

## **Background on Diego Garcia**

- The Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, is sovereign British territory.
  - The archipelago is formally known as the British Indian Ocean Territory -- BIOT for short.
  - Diego Garcia is the largest island in the group.
- U.S. military support facilities on Diego Garcia are established and authorized by a series of bilateral agreements with the British government dating back to 1966. As such, the U.S. does not “own” the base.
  - A British government representative on the island administers it in conjunction with the Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Support Facility.
  - A Commissioner in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London oversees BIOT affairs.
- U.S. and UK share operational responsibility for Diego Garcia and the outer islands comprising the Chagos archipelago.
- UK government oversaw the movement of the islands’ population in the late ‘60s - early ‘70s to make way for U.S. facilities.
- U.S. cannot comment on legal issues related to the island as the case is pending appeal before the court in the UK.
  - DOD cannot comment on the suit against the U.S. pending before the U.S. District Court in Washington, DC.

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