

**BRITAIN PALESTINE PROJECT**

# **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

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**Britain  
Palestine  
Project**



Peace with justice, security and equal rights for Israelis and Palestinians

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# STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

**From the 1917 Balfour Declaration through the British Mandate to May 1948, the UK played a formative role in shaping the political and legal framework of Mandatory Palestine. In this time, it failed to safeguard the civil and political rights of the majority non-Jewish population.**

Britain bears heavy responsibility, along with Zionists and neighbouring Arab states, for the dispossession and statelessness of Palestinians following 1948. Britain's responsibilities as the Mandatory Power remain central to understanding its continuing obligations in the face of the atrocities of 7th October against Israelis and the genocidal war waged on Gaza by Israel in response.

Israel was admitted to the United Nations in May 1949 based on commitments to uphold the UN Charter and the right of the 750,000 Palestinian refugees to return home. This history establishes a continuing British responsibility to support a just, equitable and lawful resolution, including one that enables the realisation of Palestinian self-determination in the State of Palestine (the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza) and safeguards the security and recognised existence of the State of Israel.

Today, the rights and security of Israelis depend on the rights and security of Palestinians, and vice versa. In recognising the "rupture" in the international order currently underway, and in recognising the rights of both the State of Palestine and the State of Israel to exist, the Britain Palestine Project (BPP) affirms the following Principles as the foundation of our advocacy:

**1. Ending the occupation and enabling Palestinian sovereignty:** Ending Israel's illegal occupation of the State of Palestine is the overriding priority. Consistent with prevailing international law and UN Security Council resolutions, the State of Palestine is understood as comprising the territory occupied by Israel in June 1967: the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza. There can be no business as usual with an occupying power: occupation and de facto annexation must carry consequences and must not be normalised. UK policy should apply pressure to the State of Israel, to enable the State of Palestine to exercise effective sovereignty. Genuine sovereignty requires full Palestinian control over borders, security, natural resources and all state functions, including taxation, customs, currency, and population and land registries. Measures that entrench or prolong the occupation should be met with proportionate consequences.

**2. Universal application of international law:** International law must be applied consistently and without exception. The same legal principles the UK applies in response to Russia's occupation of Ukraine, or in the pursuit and prosecution of suspected perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in for instance Sudan should apply equally to Israel's occupation of territory of the State of Palestine. Israel's actions in the occupied territory of the State of Palestine must be judged by the legal standards applicable to any state acting beyond its recognised borders. The UK should work with partners to uphold the Geneva Conventions and other relevant international legal obligations, and to support accountability mechanisms.

**3. Palestinian self-determination and political representation:** Palestinians have the exclusive right to choose their representatives, leadership, and constitutional arrangements without external interference. The UK should engage with Palestinian representatives based on legitimacy conferred by the Palestinian people, preferably through free and fair elections. Decisions regarding the security character of the State of Palestine must derive from the freely expressed will of the Palestinian people through their legitimate institutions or a popular mandate.

**4. Parity of esteem and equal rights:** A just and durable peace requires equal rights of security and dignity for Palestinians and Israelis. UK policy should treat both peoples in practice as equal in rights and sovereignty and should reject frameworks that entrench permanent inequality through occupation or annexation.

**5. Engagement without complicity:** The UK should pursue principled engagement that avoids complicity in illegality. Engagement, with Israeli and US lead process is appropriate where it helps end the occupation or alleviates suffering, but participation or support must be withheld where initiatives breach international law or undermine Palestinian sovereignty.