

Get involved?

- Would you like to use the film 'Britain in Palestine, 1917-1948' with its [Companion Guide](#) and invite a speaker from the Balfour Project?



- **Britain's Broken Promise: Time for a New Approach.** Please join us at **Westminster Central Hall on Oct 31st** to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. In words, film and music, it will acknowledge Britain's historic responsibilities in the Middle East. It will offer an opportunity to commit ourselves to support Palestinians and Israelis in building a peaceful future based on equal rights for all.



The **Balfour Project** was created by a group of British citizens to educate the public in our history in Palestine in the first half of the 20th century. If you would like to learn more about this history, do visit the Balfour Project website at: www.balfourproject.org and contact [in-fo@balfourproject.org](mailto:info@balfourproject.org) with your ideas



Balfour Project is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) Charity number SC047090

'While the US struggles to invent its future as an honest broker, Britain might find its relevance in the Arab-Israeli conflict merely by recalling its past: and to tap into its historical knowledge and reclaim its role as a member of the original Palestine triangle.' Natasha Gill, *The Guardian*, March 2010

This leaflet has links to more details. You can read these on your smart phone or tablet simply by scanning the relevant code with a QR reader

Mindful of centuries of European persecution of the Jewish people and the continuing plight of the Palestinian people

THE BALFOUR PROJECT

invites the British government and people to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration on **2nd November 2017** by:

- **learning** what the Balfour Declaration means for both Jews and Arabs
- **acknowledging** that whilst a homeland for the Jewish people has been achieved, the promise to protect the rights of the Palestinian people has not yet been fulfilled.
- **urging** the people and elected representatives of the UK to take effective action to promote justice, security and peace for both peoples.

IN November 1917 the government of Britain issued the Balfour Declaration which promised a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine whilst also promising to protect the rights of the existing indigenous Arab population. However, in 1915 Britain had already promised the Arabs that after the war they would be granted independence in their lands, including Palestine.

Subsequent British governments upheld the promise to create a Jewish homeland but reneged on the promise to protect the rights of the Arab inhabitants. Thus, a homeland for the Jewish people has been achieved but the 'sacred trust' to facilitate Palestinian independence is still to be fulfilled.

Almost a hundred years ago the stage was set for a struggle to control the land that has intensified from that day to this.

The Contradictory Promises

1915 McMahon-Hussein Correspondence

In 1915 Britain promised the Arabs that after the war they would be granted independence in their lands, in exchange for joining a wartime alliance against the Turks.

'With regard to Palestine, His Majesty's Government are committed by Sir H. McMahon's letter to the Sherif on the 24th October, 1915, to its inclusion in the boundaries of Arab independence.'

Political Intelligence Department report, 'Memorandum on British commitments to King Hussein'. 1919



1916 Sykes-Picot



France and Britain made a secret agreement to divide up the Middle East between them going back on the promise to Hussein, even whilst he was being asked to fight for us.

1917 Balfour Declaration

'His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country'



Britain followed through on the first undertaking, but not on the second.



1918 Anglo-French Declaration

Britain and France promised independence to the former subjects of the Ottoman Turks in Syria, Palestine and Iraq.

'The goal envisaged by France and Great Britain the setting up of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the free exercise of the initiative and choice of the indigenous populations.**administrations which those populations will have elected of their own free will.**'

1922 British Mandate



When the League of Nations granted Britain a Mandate to administer Palestine, it included the requirement that the Balfour Declaration should be implemented. But the Mandate also operated under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations which defined -**The Sacred Trust of Civilisation**- the requirement of the Mandatory to prepare the countries under its tutelage for independence. It continued: '**Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised** subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone...'

1939 White Paper

The White Paper proposed an independent state in 10 years time governed by Arabs and Jews according to their numbers in the population.



It also proposed restrictions on Jewish immigration and restrictions on the rights of Jews to buy land from Arabs.



Balfour Project conferences

See: www.balfourproject.org/category/events/

Britain in Palestine 1917-1948

You can view this new 18 minute film at:
www.balfourproject.org/film-of-britain-in-palestine-1917-1948/

