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PTQ5661

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D), B6

PAGE 01
ACTION AF-00

PORT L 01448 01 OF 02 120402Z

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DS-00
	EUR-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	VCE-00
	DCP-01	NSAE-00	PM-00	IRM-00	USIE-00	BBG-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	SAS-00	/004W		
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R 110811Z DEC 01 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7521
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
SADC COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT LOUIS 001448

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/12
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, MARR, MP, UK
SUBJECT: CHAGOSSIAN DEMONSTRATE IN FRONT OF THE
BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION: MAURITIUS FEELS THE LATEST
TREMORS FROM THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

REF: PORT LOUIS 1411

(U) CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE BISA WILLIAMS FOR REASONS
1.5 B/D.

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER SAW A FLURRY
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OF ACTIVITY BY THE CHAGOSSIAN COMMUNITY. PERHAPS
SEEKING TO CAPITALIZE ON DIEGO GARCIA'S HIGH PROFILE
IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM, THE CHAGOSSIAN STAGED A
19-DAY PROTEST IN FRONT OF THE BRITISH HIGH
COMMISSION IN PORT LOUIS THAT ENDED NOVEMBER 23RD.

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DISPLACED AND DISPLEASED BUT FAR FROM DISPIRITED

2. (C) [REDACTED] AND FELLOW CHAGOS ISLANDERS
LAUNCHED A LIVELY DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE THE BRITISH
HIGH COMMISSION (BHC) ON NOVEMBER 5TH. ACCORDING TO
[REDACTED], THE CHAGOSSIANS, WHO WERE REMOVED FROM THE
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CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO BETWEEN 1965 AND 1973, WERE
DETERMINED TO STAY IN FRONT OF THE BHC AND POSSIBLY
COMMENCE A HUNGER STRIKE [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] WHILE [REDACTED] INITIALLY INSISTED THAT A
LIST OF TEN DEMANDS WOULD NEED TO BE MET IN ORDER TO
TRIGGER THE END OF THE PROTEST, AS THE DAYS WORE ON
HE SLOWLY BACKED AWAY FROM THIS POSITION, EVEN AS HE
RATCHETED UP THE RHETORIC. THE CHAGOSSIAN DEMANDS
CENTERED AROUND COMPENSATION FOR THE FORCED
REMOVALS, AS WELL AS ACCESS TO DIEGO GARCIA. TWO
ADDITIONAL FLASHPOINTS WERE THE PERCEIVED UNEVEN
APPLICATION OF BRITISH CITIZENSHIP LAWS TO THE
CHAGOSSIANS AND DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE LONDON HIGH
COURT'S NOVEMBER 2000 RULING THAT THE EXPULSION WAS
ILLEGAL HAD NOT YET TRANSLATED INTO ANY CONCRETE
ACTION.

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3. (C) [REDACTED] AND HIS SUPPORTERS MANAGED TO
MAINTAIN A BASE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED PROTESTERS
THROUGHOUT THE 19-DAY PROTEST. CHANTING ANTI-UK
SLOGANS AND ENERGETICALLY MAKING THEIR PRESENCE FELT
IN FRONT OF THE BHC, [REDACTED]

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PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA PLAY WAS EXTENSIVE AND
MOSTLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE PLIGHT OF THE PROTESTERS.
[REDACTED]

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HUNGER STRIKE AVERTED, HIGH COMMISSIONER VILIFIED

4. (C) THE SPECTER OF A HUNGER STRIKE BY THE CHAGOSSIANS WAS ENOUGH TO PROMPT A PERSONAL INTERVENTION BY THE PRESIDENT OF MAURITIUS, CASSAM UTEEM. UTEEM, SERVING AS THE INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN [REDACTED] THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER, MANAGED TO OBTAIN ASSURANCES FROM [REDACTED] THAT THE PROTESTERS WOULD CALL OFF THE PLANNED HUNGER STRIKE IN EXCHANGE FOR THE PROMISE THAT THEIR CASE WOULD BE CONSIDERED PROMPTLY.

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SAS-00 /003W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PORT LOUIS 001448

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BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION: MAURITIUS FEELS THE LATEST
TREMORS FROM THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

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PROTEST ENDS AND EVERYBODY GOES "HOME".....SORT OF

6. (C) THE PROTEST WAS FINALLY BROUGHT TO A
CONCLUSION WHEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PAUL BERENGER
STEPPED IN AND HELPED ARRANGE A MEETING FOR [REDACTED]
IN LONDON WITH BARONESS VALERIE AMOS. [REDACTED]

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7. (C) THE OFFICIAL END OF THE PROTEST WAS MET WITH
JUBILATION AND EXCITEMENT BY THE CHAGOSSIANS.

[REDACTED] PUBLICLY EXALTED IN THE "TRIUMPH" THAT WAS
ACHIEVED AND CELEBRATED THE "CONCESSIONS" THAT THEY
HAD EXTRACTED FROM THE UK. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT

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