

‘Scandal, secrecy and surrender’

To ordinary voters weighed down by the pressures and demands of daily life, the debate over the Chagos Islands may appear remote, obscure and irrelevant. However, as the following report makes clear, the financial and security implications for all of us are so serious that they can no longer be overlooked or ignored. In short the fate of the Chagos Islands will affect each and every one of us and people need to understand why.

Part One of this two-part report explains the background history to the present crisis and how we got here.

In Part Two (below) we highlight the terms of the current proposal which by any reasonable measure appear to be legally dubious, financially ruinous and strategically reckless.

We are indebted to former Cabinet Minister Sir John Redwood for his piercing analysis and withering summary.

“UK taxpayers have no wish to make large payments to Mauritius for 99 years when there is no need. Our most important ally, the USA does not want us to do this. The policy the government is adopting makes us less secure, putting a crucial base into the ownership of a country that is no friend of the UK or US.”

What follows is a summary with a link to the full report beneath it.

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**Accusation of bribing voters, overnight
and complete ban on social media, lies,
corruption...**

**Why were Sir Keir and David Lammy throwing billions of
UK taxpayers' money at the former Mauritius Prime
Minister?**

**Plus, the absent legal case for doing a deal with the
new Mauritius Prime Minister**

**Following our revelations about the serious problems
surrounding the proposed Mauritius deal yesterday, we now look
at the main issue behind the Government's rush to give away
the UK's sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago. We provide
the legal evidence which makes the Government's justifications
for its actions look so thin as to be non-existent.**

**Sir Keir Starmer's attempted legal justification for
this hugely expensive giveaway**

**The only justifications given by Sir Keir and other Ministers
surrounding this whole affair relate to a legal requirement to
take the actions the Government seems intent on taking.
Unfortunately a search of official statements does not reveal
any detailed legal argument. The best that is on offer are**

simple statements made by Sir Keir and others under questioning by MPs. Some examples are below.

05 Feb 2025 (PMQs)



The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP : *“Let me be clear, Mr Speaker, and I shall pick my words carefully. Without legal certainty, the base cannot operate in practical terms as it should.”*

It has not been possible to find any substantive statement from the Government giving any evidence at all of any legal obligation by the United Kingdom to alter the status quo.

The facts showing Sir Keir has no legal case

Any binding resolution of the UN would need Security Council approval, where the UK and US both have a veto. When the UK signed up to the ICJ it was expressly agreed that **cases about the UK and Commonwealth – which this one would be if it were brought – are excluded.**

As a lawyer himself, Sir Keir Starmer should be interested in this...

Our source for the information is a Mauritian barrister-at-law

AN IMPORTANT POINT OF LAW : There is an established precedent that no Commonwealth country brings an action against another Commonwealth country at the ICJ. This doctrine between Commonwealth States is known as 'Inter Se'. Even without this agreement between Commonwealth countries, Article 36 of the International Court of Justice Statute provides that it is the option of a State whether it wishes to subject itself to the ICJ's jurisdiction. Article 36 reflects the fundamental principle of state sovereignty, on which the whole of international law rests.

The ICJ are therefore excluded by their own Articles from judging any case brought by Mauritius against the United Kingdom

What the Mauritian PM said is in the deal, as opposed to what the UK Government says

The hidden details of the giveaway of sovereignty and £18bn of taxpayers' money

The UK Government still refuses to publish the details of the new Chagos Islands deal, despite the fact many of these details have been publicly given by the Mauritian government to its own National Assembly (parliament). In order to inform the public we are therefore publishing the video recording of the debate in the Mauritian National Assembly on 04 February. Below that are official excerpts of the Mauritian Prime Minister's answers to questions from the leader of the Opposition.

"We insisted that it be clear that we have complete sovereignty on the Chagos, including Diego Garcia. The British agreed to that and this has been changed."

"The extension has to be agreed with both parties. It cannot be unilateral from the British. And I am glad to inform the

*Leader of the Opposition that **the British have agreed to that also.***

*“They had agreed to a package for 99 years, but it was not inflation-proof. The exchange rate, because it is in dollars, would be fixed once, and then, the last in 99 years. How can that be? What is the point of getting money and then having half of it by the end? This is what would have happened! We have made the calculation. So, that also, we did not agree to. And we also wanted to do **front loading**; some of the money had to be front loaded, and that also is being agreed to, I think.”*

– Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister, Mauritius

So in broad terms we know the plan is for a surrender of sovereignty together with a 99-year leaseback in respect of Diego Garcia, with lease payments of at least £9 billion, front-end loaded, and almost certainly with payments being index-linked, which would **more than double the eventual sum paid by the British taxpayer**. This means the total bill will be in the region of £20 billion – not far short of Rachel Reeves’ infamous “£22bn black hole” in the Government’s finances.

Observations

We feel compelled to make some simple observations which should have been made by the British Government when this question first came up.

Mauritius has no connection with the Chagos Archipelago.

It has no citizens there, no social connections, and has had no involvement of any kind with the islands. This is hardly

surprising as the Chagos Islands are located 1,300 miles away. Mauritius is much closer to Madagascar than it is to Chagos. Put another way, there are other countries closer to the Chagos Archipelago than Mauritius. Why aren't they making a claim?

Next we come to the money.

Why are the Government even considering making any payment whatsoever, let alone the £20-odd billion which now seems to be being discussed? We can think of no justification for this massive largesse by the Labour Government, other than to attempt to curry favour. Where will this lead? The obvious answer is reparations to other former colonies, which Foreign Secretary David Lammy has previously advocated.

Finally, what is the Government doing, thinking of splashing billions of pounds of taxpayers' cash on a regime where there are serious questions about its likely propriety and where all manner of standards seem to be lacking?

Unless the Government can find a face-saving way out of the mess it has created, the UK's only hope now is that President Trump will ride in to block the deal. For the UK to have to rely on the US to get itself out of a hole is an extreme embarrassment for the country and we suspect this Government will be judged accordingly.

This is a summary CIBUK-Brexit Facts4EU report. The full version can be found [here](#).

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