

The struggle of the Chagos People for their rights and their Home Islands



NATIONAL SUPPORT FRONT FOR THE ILOIS

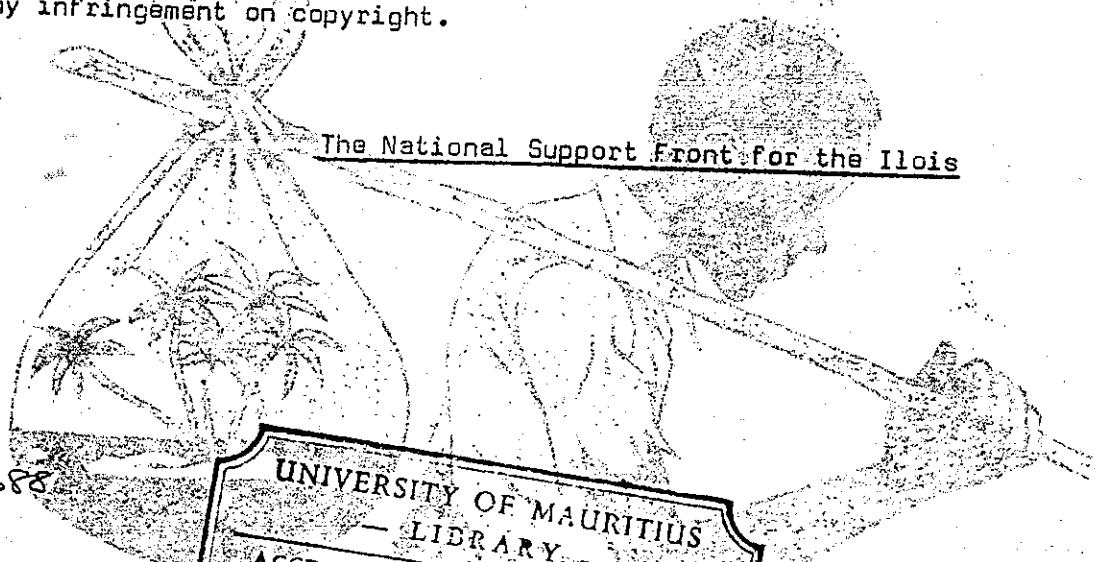
JUNE 1981

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to Françoise Botte, Hervé Silva and André Oraison for the valuable information obtained through their work on the Chagos people and their home islands.

The illustration on the cover is a reproduction of a drawing which accompanied an article on the Ilois published in "Le Monde" dated 30 December 1979. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we have been unable to contact the artist in time to obtain his or her permission prior to using this reproduction. We apologise for any infringement on copyright.

The National Support Front for the Ilois



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NATIONAL SUPPORT FRONT FOR THE ILOIS

JUNE 1981

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I "THE LAND OF OUR FORE-FATHERS-OUR NATIVE LAND"

1. The Sheridan episode of 1979

"It is the Deed of me and the adult members of my family who have hereinto subscribed their names and seals. I am an Ilois who left that part of British Indian Ocean Territory known as in the ship on the day of 19..... never to return. ((.....))

We know that the United Kingdom Government has already paid the Mauritian Government £ 650,000 for the settlement of the Ilois people who came to Mauritius following the setting up of British Indian Ocean Territory and has offered to make available a further £ 1,250,000 for that purpose provided it is accepted by the Ilois in full and final settlement of all claims whatsoever upon the United Kingdom Government by the Ilois arising out of the following events:- the creation of British Indian Ocean Territory, the closing of the plantations there, the departure or removal of those living or working there, the termination of their contracts, their transfer to and resettlement in Mauritius and their prohibition from ever returning to the Islands composing British Indian Ocean Territory ((.....))

We accept the money already paid to the Mauritian Government and the money to be paid to Mr. Sheridan as aforesaid in such instalments as he shall agree in full and final settlement and discharge of all our claims however arising upon the United Kingdom Government ((.....)) in respect of the events, their incidents, circumstances and consequences and we further abandon all our claims and rights (if any) of whatsoever nature to return to British Indian Ocean Territory." *

The above quote comes from a legal document - a deed of acceptance and power of attorney - which was presented in November 1979 to the exiled Chagos people by a London barrister, Bernard Sheridan. Some years ago, B. Sheridan had entered a test case in the British Court in the name of Michel Vencatessen, an Ilois who was suing the British Government for having been "ordered, coerced or compelled" to leave his home

* An integral copy of the Deed appears in Annex 1

Officially, Sheridan was acting on his own, but during his stay in Mauritius, he was lodged in a government-owned sea-side bungalow and travelled in an official police-driver car. At one moment he ran out of stock of the document referred to above, but the British High Commission immediately put its photo-copying facilities at his disposal.

Sheridan's "initiative" was obviously not given any publicity, but the signature-collecting sessions soon became suspicious and had to be stopped following violent protests widely publicised by the local press. The London barrister flew back overnight with his attaché-case full of copies of the deed which a substantial proportion of Ilois had been made to sign, on the argument that the actual figure to be paid in compensation would be proportionate to the number of signatures received.

Fifteen months later, in March 1981, in the heat of an Ilois hunger strike which was to last twenty days, the British High Commission reluctantly accepted to discuss, not negotiate, with a delegation representing Ilois interests after having put up a mild protest to the effect that it would have preferred to discuss through the right channel, that is, with Mr. Bernard Sheridan considered by Her Majesty's Government as the legal representative and spokesman of the Ilois people.

The Sheridan episode is a typical example of the blatant cynicism with which the Ilois people have been treated ever since their forced removal from the Chagos Islands. It is difficult to imagine that a country like Great Britain should in 1979 have recourse to such an undignified procedure which, stripped of its legal trappings, amounts to bribing a people into renouncing his right of return to his homeland. Colonial atavism might explain the method but the bid to get the Ilois to "abandon all our claims and rights (if any) of whatsoever nature to return to BIOT" can only be understood against the background of the growing militarisation of the Indian Ocean and of the furtherance of U.S. military interests in Diego Garcia.

