

United Nations Special Committee on Palestine : 1947-1948

(Latest jury feedback is incorporated into the exhibit)

Exhibit Scope

This exhibit documents efforts between April 1947 and April 1948 of the fledgling United Nations organization to settle the land dispute between the Arab and Jewish populations in the Palestine Mandate.

Historical Background

The United Nations replaced the League of Nations in 1946 and inherited the League's resources and responsibilities, including the oversight of the Palestine mandate. In April 1947, Great Britain announced it would no longer administer the Palestine mandate as of May 1948. They proposed a 'Special Session' of the U.N. Security Council to address administration and security under U.N. auspices once British forces departed.

Exhibit Development

Exhibit development progresses chronologically (date range top right of exhibit pages - some ranges overlap) and presented using related material to illustrate each subject:

British responsibility for Palestine Mandate, Special Session on Palestine, Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), Palestine Commission (UNPC), Truce Commission on Palestine (UNTCP).

Exhibit Plan

London Conference	- Failed attempt at Arab & Jewish agreement
Special Session on Palestine	- General Assembly forms Special Committee
Special Committee on Palestine	- Committee gathers data for Reports
Special Committee in Geneva	- Committee in Geneva prepares formal reports
Ad Hoc Committee & G.A. Approval	- Committee debates & chooses Major Report
Palestine Commission & Secretariat	- Monitoring transition to independent states
Arab / Israeli War	- Disagreements lead to Open Conflict
Truce Commission & End of UNSCOP	- Administration of cease-fire, truce & armistice
Epilogue: Statehood	- British Leave & Israel Declares Independence

Subject Knowledge

The story-line of this exhibit includes major events arranged by date and illustrated with diverse philatelic elements selectively chosen to demonstrate specific story-line details and balance presentation.

Philatelic Knowledge

Care is taken to ensure proper descriptions of philatelic elements to demonstrate knowledge of philately and includes information on stamps, cancel devices, rates, rarity or other justified information as appropriate.

Philatelic Elements

This exhibit utilizes a rich array of materials spanning many exhibit types (traditional, thematic, postal history, post card, etc.) to carry the story forward. Examples of mail from all special bodies and/or offices are included and mail from the appropriate time period and office is preferred and incorporated.

Condition and Rarity

U.N. official service mail from Palestine during this period utilized special stationery with preprinted cornercard text or in some cases, manuscript notations. Due to each committee / office's brief existence, official service mail from each entity is extremely scarce.

Examples of official service mail is known from these offices (all in exhibit) and rarely obtainable.

United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (~1 year)

United Nations Palestine Commission (~5 months)

United Nations Truce Commission on Palestine (9 days)

Covers are selected for best condition, bearing in mind service mail is seldom pristine. Folds, creases, nicks, small tears or missing corners are indications of actual transit through the mail systems of the time and place.

Challenge for this area is high as many items are either scarce or unique. Key items are matted on gold matts and include the discovery and only reported example of the American Friends Service Committee (Quaker) efforts in Palestine.

- Special Committee on Palestine service mail (manuscript) sent internationally (6 reported)
- **Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent to Haifa (2 reported)**
- **Committee member countrywide pass with embossed British M.E.F. seal (only reported)**
- **Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent within Jerusalem (only reported)**
- Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent internationally (6 reported)
- **Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent as postcard (only reported)**
- Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent internationally (6 reported)
- Special Committee on Palestine service mail sent internationally from Geneva (9 reported)
- **American Friends Service Committee mail sent internationally from Geneva (only reported)**
- **Palestine Commission service mail (3 reported)**
- Palestine Truce Commission service mail ('**Emergency P.O.**' in use 9 days - 5 reported)

Rarity is determined from published sources and correspondence.

- Articles from "*The Journal*" (UNPI) and "*The Israel Philatelist*" (SIP)
- Gaines Catalog / monographs of international U.N. philatelic societies
- Philatelic exhibits (international) / web sites / personal correspondence

Political Viewpoint

This exhibit attempts to remain non-partisan on a controversial subject.



American Friends Service Committee
Discovery and only reported example

Key Literature References

- "1948 Security Council Truce Commission", *The Journal of United Nations Philatelists*, 2014, **Vol. 38 #2**
- "To Consider the Future of Palestine", *The Israel Philatelist*, 1998, **Vol. 49 #4**
- "United Nations Philately", Arleigh Gaines, R&D Pubs, 1980-92, **pages 1715-1717, 3026, 1791 and 1425**
- *Wikipedia* - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Special_Committee_on_Palestine (Active on 31/1/25)