

TIMELINE: Uganda

1898 Theodor Herzl obtains a meeting with the German Kaiser Wilhelm II in Constantinople and again in Palestine.

1901 In May, Herzl succeeds in meeting the Ottoman Sultan. He offers to help with the Ottoman Empire's debt in return for a charter giving Jews rights to settle the Land of Israel.

1903 In April, Herzl meets with Joseph Chamberlain, Britain's colonial secretary, to help obtain Egypt's permission for Jewish settlement in El Arish in the Sinai. Chamberlain suggests another area, having recently returned from a trip to Africa where he had seen land well-suited for Europeans.

1903 In April, a pogrom takes place in the city of Kishinev in Tsarist Russia. It's particularly brutal and almost 50 Jews are killed. Herzl is moved by the event and feels the urgent need to relieve the plight of Russian Jews.

1903 In May, Herzl learns that the El Arish plan has been rejected.

1903 In June, Herzl confides to his friend Max Nordau that he will look into the East African offer. Nordau objects that the Jews will not accept a land outside of Israel, to which is wedded all of Jewish history and tradition. Herzl insists they must at least entertain the offer.

1903 In August, Herzl meets with Russia's Minister of the Interior Vyacheslav Plehve. He succeeds in convincing Plehve to use Russian influence with the Ottoman Sultan to back Zionist efforts in Palestine. The meeting is controversial as Plehve is responsible for the state-sponsored pogroms.

1903 At the end of August, the Sixth Zionist Congress takes place. Herzl opens with the Uganda offer, which isn't in fact in Uganda but in what is today Kenya. To his surprise, the Russian delegates, the ones most in need of a refuge, reject the offer. They will only accept Eretz Israel as the home of the Jews.

1904 On July 3rd, Herzl dies. In his will he says: "I wish to be buried in the vault beside my father, and to lie there till the Jewish people shall take my remains to Israel."

1949 Herzl is reinterred in Jerusalem.