

## Conversation Guide: Palestinian Public Opinion in the Aftermath of October 7



**Dr. Khalil Shikaki** was born and raised in Rafah, in Gaza. He is the founder and Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research based in Ramallah and a visiting scholar at the Crown Center at Brandeis University.

On November 7th 2023, Encounter hosted a conversation with Dr. Shikaki regarding Palestinian public opinion in a post-October 7th world. [Click here to listen to the audio.](#)

### Themes to Explore

**Openness to Compromise:** Dr. Shikaki shared that one of the most surprising findings in his most recent survey, which concluded on October 6, was that Gazans were more dovish than other Palestinians groups, as expressed through a significant drop in support for Hamas and greater openness to compromise and make concessions. **What do you make of these findings?**

**Denial:** A key observation Dr. Shikaki speaks about is that many Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank do not believe that Hamas committed the atrocious acts of October 7, and instead are convinced that the images and stories they do see are fake news. **What did you think and feel as you listened to him speak about this phenomenon?**

**Violence and Hope:** One of Dr. Shikaki's key findings is that exposure to violence tends to increase support for violence – whereas when Palestinians are offered alternative pathways to achieve their goals, support for violence dramatically decreases. He also speaks about the powerful role hope can play in reducing support for violence. **Amidst this incredibly difficult time, where have you experienced even small glimpses of hope for a different path forward?**

### Recommended Resources

**Read:** [What Palestinians Really Think About Hamas](#), Foreign Affairs, *October 25, 2023*

**Read:** [Where the Palestinian Political Project Goes from Here](#), The New Yorker, *October 11, 2023*

**Listen:** [She Polled Gazans on October 6. Here's What She Found](#), The Ezra Klein Show, *November 3, 2023*

**Explore:** [Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research](#), Directed by Dr. Shikaki, with links to all his recent and older polls