



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing St
Westminster
SW1A 2AA

19th June 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

We write regarding our concerns about the status of the Chagos Islanders in light of the government's rejection in recent days of an International Court of Justice ruling on the United Kingdom's occupation of the Chagos archipelago. We believe that the UK must immediately act on the ICJ's ruling and ensure the £40m package of support already promised to the Chagossian community is paid out in full.

You will be aware that the ICJ has instructed the UK to return the island chain, detached from Mauritius by the UK in 1965, to Mauritian control. The United Kingdom has a proud record of upholding human rights and the international rule of law. We are concerned that the government's refusal to return sovereignty of the Chagos Islands risks undermining our country's credibility in these matters on the world stage. If we are to realise the ambition of "Global Britain" then we must live up to our international obligations.

In February 2019 the ICJ advised that "the United Kingdom is under an obligation to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible". The statement published by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office on 13th June 2020 asserts that the government does not recognise Mauritius' claim of sovereignty over the archipelago. Such an assertion stands in opposition not only to the ruling of the ICJ, but also to the African Union's demand for the UK to end its "continued colonial administration". You may also be aware that the United Nations General Assembly voted to condemn Britain's occupation of the Chagos Islands in May 2019.

This week the Prime Minister of Mauritius addressed the Mauritius National Assembly and highlighted the connections between the Chagossian struggle and the Black Lives Matter movement, stating:

"We have all watched, over the past weeks, as the Black Lives Matter protests remind us of our deep concerns as to historic wrongs in relation to race and slavery. The continued occupation of the Chagos Archipelago inscribes itself in these historic wrongs, and I express the hope that the United Kingdom and the United States will take steps to bring this wrong to an end, to allow those who wish to return to their homes to do so, and to allow Mauritius to enjoy the potential benefits offered by that part of its own territory."

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Today, our country is reckoning once more with our past actions and attempting to right historic wrongs. By taking action to return the Chagos Islands, we believe that the United Kingdom now has an opportunity to uphold our country's reputation as a world leader in human rights, and to send a powerful message about our support for the rule of law globally.

Yours truly,
Alistair

Full list of signatories

Alistair Carmichael MP
Wendy Chamberlain MP
Ben Lake MP
Allan Dorans MP
Layla Moran MP
Jonathan Edwards MP
Yvonne Fovargue MP
Sir Ed Davey MP
Margaret Ferrier MP
Stephen Farry MP
Martin Doherty MP
Patrick Grady MP
Tony Lloyd MP
Deirdre Brock MP
Tommy Sheppard MP
Andrew Gwynne MP

Carol Monaghan MP
Gavin Newlands MP
Christine Jardine MP
Sarah Champion MP
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Jamie Stone MP
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