2. How the Chagos Islands were emptied of their native population

It is now an established fact that the excision in 1965 of the Chagos Islands from Mauritian territory and the deportation of the native population by Great Britain were done at the request of the United States.

Already in the late fifties, U.S military strategists had shown interest in Diego Garcia, the main island of the Chagos. By 1964, planned concertation between the United States and Britain over the future use of these Indian Ocean islands was well under way. In 1965, negotiations for the independence of Mauritius were opened and Britain, taking advantage of the lack of consensus among the Mauritian delegation, linked the independence issue with the excision of the Chagos Islands.*

The Mauritian government obtained £ 3 million for having accepted the deal - and an easy way to independence. The owner of the "Chagos-Agalega Ltd", a private Company that exploited the resources of the Islands, received for his part £ 1 million for "cessation of business". As for the Ilois, the native people of the Chagos, the only provision that was made concerned their removal. They lost their houses and their livestock, their church and their school. In short, they lost their homeland, because the Chagos, henceforth part of the British Indian Ocean Territory, had to be depopulated as requested by the United States.

The methods used to get rid of the Chagos people were most revolting. Those Ilois who were already in Mauritius - for medical treatment, child-birth, or on family visit - were simply not allowed to go back home. The copra plantations were closed, with the result that the Ilois were forced out of job. Then the food supplies were cut down - the two supply boats, the Mauritius and the Nordvaer, just stopped coming to the Islands. From 1965 to 1973 the Ilois were thus progressively driven out of their homeland. The only solace they had was the promise of land, work, housing and money.

* This was contrary to U.N. Resolution 1414. See Annex 2 for U.N. Resolution on Mauritius.

They were first moved to Peros Banhos and the Salomon Islands, which are part of the Chagos, before being dumped in Mauritius. One batch of Ilois who transited in the Seychelles spent several days in prison cells, the only accomodation that apparently was available. The last group of Ilois to reach Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius, simply refused to disembark. They had learned of the miserable conditions in which those who had come before were living in spite of repeated promises of land, housing and money. Eventually some were given accomodation in government-owned flats.

3. "The islanders that Britain sold"

In October 1972, Britain offered £ 650,000 "in full and final discharge" for the resettlement of some 1,500 displaced Ilois. But when the islands were closed in 1965, one individual owner was paid £ 1 million to wind up the activities of his copra company. Britain herself had made a nice profit out of the deal with the Americans in 1966 when Diego Garcia was leased to them "for defence purposes" for a period of fifty years. At the time of the deal, the financial turnover was obviously kept secret and it was only in 1975 that news of it broke out. In its issue of 21 September 1975, The Sunday Times wrote :

"At least \$ 11.5 million worth of "bills" or expenses incurred by Britain in securing the real estate of the island and emptying it of its inhabitants has been paid by the U.S. Government - the last payment being made in July this year.

These payments were not in fact approved by Congress, and it has been suggested that they came either from offsetting the research and development costs on Britain's Polaris missiles bought from the Americans or from a straight payment from Presidential or Secretary of Defence discretionary funds. At any rate, it seems the British did not get so bad a deal as at first appears."

1934 BIRTH in the Island of

NAISSANCE dans l'Île de Diego Garcia

Dependency of Mauritius
Dépendance de Maurice

No.	When born and Where	Name and Surname	Sex	Nature of Legitimacy	Name and Surname of Father and Mother	Name and Surname of Informant, Profession and Domicile	Name and Surname of Witnesses, Professions and Domiciles	Signature of Informant	Signature of Witnesses
11	le Samedi 8 Sept 1934 at 8 heures à midi Diego Garcia	Maire Charleria Fambo	M	Naturel	Verlye Fambo le père et Fambo la mère Fambo la mère	Verlye Fambo le père et Fambo la mère Fambo la mère	Verlye Fambo le père et Fambo la mère Fambo la mère		

So declared by the above said Informant in the presence of the above named Witnesses who, after, I have read over the Act to them, have signed or marked the same in my presence this
day of one thousand nine hundred and

Cette déclaration a été faite par le dit Déclarant en présence des Témoins ci-dessus mentionnés, qui, après lecture à eux par moi faite du présent Acte, ont apposé leurs signatures ou leurs croix
ce 22 Sept mil neuf cent trente quatre

