too much; 41% say he is striking the right balance in the situation in the Middle East. The percentage saying Obama favors the Palestinians too much has changed little over the past four years.

About four-in-ten Republicans (39%) say Obama favors the Palestinians too much. That compares with 22% of independents and just 7% of Democrats.

Many Republicans Say Obama Favors Palestinians Too Much

<i>Thinking about Middle East situation, Obama is ...</i>	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Favoring Israel too much	9	6	9	10
Favoring the Palestinians too much	21	39	7	22
Striking right balance	41	24	59	40
Don't know	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>28</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Public Willing to Consider Force to Thwart Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

Opinions about the use of military action to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons also have not changed much in recent years. Currently, 64% say it is more important to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, even if it means taking military action; 25% say it is more important to avoid a military conflict with Iran, even if it means they may develop nuclear weapons.

Majority Favors Stopping Iran's Nuclear Program, Even If It Means Military Action

<i>More important to ...</i>	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons even if means taking military action	64	80	62	59
Avoid military conflict even if Iran may develop nuclear weapons	25	14	25	32
Other/Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17,
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.2013.

Majorities across nearly all demographic groups say it is more important to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, even if it means taking military action. Still, Republicans (80%) are more likely to express this view than either Democrats (62%) or independents (59%).

Middle East Sympathies

As in the past, there are sizable religious as well as partisan differences in Middle East sympathies. Fully 72% of white evangelical Protestants sympathize more with Israel, while just 8% say either that they sympathize more with the Palestinians (4%) or say they sympathize with neither Israel nor the Palestinians (4%). Most white Catholics (59%) also sympathize more with Israel. But just 37% of white mainline Protestants and 35% of the religiously unaffiliated sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians.

Two-thirds of Republicans (66%) sympathize more with Israel, compared with 49% of independents and 39% of Democrats.

Age also is a factor in Middle East sympathies: Just 36% of those younger than 30 sympathize more with Israel, while 19% sympathize more with the Palestinians. A relatively large share of young people (37%) either offer no opinion (34%) or say they sympathize with both sides (3%). Among older age groups, there is more support for Israel: 47% of those 30 to 49 sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians, as do majorities of those 50 to 64 (59%) and 65 and older (54%).

Young People Less Likely to Sympathize More with Israel

	<i>Sympathize more with ...</i>			
	Israel	Pales- tinians	Neither	Both/ DK
	%	%	%	%
Total	49	12	12	27=100
18-29	36	19	8	37=100
30-49	47	11	14	28=100
50-64	59	11	13	18=100
65+	54	8	10	28=100
Republican	66	5	7	22=100
Democrat	39	17	14	29=100
Independent	49	14	11	26=100
Protestant	56	10	9	25=100
White evangelical	72	4	4	20=100
White mainline	37	13	13	37=100
Catholic	46	9	16	29=100
White Catholic	59	6	16	19=100
Unaffiliated	35	17	15	33=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.
Whites include only those who are not Hispanic.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 13-17, 2013, among a national sample of 1,501 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (750 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone and 751 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 385 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by Abt SRBI. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about the survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2011 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2012 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,501	2.9 percentage points
Form 1	749	4.2 percentage points
Republican	225	7.6 percentage points
Democrat	241	7.3 percentage points
Independent	233	7.5 percentage points
Form 2	752	4.2 percentage points
Republican	195	8.2 percentage points
Democrat	246	7.3 percentage points
Independent	265	7.0 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 2013 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
March 13-17, 2013
N=1,501

QUESTIONS 1, 5-7, 15, 18, 20-24, EMPLOY2, 26-29, OWNRENT, MORTGAGE, MORTGAGE2, 35-38, 45-48, 56-57, 61-63a, 65 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

NO QUESTIONS 2-4, 8-14, 16-17, 19, 25, 30-34, 39-44, 49-55, 58-60, 64, 66-69

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=749]:

On another subject...

