

Balfour Declaration – historical overview

Ninety years ago, a letter by British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour acknowledged for the first time that Britain favoured the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The *Balfour Declaration*, as it became known, is seen as instrumental in helping set up the state of Israel 31 years later

► **1882-1897:** In response to growing anti-Semitism, European Jews found *Zionist* movement with goal to create Jewish homeland in Palestine

► **1897-1914:** Up to 70,000 Jewish immigrants relocate to Palestine

► **1917:** Balfour commits Britain to work towards “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”

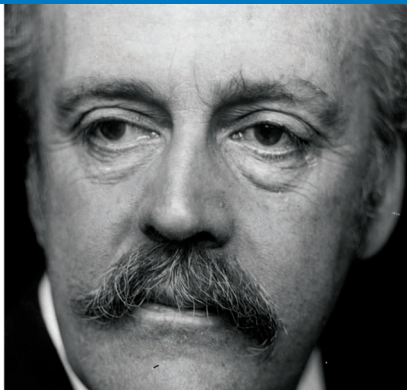
► **1920:** Britain assumes control of Palestine and Transjordan after defeat of Ottoman Empire in World War I



► **1922:** Balfour Declaration accepted by *League of Nations*

► **1936:** Three-year Arab revolt starts, amid anger at rising Jewish immigration and ongoing colonial rule

► **1939-45:** Jewish refugees from Holocaust flood into Palestine during World War II. *Arab League* formed as counterweight to Zionism



► **1947:** Britain hands responsibility for Palestine problem to newly formed *United Nations*. Arabs reject proposed UN partition plan

► **1948:** State of Israel proclaimed, triggering invasion by neighbouring Arab states – repulsed by Israeli forces. Around 700,000 Arabs flee