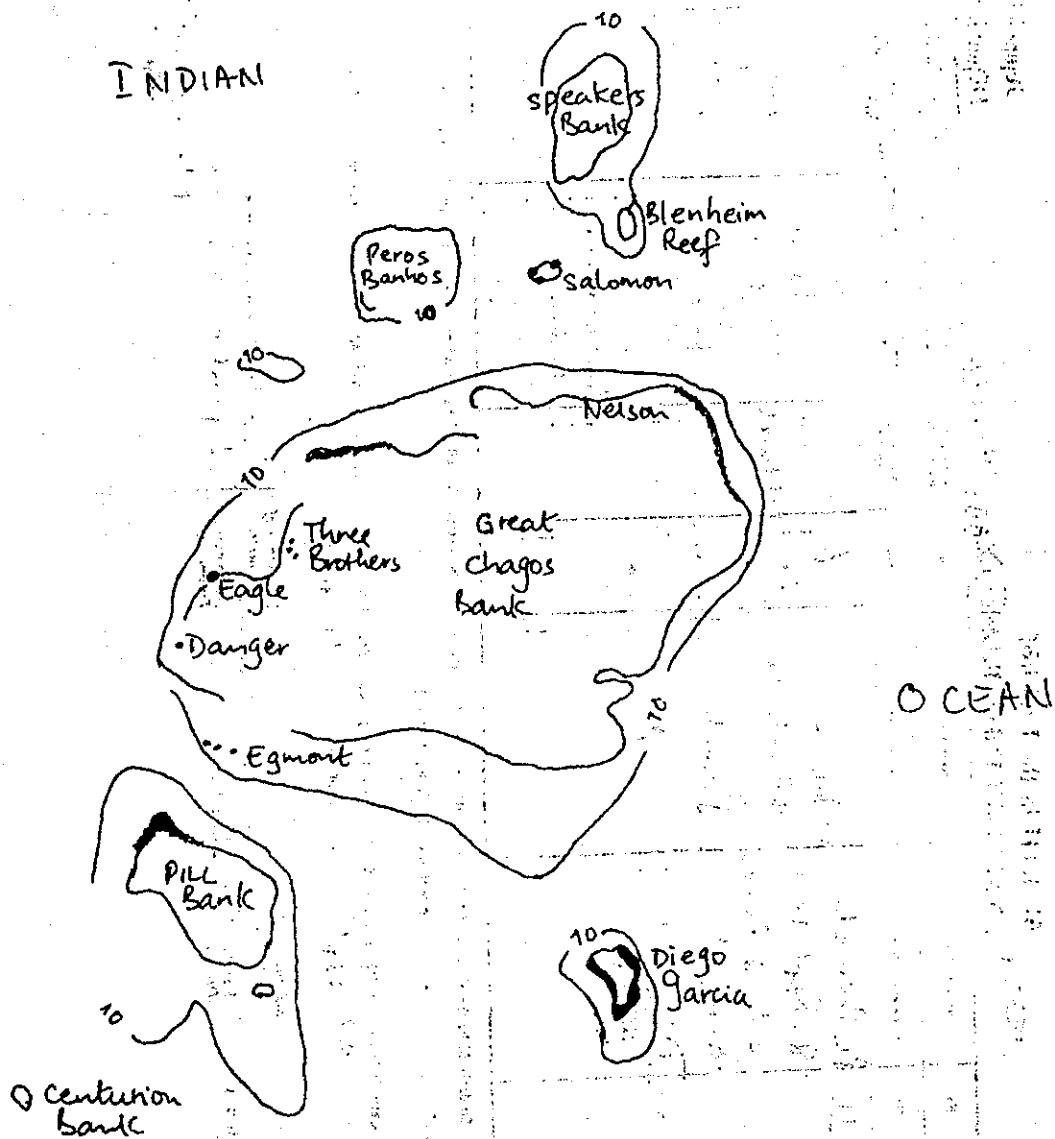
Signature of Informant
Signature of Witnesses
Signature of the Civil Status Officer
Signature of the Civil Status Officer



10 cents

THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

Scale



The £ 650,000 given in 1972 by the British Government to Mauritius stayed for years in a government bank account in spite of continued claims made by the Ilois with the active help of l'Organisation Fraternelle, a Mauritian organisation closely involved in the Ilois struggle. Exasperated by the delaying tactics of the Mauritian government, the Ilois demonstrated in the streets and voiced their grievances through letters and petitions which were given international coverage.

In 1975, the American people learned for the first time thanks to the Washington Post that the native population of the Chagos had been forcibly removed in "a most shameful way" to make way for the U. S military base. Worse still, they learned that the Pentagon who knew of this "mass kidnapping" had voluntarily misled the U. S Congress to believe that Diego Garcia was uninhabited. The revelations of the Washington Post sent waves of shock which reached France and Britain. The same year the "1966 Society for Diego Garcians in exile" was launched by George CHAMPION who ever since has been fighting for the Ilois cause with an admirable sense of dedication. In September 1975 The Sunday Times dispatched a team of reporters to Mauritius to dig out the real story behind the Anglo-U.S "hush-hush" policy over the Ilois case. In the September issue already referred to, The Sunday Times came out with a three-page report on the Ilois under the sensational title "The Islanders that Britain sold". Relating the circumstances in which Diego Garcia was cleared of its inhabitants, the British newspaper quotes Marcel Moulinié, of the Chagos-Agalega Ltd, who was entrusted with the "dirty job".

"It was a paradise there. He added, "it wasn't

very pleasant telling them they had to go. We

told them we had orders from BIOT. We just

said, sorry fellows but on such- and-such day

we are closing up. They didn't object, but

they were very unhappy about it, and I can

understand this because I am talking about

five generations of Ilois (islanders) who were

born there"

The pathetic story of the unwilling departure from Diego Garcia was related by the Ilois themselves in the local Sunday paper "Week-End" of 21 September 1975 (the coincidence with the Sunday Times issue just quoted is striking):

"We were assembled in front of the manager's house and informed by the latter that we could no longer stay on the island because the Americans were coming for good. We didn't want to go. We were born there. So were our fathers and forefathers who were buried in that Land."

4. A little bit of history

The peopling of the Chagos Islands actually dates back to the latter end of the 18th century. Diego Garcia, for instance, was peopled as from 1776. In 1813, the 22 islets of Peros Banhos became part of the settlement network established from Mauritius. Ten years later the Salomon Islands were integrated into the same network. Thus within less than half a century the whole complex of islands composing the Chagos Archipelago was peopled from Mauritius, and from that period onwards the Chagos became the main supplier of (coconut) oil to the other islands of the Indian Ocean, even Madagascar.*

These are historical facts recorded in official documents which are no secret to any student of Indian Ocean affairs. Yet the British Government and the U.S. Pentagon blatantly misguided the British and American public opinion by persistently presenting the Chagos as uninhabited islands and the Ilois as "a handful of migrant contract workers". No significant local population and no prying newsmen It is no wonder that when the truth behind the Anglo-U.S. "hush-hush" broke out, it provoked angry reactions. In its issue of 24 September 1975,

* Francoise BOTTE, "The Ilois community and the Ilois women", 1980, University of Mauritius. The information on the settlement of the Chagos has been taken from the same source.

