

**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE PRAVIND KUMAR JUGNAUTH, PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS, TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

3 NOVEMBER 2022

Mr Speaker, Sir,

I wish to make the following statement concerning developments in respect of the Chagos Archipelago.

Following the meeting which I had with former UK Prime Minister Elizabeth Truss on 21 September 2022 in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, Mauritius and the United Kingdom have decided to begin negotiations on the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

Through negotiations, taking into account relevant legal proceedings, it is our intention to secure an agreement on the basis of international law to resolve all outstanding issues, including those relating to the former inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago. This will allow Mauritius and the United Kingdom, as close Commonwealth partners, to work even more closely together to tackle the regional and global security challenges that face us all. We will seek to strengthen significantly our cooperation on Indian Ocean security, maritime security and marine protection, the conservation of the environment, climate change, respect for human rights, and to tackle illegal migration, illegal fishing, drugs and arms trafficking, as well as bilateral cooperation on a range of other issues. We will work to do this in cooperation with key allies and partners in the region.

Mauritius and the United Kingdom have reiterated that any agreement between our two countries will ensure the continued effective operation of the joint UK/US military base on Diego Garcia, which plays a vital role in regional and global security. We recognise the United States' and India's interests and will keep them informed of progress.

Mauritius and the United Kingdom have agreed to engage in constructive negotiations, with a view to arriving at an agreement by early next year.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks and gratitude to all States and organisations, particularly the African Union, for the support they continue to provide to Mauritius for the completion of its decolonisation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.