



*Ref Say*  
Department of State **TELEGRAM**

*Tr Def 15 Ind - US*

CONFIDENTIAL 463

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CONFIDENTIAL LONDON 5914 *US*

SUBJECT: BIOT; RESETTLEMENT OF CHAGOS WORKERS

REF: LONDON 1724 *Ref Sec 6 in Def 15*

1. FON SECY DOUGLAS-HOME SAW PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM ON JUNE 23. PRIOR TO MEETING, FCO TOLD US HOME WOULD INFORM RAM THAT HMG PREPARED TO FINANCE FULL COST OF RESETTLEMENT PROJECT EARLIER APPROVED BY GOM (REFTEL). TOTAL UK FUNDING POUNDS 650 THOUSAND. IN RETURN FOR OFFER, HOME WOULD REQUEST WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM GOM THAT THIS CONTRIBUTION WOULD DISCHARGE IN FULL ALL BRITISH OBLIGATIONS TOWARD GOM WITH RESPECT TO FORMER INHABITANTS OF CHAGOS.

*(2)* 2. FCO BELIEVES THAT IF RAM PROVIDES SUCH WRITTEN ASSURANCE, THIS WILL PROVIDE LARGE MEASURE OF PROTECTION AGAINST POTENTIAL POLITICAL FALLOUT FROM RELOCATION OPERATION. HOWEVER, FCO RECOGNIZES CHARGE COULD STILL BE MADE THAT UK HAS FAILED TO MEET OBLIGATIONS UNDER UN CHARTER TO FORMER "INHABITANTS" OF ISLANDS, AND BRITISH DEFENSE THAT THEY ARE NOT TRUE "INHABITANTS" BUT LONG-TERM CONTRACT WORKERS IS SOMEWHAT CLOUDED BY VARIOUS CITIZENSHIP CLAIMS OF ILOIS. FCO THEREFORE HOPES TO AVOID AS FAR AS POSSIBLE ANY PUBLICITY ABOUT RESETTLEMENT SCHEME.

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