The Mauritian daily "L'Express" published a reprint from the Economist in which the Anglo-U.S collusion is denounced in strong terms:

"One of the chief virtues advertised for the place, the fact that it was uninhabited, was something deliberately created by the enforced removal of the inhabitants between 1966 and 1972. Although the British Government was the agent, evidently "this act of mass kidnapping" as the Washington Post calls it was perpetrated by Anglo-American agreement".

II. A LATE RESETTLEMENT SCHEME : THE 1976 PROSSER REPORT

1. £ 650,000 eaten away by inflation

The deceitful Anglo-U.S statements on the inhabitants of the Chagos were matched locally by persistent official indifference to the plight of the Ilois. The £ 650,000 received in 1972 "in full and final discharge" were still lying in a government bank account. Embarrassed by the general outcry, the Mauritian government pretexted some lame excuses, such as "it takes time to ensure that the money is spent in the right way".* But, availing itself of the argument that the sum was hopelessly inadequate which it was, right from the start - and of the international press campaign in favour of the Ilois, Mauritius tried to obtain more from Britain. As expected, the latter humiliatingly turned down the request and instead pressed the Mauritian government to use the initial sum. Eventually, Britain agreed to the naive plea from Mauritius that expert advice was needed for the resettlement of the Ilois and an official from the Ministry of Overseas Development, A.R.G. Prosser was dispatched to Mauritius at the end of January 1976.

* Statement by the Finance Minister in the Sunday Times, 24 September 1975

After having identified housing as "the most intractable problem for the Ilois", Prosser notes in his 5-page report that "the majority of Ilois are reasonably well settled in Mauritius" before concluding enthusiastically : "The fact is that the Ilois are living in deplorable conditions which could be immediately alleviated if action is taken on the lines I have suggested."

The statements are rather conflicting but this certainly does not explain why the Mauritian government did not take immediate action as recommended, nor why the suggested lines were not followed when eventually action was taken. It was only in 1978, that is, two years after Prosser's visit, that the government proceeded to the distribution of cash compensation, instead of trying to implement a resettlement scheme in terms of housing, occupational training, welfare services etc, as suggested in the Prosser report.

A hasty and incomplete survey was carried out in 1977, on the basis of which each registered adult Ilois received in March 1978 a sum of approximately £ 550 (Rs 7,590) but as the Prosser report rightly pointed out, :

Unfortunately, from the time of the signing of the agreement between the Mauritius Government and The British Government, the cost of housing in Mauritius has risen approximately 500 per cent. That statement was made in early 1976, that is two years before the actual payment was made. Since then the inflationary trend has worsened further, with the result that the £ 550 received in 1978 were hopelessly inadequate. The 1977 survey referred to above had revealed in spite of its shortcomings that out of 557 families who had registered, 341 had opted for a house and 213 for cash compensation. Abandoning their prior claim for cash compensation only, Ilois representatives on the Resettlement Committee set up by the Government had suggested, accordingly, that both options - house and cash - should be left open. In spite of it, in December 1977, in reply to a parliamentary Question,

The Prime Minister of Mauritius declared :

"The Government has finally given up hope of convincing the families from Diego Garcia that it is in their best interests to have houses built for them rather than to have a cash compensation only. So steps are being taken to share the grant as well as the interest accrued thereon to the families"

2. "The nostalgia of their homeland"

A fundamental question raised in the 1976 Prosser report concerns the feelings of the Ilois towards their native land :

"It would be pertinent to note that at my meetings with the Ilois there was complete agreement that they did not wish to move to another island, and that their major desire was to be established as residents in Mauritius. Were it possible for some families to return to Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago my estimate is that 30 to 40 families might take up this option."

A few months before Mr Prosser's estimate, 422 Ilois families had addressed a petition to the British and U.S. Governments demanding their return to the Chagos*. That might help to explain the calculated assurance of Mr Prosser, who stayed in Mauritius only from 26 January to 1 February 1976. His programme of visits annexed to the report shows that he spent part of one morning in one of main Ilois areas, had one afternoon session with "Ilois leaders" and an additional morning session with "Ilois leaders, directed towards the promotion of Ilois Association".

The reference to "Ilois leaders" and "Ilois Association" is as misleading as his wishful representation of Ilois feelings towards Diego Garcia and the Chagos. It constitutes at most a naive attempt to give some sort of legitimacy to the wishful thinking expressed in the report that

* A copy of the petition was published in the International Herald Tribune of 10 September 1975

"The Ilois community has gradually merged with Mauritian society and there is almost a complete consensus of opinion, including a consensus amongst the Ilois, that what is needed now is not a new community settlement scheme but an agency which will assist with the complete integration of the Ilois in Mauritius and an assurance that their welfare will be safeguarded."

Following a suggestion put forward in the report, Francoise Botte, a social worker already actively involved within the Ilois community, was asked "to continue her excellent work with the Ilois". In a study submitted to the University of Mauritius in 1980, F. Botte summarises some of the data collected through her close association with the Ilois and surveys carried out specifically for the study. Her findings, which are supported by statistics, far from confirming the calculated blissful optimism of Prosser, show on the contrary that the Ilois have never been given the chance of integration and that the social, economic, cultural conditions in which they have been living have in fact become much worse.

