

UK-Poland relations: 100 years on – exhibition in London and Warsaw

It was 100 years ago, on 26 February 1919, that Sir Esme Howard, British Civil Delegate on the International Commission to Poland, wrote the following key sentence to Marshal Józef Piłsudski, Chief of State of the newly re-established Republic of Poland:

His Britannic Majesty's Government acknowledges Poland's restoration to independence.

With this gesture, Sir Howard renewed Polish-British relations after 124 years.

To celebrate the centenary of this historical event, British Embassy Warsaw and Polish Embassy UK launched "UK-Poland relations: 100 years on" – a joint exhibition highlighting inspiring moments in the shared history of both countries. These include, to name a few: Ignacy Jan Paderewski's epic concert at the Royal Albert Hall in 1933, the speech by Her Majesty the Queen at the Polish Sejm in 1996, the passing of the presidential insignia to Lech Wałęsa in 1989, and the launching of the Polish-British Belvedere Forum in 2017.

Photographs are displayed at the Polish Embassy in London and at the open gallery on the fence of Łazienki Królewskie park in Warsaw from 19 to 30 November 2019. From 1 to 31 December 2019, photographs will be displayed at Agrykola Park in Warsaw.

British Ambassador to Poland, Jonathan Knott, commented on the exhibition:

The photographs in this exhibition chart how our bilateral relationship has developed and grown since 1919. It tells the story not only of our political relationship, but also of the close human ties between us and how sporting and artistic endeavours have brought our cultures and people together.

This exhibition is an excellent occasion to reflect on our shared history and our exceptionally close people-to-people relationship, and to consider how we can build our relationship in years to go. There's so much to celebrate and look forward to.

Polish Ambassador to the UK, Arkady Rzegocki, encouraged the wide public to visit the exhibition:

Join us as we revisit the legacy which our two countries share. May our common history continue to teach and inspire us to strengthen

our relationship and build our common future.