Chagos Archipelago

457. The Heads of State and Government welcomed the clear and unambiguous Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice delivered on 25 February 2019 on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, pursuant to the UN General Assembly resolution 71/292 of 22nd June 2017.

458. The Heads of State and Government took note of the Court’s findings that the right to self-determination was a rule of customary international law in 1965 and that the excision of the Chagos Archipelago from the territory of Mauritius was an internationally wrongful act. In that regard, the Heads of State and Government fully supported the Court’s ruling that the United Kingdom is under an obligation to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible.

459. The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed, in the light of the Court’s Advisory Opinion, that the Chagos Archipelago is and has always been part of the territory of Mauritius and that Mauritius is the sole State lawfully entitled to exercise sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and sovereign rights over the appurtenant maritime spaces. They resolved to cooperate fully with the UN General Assembly in ensuring the prompt decolonization of Mauritius, as required by the Court, and take all necessary measures for the process of decolonization of Mauritius to be completed without hindrance and as rapidly as possible.

460. The Heads of State and Government expressed their satisfaction that the findings of the Advisory Opinion confirm that the “marine protected area” ("MPA") purportedly created by the UK around the Chagos Archipelago is illegal since under international law, the UK is not the ‘coastal State’ in relation to the Chagos Archipelago.

461. The Heads of State and Government also took note of the concern expressed by the Republic of Maldives regarding the legal and technical issues arising from the United Kingdom’s illegal decision in 2010 to declare a “MPA” in the Chagos Archipelago which overlaps the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Maldives as declared in its Constitution without prejudice to future resolution of maritime delimitations.