Q.70F1 In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, which side do you sympathize with more, Israel or the Palestinians?¹

	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Palestinians</u>	<u>(VOL.) Both</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
Mar 13-17, 2013	49	12	3	12	24
Dec 5-9, 2012	50	10	4	13	23
May 25-30, 2011	48	11	4	15	21
Apr 21-26, 2010	49	16	4	12	19
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	51	12	4	14	19
January 7-11, 2009	49	11	5	15	20
May, 2007	49	11	5	17	18
August, 2006	52	11	5	15	17
July, 2006	44	9	5	20	22
May, 2006	48	13	4	14	20
Late October, 2005	43	17	5	16	19
July, 2005	37	12	5	19	27
July, 2004	40	13	7	18	22
Late February, 2004	46	12	8	15	19
April, 2002	41	13	6	21	19
Mid-October, 2001	47	10	8	18	17
Early September, 2001	40	17	6	23	14
September, 1997	48	13	5	16	18
September, 1993	45	21	3	18	12
Chicago CFR 1990	34	14	7	26	20
Chicago CFR 1982	40	17	8	19	16
Chicago CFR 1978 ²	45	14	9	18	15

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=749]:

Q.71F1 Thinking about the situation in the Middle East these days, do you think Barack Obama is **[RANDOMIZE: favoring Israel too much; favoring the Palestinians too much]** or striking about the right balance?³

<u>Mar 13-17 2013</u>		<u>May 25-28 2011</u>	<u>Apr 21-26 2010</u>	<u>Oct 28-Nov 8 2009</u>	<u>Jun 10-14 2009</u>
9	Favoring Israel too much	6	7	7	6
21	Favoring the Palestinians too much	21	21	16	17
41	Striking about the right balance	50	47	51	62
29	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	24	25	26	14

NO QUESTIONS 72

¹ Data from December 2011 not shown because of differences in questionnaire context.

² In the 1978 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations survey conducted by the Gallup Organization, results are based on respondents who said they had "heard or read about the situation in the Middle East", which represented 87% of the public. As a context note, in both the 1978 and 1982 CCFR/Gallup surveys, this question followed a broader question: "In the Middle East situation, are your sympathies more with Israel or more with the Arab nations?" and in 1982, a question regarding "U.S. military aid and arms sales to Israel".

³ Data from September 2011 not shown because of differences in questionnaire context.

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:

On another subject...

Q.73F2 In your opinion, which is more important **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

Mar 13-17 <u>2013</u>		Feb 8-12 <u>2012</u>	Sep 30- Oct 4 <u>2009</u>
64	To prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, even if it means taking military action	58	61
25	To avoid a military conflict with Iran, even if it means they may develop nuclear weapons	30	24
3	Neither (VOL.)	2	4
1	Both (VOL.)	1	1
7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	10	10

NO QUESTIONS 74-76, 78-84, 93-97**QUESTIONS 77, 85-92 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****QUESTIONS RELIG, ATTEND, 98-102 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Mar 13-17, 2013	26	33	34	3	1	3	14	15
Feb. 13-18, 2013	22	32	41	2	*	2	15	19
Jan 9-13, 2013	25	32	38	2	*	2	15	16
Dec 17-19, 2012	21	32	38	4	*	4	15	14
Dec 5-9, 2012	23	33	38	3	1	2	14	19
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012	26	34	34	3	1	3	13	16
Oct 24-28, 2012	28	33	33	4	*	2	12	16
Oct 4-7, 2012	27	31	36	3	1	3	15	15
Sep 12-16, 2012	24	35	36	2	*	2	14	16
Jul 16-26, 2012	22	33	38	4	*	3	14	15
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	24	33	37	3	*	3	15	17
Jun 7-17, 2012	24	33	39	2	*	2	17	17
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	24	32	36	4	*	4	13	14
Apr 4-15, 2012	24	31	39	3	*	2	15	15
Mar 7-11, 2012	24	34	36	3	1	2	16	17
Feb 8-12, 2012	26	32	36	4	1	2	13	17
Yearly Totals								
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	<i>Lean Rep</i>	<i>Lean Dem</i>
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1) [N=623]:

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

Mar 13-17 <u>2013</u>		Feb 13-18 <u>2013</u>	Jan 9-13 <u>2013</u>
43	Agree	36	35
7	Disagree	9	10
47	No opinion either way	52	51
1	Haven't heard of (VOL.)	1	2
1	Refused (VOL.)	3	2

Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:

(U)	Pew Research Center/USA Today polls
(WP)	Pew Research Center/Washington Post polls
(SDT)	Pew Research Center's Social and Demographic Trends project
(PIAL)	Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life project