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**Siena New York Global Issues Poll:**

## **82% of NY'ers – “World Conditions Have Worsened”**

*Majority Support Iraq Withdrawal, Talks with Iran, Off-Shore Drilling, Relations with Cuba*

### **McCain vs. Obama: Supporters Live in Different Worlds**

**Loudonville, NY.** As New Yorkers review the last two years, 82% say that conditions across the world have gotten worse. Looking forward, 32% believe that things in general will improve, but a majority says that the political, social and economic climate around the world will either stay the same or worsen according to a new poll of registered voters released today by the Siena Research Institute. By a majority of 58% to 33%, voters support beginning to withdraw troops from Iraq immediately and having all but a small force out of Iraq within 18 months. Nearly twice as many New Yorkers (53%) support direct talks with no preconditions with the leaders of Iran as oppose (27%) that step, two-thirds call for additional offshore drilling, and by 53% to 22% they advocate having normal and open relations with Cuba immediately. Senator Barack Obama leads Senator John McCain 44% to 26% with 25% undecided in the presidential contest. On many global issues, supporters of Obama and McCain are worlds apart.

While a majority of NY'ers support an immediate withdrawal from Iraq and by a margin of 61% to 29% do not support the notion that the United States military should remain in Iraq until that country can democratically govern itself, opinion is widely different between supporters of the two leading presidential contenders. Among those voters that support Obama, support for immediate withdrawal is at 78% and against an indefinite commitment to Iraq's democracy at 82%. Supporters of McCain oppose leaving Iraq 66% to 25% and support a continuing military presence by 2 to 1.

Among voters that would vote for Obama if the election were held today, by nearly 3 ½ to 1 they support direct talks with Iran's leaders; McCain's voters are evenly split on talks with Iran with 45% opposed and 43% in favor. Nearly 90% of the Arizona senator's supporters favor additional offshore oil drilling, but despite a plurality of the presumptive democratic nominee's supporters being in favor of drilling, they fail to reach 50%. By more than 4 to 1 Obama's voters call for immediate relations with Cuba while McCain voters only muster a small plurality, 46% to 32%.

“Obama voters, McCain voters, they just do not see Iraq, Iran and issues like offshore drilling and Cuba the same way,” according to SRI Director, Dr. Don Levy. “In each case the current 25% of voters that are undecided on the presidential race fall between McCain and Obama's supporters on issues. On Iraq the undecideds are closer to the Obama backers; on offshore drilling and Cuba, they lean towards the McCain supporters.”

Seventy-Eight percent of all New Yorkers (91% of McCain backers, 67% of Obama's) agree that although it is important to help people around the world that are in need, our first priority must be to effectively minimize terrorist threats to our country and its interests. But, only 15% of voters (23% of McCain's and 10% of Obama's) support actively spreading democracy to other nations, and 60% (71% of Obama's, 43% of McCain's) of New Yorkers do not think the United States should engage in any foreign wars unless part of a broad multi-nation coalition.

“Although most New Yorkers, especially John McCain's supporters believe it is wiser to be more concerned about Al Qaeda than global warming, a majority, especially Barack Obama's voters, would rather devote resources to fighting hunger and disease around the world than concentrate on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Levy noted. “McCain's supporters by more than 3 to 1 agree that radical Islamic fundamentalism is the greatest danger our country faces in world today, but only 35% of Obama's backers feel the same way. And although a plurality of all New Yorkers, 42% to 35%, feel that the war in Afghanistan is more a threat to Americans than the war in Iraq and that we should increase our military forces in Afghanistan, there is no real difference between Obama's and McCain's supporters on this issue.”

Overall, New Yorkers are evenly split, 36% to 36% with 20% indicating that they do not have enough information, on whether the United States unfairly supports Israel more than the Palestinians. Jewish voters overwhelmingly disagree, McCain supporters tend to disagree while Obama supporters, African-Americans and Hispanic voters tend to agree that the United States unfairly supports Israel. And although a small plurality of Obama voters believe it is time the U.S. recognizes Hamas as the political leadership of the Palestinian people, New Yorkers overall disagree by 34% to 28% and McCain supporters disagree by 49% to 19%.

A majority of New York voters (52% to 35%) agree that it is time we further restrict the number of immigrants that come to the United States. Republicans, McCain supporters, suburbanites, upstaters and older voters strongly support restricting immigration, while Obama supporters, Democrats, and those with a college degree are evenly split.

Large majorities of New Yorkers support imposing sanctions on nations that develop nuclear facilities and refuse international inspections (73% to 14%), and they argue that ending genocide in Darfur should be a top priority of the American government (58% to 21%). A plurality of voters, 45% to 33% feel the United States needs to lessen its financial contribution to the United Nations. Support for lessening the financial contribution to the U.N. is 2 ½ to 1 among McCain backers while Obama supporters disagree and argue against cutting back the contribution by 45% to 32%. A majority of all New Yorkers (58% to 32%) including a majority of both Obama and McCain supporters are in favor of spending money to explore space or other planets.

Overwhelmingly across every demographic New Yorkers (70% to 5%) believe China ought to remove its troops from Tibet and allow that nation to be free and independent. Similarly, 71% of voters support the rights of indigenous, or native, peoples in their struggles against those governments that deny them in their quest for autonomy.

**This SRI survey was conducted July 17-29, 2008 by telephone calls to 671 registered New York State voters. It has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.8$  percentage points. For more information, please call Dr. Don Levy at 518-783-2901. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: [www.Siena.edu/SRI/issues\\_08](http://www.Siena.edu/SRI/issues_08).**