

Sunset over the Empire

Victorians used to boast that the sun never set on the British Empire, but when Britain hands its Asian pearl, Hong Kong, back to China it will end a century and a half of colonial rule. At its height in 1919 the empire covered nearly a quarter of world territory – but now almost all of Britain's former colonial possessions are fully independent

British influence in Middle East and North Africa

1922: Egypt **1946:** Jordan
1948: Israel (*Palestine*) **1956:** Sudan
1961: Kuwait **1967:** Aden, South Yemen
1971: UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman

1947: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh (then East Pakistan)

1948: Sri Lanka (*Ceylon*)

1948: Myanmar (*Burma*)

1957: Malaysia (*Malaya*)

1963: Sarawak, Sabah
 Both join Federation of Malaysia

1965: Singapore

1997: Hong Kong
 Ceded to Britain in 1842.
 Sino-British declaration to return colony to China signed in 1984

1984: Brunei

1975: Papua New Guinea

1968: Nauru

1979: Kiribati

1978: Tuvalu

1970: Fiji, Tonga

1978: Vanuatu, Solomon Islands

1901: Australia. Independent within Commonwealth. British monarch remains head of state – Republicans want to sever ties by 2001

1907: New Zealand. Independent within Commonwealth

1962: Trinidad and Tobago
1966: Barbados

1974: Grenada
1978: Dominica
1979: St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenadines

1981: Antigua and Barbuda
1983: St Kitts and Nevis

1960: Somalia (*British Somaliland*)

1960: Cyprus

1964: Malta

1960: Nigeria, British Cameroon

1957: Ghana (*Gold Coast*)

1965: The Gambia

1961: Sierra Leone

1962: Uganda

1963: Kenya (*British East Africa*)

1961: Tanzania (*Tanganyika*)

1964: Zambia (*Northern Rhodesia*)

1966: Botswana (*Bechuanaland*)
Malawi (*Nyasaland*)

1980: Zimbabwe (*Southern Rhodesia*)

1931: South Africa

1966: Lesotho
1968: Swaziland

1931: Canada. Constitutional independence within Commonwealth. British monarch remains head of state

1981: Belize

1966: Guyana (*British Guiana*)

1973: Bahamas

1962: Jamaica