**One Hundred Years since the Balfour Declaration – one Hundred Years of Ongoing International Crimes: The Global Palestinian Refugee Network Statement**

BADIL Resource Center

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http://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/86-2017/4823-pr-en-011117-53.html

The Balfour Declaration, an illegal declaration that marked the initiation of the colonial project of Israel in Palestine – the natural and historic homeland for Palestinians – enters its one hundred year anniversary. Since 1917, the Balfour Declaration kicked off a plethora of international crimes against the Palestinian people: ongoing forcible transfer and displacement, colonization and apartheid on both sides of the Green Line.

The United Kingdom and its allies continue to play an essential role in providing Israel with the broadest impunity possible. Furthermore, regardless of the fact that Israel is a colonial and apartheid state, the UK insists on celebrating the Balfour Declaration adding insult to the injury sustained.

The UK pretends to be an advocate for human rights and democracy, while ignoring the Palestinian right to self-determination, their right to return to their lands and properties, and their right to establish an independent and free state of Palestine.

Today, the UK and the entire world have an obligation to recognize that the one hundred years of suffering, dispossession and suppression of the Palestinian people are ongoing because of the colonial policies initiated during the British Mandate for Palestine (1917 – 1948). Those policies included:

* Facilitating the illegal immigration of Zionist colonizers to Palestine and granting them citizenship;
* Forcibly displacing more than 100,000 Palestinians through the revocation of their citizenship rights;
* Confiscation of Palestinian properties and transferring their ownership to Zionist colonizers;
* Providing arms, military training and financial support to Zionist colonizers;
* Suppressing Palestinians;
* Facilitating the division of Palestine and the creation of Israel – the colonial, apartheid state which aims to forcibly displace Palestinians from their lands.

The 1948 Nakba is still ongoing and implemented through Israeli policies and laws put forth originally by the British government via the mandate. These laws are called emergency laws which include land confiscation, residency revocation, isolation, home demolition, administrative detention and brutal suppression. The ongoing Nakba would not have been perpetuated without the continuous and unlimited political, military, diplomatic and economic British support of Israel. Therefore today, we, the Global Palestinian Refugee Network, assert the following:

1. The crimes resulting from the Balfour Declaration are ongoing and cannot be rectified by a confession or apology from the UK and would not alter the facts on the ground. A confession or apology would not relieve the UK from its historic, legal and moral responsibilities toward all the past and future violations against the Palestinian people caused by the Balfour Declaration.
2. All British political parties, non-governmental and civil society organizations and movements are responsible for their government's continued denial of Palestinian rights. Accordingly, British civil society is obligated to take all necessary actions to pressure its government to respect its responsibilities and support the Palestinian struggle in claiming their rights to self-determination, to return and to establish a free and democratic state of Palestine.

The Global Palestinian Refugee Network: The network includes 41 Palestinian organizations active in the field of defending the rights of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons in historic Palestine and Diaspora)