Housing conditions in the suburban slums of Port Louis the capital where the Ilois are concentrated have not improved. 85 per cent of the male Ilois population are underemployed, being unskilled in the Mauritian context. Most of the Ilois people have remained illiterate. 62 per cent of the Ilois families are of the free style type, and it is the mother who is the effective head of household. Alcoholism is rife among the un- and under-employed, while many young Ilois women aged between 18 and 35 have been forced into prostitution out of necessity. The children of school age tend to shirk the classroom and, left to themselves, are prone to anti-social behaviour. Her conclusions speak for themselves:

"Since the arrival of that community in Mauritius, not much has been done to help them Today the Ilois problem seems to be nobody's concern."

A new survey carried out in the beginning of 1981 at the request of the hard-pressed Mauritian government confirms the bleak picture of the Ilois community described by Francoise Botte : ... Since their displacement they have been experiencing another trend of life which is very trying for the majority of them. ... They still have the nostalgia of their homeland. 77 per cent have expressed the wish to return to the Chagos Archipelago (Ref. Table 2).

III A LONG AND BITTER STRUGGLE

1. Growing radicalization

The payment in 1978 of the £ 650,000 compensation was based on a prior survey which, carried out hastily, had left out a substantial amount of Ilois genuinely entitled to the money. In spite of repeated campaigns actively supported by the organisation Fraternelle, no rectification was undertaken.

In September 1980, the exasperated Ilois once more had to have recourse to the hunger strike weapon. A National Support Front for the Ilois (FNSI) was set up which comprised a wide spectrum of social organisations, trade union federations, religious bodies and political parties. Eventually the government agreed to effect payment to the Ilois who had been left out in 1978. The latter were invited to register with the Ministry of Social Security and it was discovered with bitter surprise that 582 adults and 727 children were still on the waiting list for their meagre share of the 1972 £ 650,000. The Mauritian Government was obviously forced to foot the bill but the problem was that the amount left over after the 1978 payment was hopelessly inadequate.

A compromise was reached and part payment effected in December 1980 with the firm guarantee that the balance would be paid in early 1981.

*See Annex 3

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In 1965 they had been lured out of their home islands with false promises of land, housing, work, money and a fresh start in life. The promised land, the country of their dreams - they loved Mauritius to which they used to come over for holidays, family trips, childbirth - soon became a long, endless nightmare of exploitation, abject poverty, humiliation and suffering.

The Americans, for their part, have shown as much interest in the native people of the Chagos as they did in the Red Indians on their soil.

On the morning of 16 March 1981, hundreds of Ilois women demonstrated in front of the British High Commission. Having tried in vain to get in touch with the High Commissioner, a group of Ilois occupied the entrance hall for several hours and then moved to the Government House where they staged a sit-in. Clash with the police soon became inevitable and several Ilois women were arrested. Their arrest triggered an immediate reaction

within the Ilois community. Eight Ilois women decided on the spot to go on an unlimited hunger strike in the "Jardin de la Compagnie" facing the offices of the British High Commission. Among them was an old woman aged 77.

In the meantime, a team of "representatives of leading British and United States construction firms and three American navy officials", to quote the Daily Telegraph of 30 March 1981, "seeking a multi-million pound contract to turn the Indian Ocean atoll (Diego Garcia) into a military fortress has arrived in Mauritius".

In the meantime, the giant U.S. aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Independence, accompanied by the destroyer U.S.S. Charles F. Adams and the tanker U.S.N.S. Passumpsic, with 5,000 marines on board, was in transit in Port Louis harbour. Police officers of the U.S.S. Independence had to be stationed at strategic points of the Jardin de la Compagnie to prevent any possible contact between their marines and the Ilois people. *

In the meantime, too, the Mauritian Prime Minister left for England. When he came back after having had talks with Margaret Thatcher, the Ilois hunger strike was already in its 18th day.

Two days after the Prime Minister's statement emphasizing—as in the past—that the Ilois problem was the exclusive concern of Great Britain, an agreement which necessitated four rounds of difficult negotiations was finally signed between the Mauritian Government on the one hand and the National support Front for the Ilois and the Ilois Committee of the Organisation Fraternelle on the other hand.

3. The Negotiations in London : The last Act?

The terms of the 4th April 1981 agreement constitute a historical turning point in the struggle of the people of Chagos. The most important aspect of the agreement concerns the decision to send at the earliest convenience a delegation comprising representatives of the

* See Annex 6, Open letter addressed to USS Independence Personnel.

Government, the Opposition, the Ilois and the National Support Front to negotiate with the British Government an additional compensation of £ 8 million "as spelt out in a memorandum dated 19th March 1981 to the British Government." *

The 1981 hunger strike of the 8 Ilois women had lasted 20 days - it was the longest and most bitter hunger strike in Mauritian history. The final outcome had a sweet and sour taste, but there was also the ironical prospect of a solution negotiated in London: the stage for the dénouement of the Ilois tragedy seems set in the British capital from where it originated sixteen years ago. On the 24th April 1981, the delegation was received by Mrs Lynda Chalker, under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Social Security, at Westminster House, the residence of the British High Commissioner in Mauritius, Mr. James Allan, who was also present. The meeting was a prelude to the negotiations with British officials in London due to start at the end of June.

16 years after having been dumped in the grim slums of Port Louis, the native people of Chagos, variously described as the Palestinians or as the Boat-people of the Indian Ocean, have staked all their hopes on the forthcoming negotiations in London. With the precious help and active support of The "1966 Society for Diego Garcians in Exile" and of the "Diego Garcia International Solidarity Committee set up in 1980, The people of the Chagos Islands rely on the solidarity of the British people to obtain from the U.K Government redress to which they are genuinely and legitimately entitled to as victims of super-power military build-up in the Indian Ocean.

The Negotiations in London

The terms of the 1981 agreement were a historical turning point in the struggle of the people of Chagos. The most important aspect of the agreement was the decision to end the military presence on the islands.

* See Annex for the text of the agreement, and Annex 5 for the U.K. memorandum.

