

# The Albizu Protocol

## Introduction:

The Treaty of Paris of 1898 marked the end of the Spanish-American War and resulted in Spain ceding Puerto Rico to the United States. However, the negotiations and signing of the treaty were conducted without any input or consent from the Puerto Rican people. This lack of consultation violated the fundamental principles of self-determination and has had long-lasting consequences for Puerto Rico. This paper will argue that the Albizu Protocol, named after Puerto Rican nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos, is a call to action for the recognition of the right to self-determination for Puerto Ricans.

## Historical Background:

Puerto Rico was a Spanish colony for over four centuries until the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1898. However, the Puerto Rican people were not consulted or given a voice in the negotiations or signing of the treaty. This lack of consultation violated the fundamental principles of self-determination, which holds that all peoples have the right to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.

The United States assumed control of Puerto Rico after the signing of the treaty, and the island became a U.S. territory. Puerto Ricans were granted U.S. citizenship in 1917, but the island's political status remained unresolved. The U.S. government has held Puerto Rico as an unincorporated territory since 1952, with limited autonomy, but without the right to self-determination or full representation in the U.S. Congress.

## The Albizu Protocol:

Pedro Albizu Campos was a Puerto Rican nationalist leader who advocated for independence from the United States. He believed that Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. territory was a violation of the island's right to self-determination. In 1936, Albizu Campos proposed the Albizu Protocol, which called for an international conference on the political status of Puerto Rico.

The Albizu Protocol argued that Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. territory was a violation of international law and the fundamental principles of self-determination. It called for an international conference to be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to discuss the island's political status and determine a course of action for the future. The protocol also called for the participation of representatives from the United States, Latin America, and Europe, as well as representatives from Puerto Rico.

## The Legacy of the Albizu Protocol:

The Albizu Protocol was never implemented, but it remains a powerful symbol of Puerto Rican resistance to colonialism and a call to action for the recognition of the island's right to self-determination. Puerto Ricans have continued to advocate for their right to self-determination, including through protests and demonstrations, as well as through legal and political efforts.

The United Nations has recognized the right to self-determination as a fundamental human right, and has called for a resolution to Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. territory. In 2017, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization called on the U.S. government to allow Puerto Ricans to exercise their right to self-determination, including the option of independence.

## Conclusion:

The Albizu Protocol is a reminder that the lack of consultation with the Puerto Rican people during the negotiations over the Treaty of Paris of 1898 violated the fundamental principles of self-determination. The ongoing political status of Puerto Rico as a U.S. territory without the right to self-determination remains a source of controversy and unresolved issues. It is time for the United States to recognize the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and take steps to resolve the island's political status. The Albizu Protocol remains a powerful symbol of Puerto Rican resistance to colonialism and a call to action for the recognition of the island's right to self-determination.

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*The Albizu Protocol is a proposal made by Puerto Rican nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos in 1936. The proposal called for an international conference to be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to discuss the island's political status and determine a course of action for the future. Albizu Campos argued that Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. territory was a violation of international law and the fundamental principles of self-determination. The protocol also called for the participation of representatives from the United States, Latin America, and Europe, as well as representatives from Puerto Rico. While the Albizu Protocol was never implemented, it remains a powerful symbol of Puerto Rican resistance to colonialism and a call to action for the recognition of the island's right to self-determination.*

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## Implementation of the Albizu Protocol

The implementation of the Albizu Protocol would require a commitment from the United States government to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the Puerto Rican people and their representatives about the island's political status. Here are some steps that could be taken to implement the protocol:

- [Hold an international conference on Puerto Rico's political status](#): The first step would be to hold an international conference on Puerto Rico's political status. The conference could be organized by the United Nations, with the participation of representatives from the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Puerto Rico. The purpose of the conference would be to discuss the island's political status and determine a course of action for the future.
- [Allow Puerto Ricans, living in Puerto Rico and elsewhere, to vote on their political status](#): The conference should provide for a referendum or plebiscite in which Puerto Ricans could vote on their political status. The referendum should be conducted in a manner that is free, fair, and transparent.
- [Respect the outcome of the vote](#): The United States government should respect the outcome of the vote and take steps to implement the will of the Puerto Rican people. If the people of Puerto Rico vote for independence, the United States should negotiate a transition to independence in good faith. If the people of Puerto Rico vote for statehood or some other form of association with the United States, the U.S. government should take steps to implement the will of the people.
- [Ensure a fair and just process](#): The implementation of the Albizu Protocol should be conducted in a fair and just manner. All parties should be given the opportunity to participate in the process, and the process should be transparent and accountable.
- [Ensure the well-being of the Puerto Rican people](#): The implementation of the Albizu Protocol should take into account the well-being of the Puerto Rican people. The United States should provide economic and other forms of assistance to ensure that the transition to a new political status is conducted in a manner that protects the rights and interests of the people of Puerto Rico.