

JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS AND THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND CONCERNING THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO, INCLUDING DIEGO GARCIA

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland today confirm that they have reached an historic political agreement on the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

Following two years of negotiation, this is a seminal moment in our relationship and a demonstration of our enduring commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes and the rule of law. Negotiations have been conducted in a constructive and respectful manner, as equal sovereign States, on the basis of international law, and with the intention of resolving all outstanding issues between the United Kingdom and Mauritius concerning the Chagos Archipelago, including those relating to its former inhabitants.

Today's political agreement is subject to the finalisation of a treaty and supporting legal instruments, which both sides have committed to complete as quickly as possible. Under the terms of this treaty the United Kingdom will agree that Mauritius is sovereign over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia. At the same time, both our countries are committed to the need, and will agree in the treaty, to ensure the long-term, secure and effective operation of the existing base on Diego Garcia which plays a vital role in regional and global security. For an initial period of 99 years, the United Kingdom will be authorised to exercise with respect to Diego Garcia the sovereign rights and authorities of Mauritius required to ensure the continued operation of the base well into the next century.

The treaty will address wrongs of the past and demonstrate the commitment of both parties to support the welfare of Chagossians. Mauritius will now be free to implement a programme of resettlement on the islands of the Chagos Archipelago, other than Diego Garcia, and the UK will capitalise a new trust fund, as well as separately provide other support, for the benefit of Chagossians.

It will also herald a new era of economic, security and environmental partnership between our two nations. To enable this partnership the UK will provide a package of financial support to Mauritius. This will include an indexed annual payment for the duration of the agreement and the establishment of a transformational infrastructure partnership, underpinned by UK grant funding, to deliver strategic projects generating meaningful change for ordinary Mauritians and boosting economic development across the country. More broadly, the UK and Mauritius will cooperate on environmental protection, maritime security, combating illegal fishing, irregular migration and

drug and people trafficking within the Chagos Archipelago, with the shared objective of securing and protecting one of the world's most important marine environments. This will include the establishment of a Mauritian Marine Protected Area.

In resolving all outstanding issues between the United Kingdom and Mauritius, the treaty will open a new chapter in our shared history, one which will continue to be based on mutual respect and trust as close Commonwealth partners committed to the security and prosperity of the Indian Ocean Region. In reaching today's political agreement, we have enjoyed the full support and assistance of our close partners, the United States of America and the Republic of India.