

Pre-session: Universal Periodic Review: Republic of Mauritius

Nov 28th 2023

Main points from Chagossian Voices

The Chagossian people were forcibly exiled from our Indian Ocean archipelago to Mauritius and the Seychelles by the United Kingdom, with the co-operation of the colonial government of Mauritius, to make way for a United States military base between 1965 and 1973. We are an indigenous people, the descendants of African slaves, with a unique culture, language and way of life.

We make the following recommendations:

- a) That the Mauritian Government addresses the economic, cultural, structural and informal disadvantages of Chagossians and Mauritian Creoles by implementing policies conducive to their economic and human development and that an independent commission is created both to assess the extent and causes of disadvantage and the effectiveness of any measures for remedy undertaken. [*See UN special rapporteurs' letter [AL MUS 3/2020](#)*]
- b) That the Mauritian Government recognises the rights of Chagossians to identify as an indigenous people. [*Chagossians are not recognised in the Mauritian constitution*]
- c) That the Mauritian Government respects and recognises the right of all Chagossians to return to their islands on their own terms, wherever they live and whatever their current nationality. [*The Chagossian diaspora has been and remains excluded from all decision-making processes concerning their future and the future of their islands*]
- d) That the Mauritian Government makes no plans for the future of the Chagos Islands or the Chagossian people without the informed consent of the Chagossian people wherever they may now live.
- e) That the Mauritian Government withdraws legislation and ceases practices which Chagossians perceive as intimidatory, and which have the effect of restricting their free speech. [eg *See [Criminal Code \(Amendment\) Act no. 17 of 2021](#)*]
- f) That the Mauritian Government makes efforts to restore confidence in the Police and the Government through transparent and accountable investigation of complaints against police and government and through Freedom of Information legislation. [*Eg See: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nishandeqnarain/2021/01/11/mauritius-in-crisis-as-militarized-police-deployed-against-peaceful-protestors/>*]
- g) That the Mauritian Government gives up its control of the governance mechanisms of the Chagossian Welfare Fund and creates an independent body, run for Chagossians by Chagossians where Chagossians can speak freely and make decisions on their own behalf. <https://mroiti.govmu.org/Pages/Chagos/Chagossian-Welfare-Fund.aspx>
- h) An investigation into the human rights of Agaleans in relation to the construction of an airbase on and associated infrastructure on their islands (Agalega), a dependency of Mauritius. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/8/5/why-is-india-building-a-military-base-on-agalega-island>