Annex 5: Memorandum dated 19th March 1981

DEED OF ACCEPTANCE AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

This is the Deed of me (1) and the adult members of my family who have hereunto subscribed their names and seals.

I am an Ilois who left that part of British Indian Ocean Territory known as (2)

..... in the ship (3) on the day of 19..... never to return. My family who came with me are (4)

and the following children:

<u>Adult children's names</u>	<u>Addresses</u>	<u>Dates of Birth</u>
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<u>Infant children's names</u>	<u>Addresses</u>	<u>Dates of Birth</u>
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We know that the United Kingdom Government has already paid the Mauritius Government £ 650,000 for the resettlement of the Ilois people who came to Mauritius following the setting up of British Indian Ocean Territory and has offered to make available a further £1,250,000 for that purpose provided it is accepted by the Ilois in full and final settlement of all claims whatsoever upon the United Kingdom Government by the Ilois arising out of the following events: the creation of British Indian Ocean Territory, the closing of the plantations there, the departure or removal of those living or working there, the termination of their contracts, their transfer to and resettlement in Mauritius and their prohibition from ever returning to the Islands composing British Indian Ocean Territory ("the events") and of all such claims arising out of any incidents or circumstances occurring in the courts of the events or out of the consequences of the events, whether past, present or to come ("their incidents circumstances and consequences").

so that this money may be paid to help the Ilois

We appoint Bernard Shoriken of 14 Red Lion Square, London WC1 as our Attorney in accordance with S.10 of the Powers of Attorney Act 1971 and in particular we authorize him to receive the 1,250,000 on behalf of the Ilois and in such instalments and amounts and subject to such conditions as he in his absolute discretion and without need to make further reference to us, may agree with the United Kingdom Government.

We appoint him as our solicitor to act on our behalf in relation to all matters connected with the payment of the 1,250,000 and I, (5) authorize him to act on behalf of my infant children named above as their next friend.

- 1). Insert name and address of head of family
- 2). Insert name of Island
- 3). Insert name of ship and date of leaving BIOT
- 4). Insert name and address of wife
- 5). Insert name of head of family

3. We accept the money already paid to the Mauritian Government and the money to be paid to Mr Sheridan as aforesaid in such instalments as he shall agree in full and final settlement and discharge of all our claims however arising upon the United Kingdom Government (both upon the Crown in right of the United Kingdom and the Crown in right of British Indian Ocean Territory) and upon its servants agents and contractors in respect of the events their incidents circumstances and consequences and we further abandon all our claims and rights (if any) of whatsoever nature to return to British Indian Ocean Territory.
4. We understand accept and agree that by entering into this Deed we shall not be able to sue the United Kingdom Government in respect of the events their incidents circumstances and consequences and hereby covenant not to do so.
5. We agree that all questions concerning the validity and construction of this Deed and any disputes arising upon it shall be governed by English law and justiciable only in English Courts.

IN WITNESS whereof we have executed this Deed this day of 1979.

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by)
the said)
in the presence of:)

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by)
the said)
in the presence of:)

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by)
the said)
in the presence of:)

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in the presence of:)

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the said)
in the presence of:)

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by)
the said)
in the presence of:)

ANNEX 2

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its 20th session, September-December 1965

The General Assembly,

Having considered the question of Mauritius and other islands composing the Territory of Mauritius,

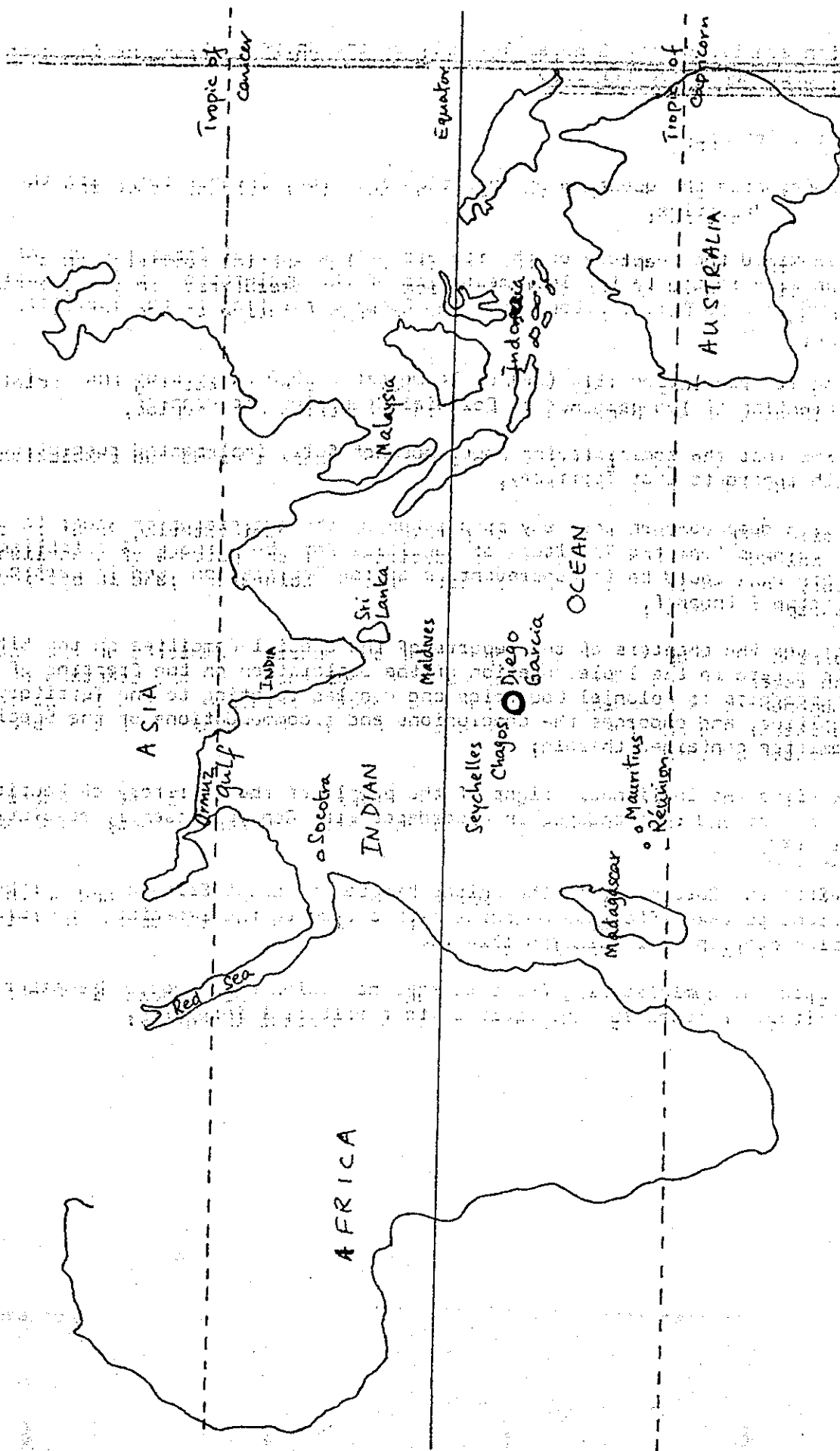
Having examined the chapters of the reports of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory of Mauritius,

