

MAY 14, 1948

DECLARATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

On Friday, the fifth of Iyar, 5708 according to the Hebrew calendar, or May 14, 1948, David ben Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel. This was the day when the British finally left the Land of Israel. It was marked by the departure of the High Commissioner, who hastened back to England. Thus ended the Mandate on Palestine. On the same day the people's representatives gathered at the Tel Aviv Museum to set up a provisional Government. David Ben Gurion read the Declaration of Independence, which formalized the establishment of the independent State of Israel. He called on the neighboring Arabs to remain in the country and to live together in peace. The Declaration states that the State of Israel is based on the principles of justice and democracy, and constitutes the national home for the Jewish People.

After 2,000 years of exile a sovereign Jewish state had been reestablished. The newly emerging state had yet to be recognized by the nations of the world. Everything was done swiftly and secretly, meticulously planned by David Ben Gurion.

After the Declaration the crowds took to the streets and danced all night, just as they did on the night of the U.N. Partition vote.

This date has been fixed as the Day of Independence of the State of Israel.

David Ben Gurion was fully aware that all the Arab states would join in the war against the newly declared State. This would be a difficult and bloody war against well trained, organized and fully equipped armies, a war of the few against the many. In the face of such odds he could not be complacent, but he fully believed in the strength of the People of Israel and the justice of his cause.



David Ben-Gurion reading the Declaration of Independence