Recalling its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

Regretting that the administering Power has not fully implemented resolution 1514 (XV) with regard to that Territory,

Noting with deep concern that any step taken by the administering Power to detach certain islands from the Territory of Mauritius for the purpose of establishing a military base would be in contravention of the Declaration, and in particular of paragraph 6 thereof,

1. Approves the chapters of the reports of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory of Mauritius, and endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee contained therein;
2. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of the Territory of Mauritius to freedom and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV);
3. Invites the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to take effective measures with a view to the immediate and full implementation of resolution 1514 (XV);
4. Invites the administering Power to take no action which would dismember the Territory of Mauritius and violate its territorial integrity.



WISHING TO

Table 2

Region	Adult Population	Return to Chagos	Go to Agalega	Stay in Mauritius	No. of Abstention
1. Bambous, Gros Caillou, Cité Richelieu, Petite Rivière	58	39	1	14	4
2. Batterie Cassée, Riche Terce Ste Croix, Terre Rouge, Le Hochet	92	92			
3. Beau Bassin, Rose Hill	40	15	3	20	2
4. Cassis, Les Salines, Bain des Dames	229	194	5	29	1
5. Cité la Cure	63	60	1	2	
6. Peilles, Guibies, C.R.N.W., Plaine Lauzun	60	60			
7. Port Louis, Tranquebar, Vallée Pitot	34	20		3	11
8. Pointe aux Sables	85	59	1	19	6
9. Roche Bois, Docker's Flat	338	275	7	38	18
10. Tombeau Bay	109	36		5	
11. Other Areas	51	45	3	3	68
Total	1,159	895	21	133	110

Wishes Expressed in Percentage

AGREEMENT

At a meeting held today between representatives of the Comité Ilois (O.F.), of the Front National de Soutien aux Ilois, and members of the Government headed by the Prime Minister, agreement was reached as follows:

- (i) The Government would make an advance of about Rs 3 million to meet the cost of payment of compensation to newly-registered Ilois on the 1978 criteria, and would deduct this sum from such further compensation as may be given by the British Government. Payment as early as possible will be preceded by the signature of a legal instrument by the Ilois concerned.
- (ii) A delegation composed of the following would proceed at the earliest opportunity to U.K:

(a)	Minister of Social Security (Leader)		
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(b)	A minister from the P.M.S.D.		
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(c)	Dr. The Hon. J.B. David		
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(d)	Hon. P. Berenger		
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(e)	Hon. J.C. de l'Estrac		
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(f)	Mrs C. Alexi		
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(g)	Mrs L. Naïck		
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(h)	Mr Elie Michel	Ilois representatives on Ad Hoc Committee	
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(i)	One representative of the Front National de Soutien aux Ilois to be designated by the Front.		
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- (iii) The delegation would take up with the British Government the following:

(a)	An additional compensation of £ 8 million as spelt out in a memorandum dated the 19th March 1981 to the British Government.		
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(b)	Status of refugee to Ilois and the question of Nationality of Ilois.		
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(c)	Any other matters related to the case of the displaced Ilois.		
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- (iv) The Government agreed that 3 Ilois representatives should assist the 3 officers of the Ministry of Social Security in dealing with cases of destitute Ilois and that the Government would give generous assistance after each case had been studied by these 6 persons.

For/on behalf of Ilois

SIGNATURE

ORGANISATION

For the Government

(S. Ramgoolam)
Prime MinisterPrime Minister's Office
Port Louis.

24th April, 1981.

19th March 1981.

MEMORANDUM TO THE UK GOVERNMENT

- (1) Please find enclosed a copy of a memorandum submitted to the Government of Mauritius today. Also enclosed, a copy of a "Special Report of the Public Accounts Committee of the 1980 session" on the "Financial and other aspects of the 'sale' of Chagos Islands and the resettlement of the displaced Ilois.
- (2) As you must already be aware, a certain number of Ilois women, one of them nearly 70 years old, have gone on a hunger strike as from last Monday, 16th March 1981, and mean to carry on to the bitter end if necessary. One of them, aged 60 years old, had to be taken to hospital today but is holding on.
- (3) You must also already be aware of the desperate situation the Ilois community has been in since they were torn from their native land between 1965 and 1973.
- (4) We are aware of the reply given to Mr Mc Namara in the House of Commons (Vol 978 No. 114) on the 11th February 1980 by Mr Luce when he said that: "In November 1979 the legal representative for the Ilois community presented to them Her Majesty's Government's offer of £1.25 million. We understand it is still under consideration. Since the main object of the offer is to facilitate the resettlement of the former islanders of Mauritius, those who accept will be required to abandon any claim to return to the Chagos Archipelago".
- (5) As you are already aware, the Ilois refused to sign at the end of 1979 the "deed of acceptance" presented to them by Mr B. Sheridan because of that part of it which referred to their "prohibition from ever returning to the Islands composing British Indian Ocean Territory".
- (6) It is clear that this offer of £1.25 million from Her Majesty's Government is an admission on its part that the £650,000 it paid in 1973 to the Government of Mauritius for the resettlement of the Ilois people was totally inadequate.
- (7) It is our contention that this offer of £1.25 million is itself totally inadequate and should not be tied in any way with the rights to return one day to their native island.
- (8) In view of the above, we urge Her Majesty's Government to make available as rapidly as practicable the sum of £8 millions as a final compensation for the proper resettlement of the Ilois community. We need not refer again here to the urgency of the matter being given that the Ilois women referred to above have reached today their 5th day on hunger strike and mean to carry on until they will have obtained a positive reply to their requests to the government of Mauritius and to Her Majesty's Government.
- (9) This sum of £8 millions has been calculated on the following basis:
 - (a) Each Ilois family should receive the following:
 - ((i) A plot of land of 100 toises = Rs 35,000.
 - ((ii) A house of 1,000 sq. ft. = Rs 100,000.
 - ((iii) An allowance to start a family business = Rs 15,000.

Total = Rs 150,000.

- (b) This per family compensation should be made available to 900 families (number quoted by Mr Hervé Silva, who has just completed an official survey of the Ilois community, at the last meeting of the official Ad Hoc Committee on the Resettlement of Ilois, held on Monday the 9th of March 1981).

This therefore amounts to a total sum of Rs 135,000,000. (i.e. 900 x Rs 150,000.

- (c) Further more, the Ilois community considers that an additional amount should be paid to cover the collective needs of the Ilois community (such as for a Community Centre, for a training and education programme etc., amounting to a sum of Rs 15 millions.)

- (d) The individual and collective elements of the compensation amount to a total sum of Rs 150,000,000 which comes to just over £8 millions at the current rate of exchange.

- (10) We undertake to provide further information about the mechanism for receiving and distributing the money, when the British Government informs us of its willingness to negotiate on the above proposals.

- (11) We however reserve our right to add to those proposals after further discussions among the Ilois representatives

ELIE MICHEL

Mrs. C. ALEXIS

Mrs. L. NAICK

(for the Comité Ilois-O.F., being the 3 Ilois representatives on the above committee)

KISHORE MUNDIL

ALAIN LARIDON

for the Front National de Soutien aux Ilois (consisting of the following organisations: MMM, PSM, GWF, FTU, OUA, CDMO, IDP, Linion Etidien Moris, MCPS, The Joint Ilois Committee and the Comité Soutien Ilois).

ANNEX 6

Open letter addressed to all personnel aboard U.S.S. "Independence"

April 1981

Mauritius

Dear Personnel on U.S.S. "Independence",

You may wish to know the facts behind the U.S. military base at Diego Garcia:

1. The inhabitants of Diego Garcia and the surrounding islands (Chagos Archipelago), were from 1965 onwards forcibly removed by the British Authorities, in order to lease a "de-populated island" to the U.S. for use as a military base.
2. These islanders known here as "Ilois" were dumped in the slums of Port Louis - without housing, without work, and without the means to live a decent life - and have since lived 16 years in abject poverty, disinherited on the earth.
3. Only after years of struggling for their rights, have some of them received a pittance (less than \$ U.S 1000) as compensation, paid by the Mauritian Government in 1978 (although this first compensation was received from the British Government in 1972).
4. The Ilois have continued their fight for a decent life and have recently been offered a second and final compensation by the British Authorities.

HUNGER STRIKE

5. There is at present a hunger strike, now in its third week, by 8 Ilois women (5 being in hospital) in front of the British High Commission, in Port Louis.
6. The demand of this hunger strike are:
 - (a) Payment of the remainder of the first compensation by the Mauritian Government.
 - (b) Payment of a greatly increased second compensation by the British Government, to allow proper resettlement of the Ilois in Mauritius, until such time as they can go back to the Chagos Islands.
 - (c) That the U.S. Government assumes its responsibilities towards the Ilois.

APPEAL

7. We appeal to you, as a citizen of the United States of America, to put as much pressure as you can on your government, to assume its responsibilities towards the ex-inhabitants of the island of Diego Garcia (and the surrounding islands), especially now that billions of dollars are being spent on Diego Garcia to achieve the military aims of the U.S.
8. You may for example consider writing to your congressman, to urge him into action.

We hope you will, in addition, take steps to ensure the dissemination of the information and views contained in this open letter, to all your colleagues on board, to people you meet at your future ports of call, and especially to your fellow citizens, back in the United States of America,

Long live the friendship between the people of the U.S.A. and the people of Mauritius.

"National Support Front For the Chagos Islanders"

K. MUNDIL & A. LARIDON,

P.O. Box 1006

PORT LOUIS.

The islanders have continued their fight for a decent life and have recently been offered a second and final compensation by the British authorities.

HUMAN RIGHTS

There is no doubt that the islanders are in the United Kingdom by a long margin (70 per cent) in the United Kingdom and the British High Commission in Port Louis.

The islanders are in the United Kingdom.

(a) The islanders are in the United Kingdom.

(b) The islanders are in the United Kingdom.

(c) The islanders are in the United Kingdom.

The islanders are in the United Kingdom.

The islanders are in the United Kingdom.