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United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State
for Political-Military Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520

APR 29 2004

CONFIDENTIAL

DECL: 04/29/04

Dear Mr. Culshaw:

I enjoyed talking to you on March 10 regarding the U.S. Naval Support Facility at Diego Garcia and the former Chagos Islanders. Your Government's continued support of the U.S. military presence in the Chagos Archipelago remains a vital cornerstone of our mutual defense posture and our ability to pursue the Global War on Terrorism.

The United States Government shares your concern for the plight of the former Chagos Islanders. As you know, we too are currently facing a class action suit in the U.S. District Court brought by the former Islanders. We have reviewed in detail your proposal for a compensatory trust fund to alleviate the poverty of the most needy former Islanders. However, we must respectfully decline participation in this trust fund because, after careful review, we are unable to resolve complications this initiative would cause in our budget process and our own equities relative to this complex issue.

Our Bilateral Political-Military talks this May offer us the opportunity to address other issues arising from the U.S. presence on Diego Garcia. I am confident that the continued close cooperation between our Governments will serve us well in ensuring that our mutual interests are preserved, and look forward to working with you to that end.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: FRANK H PEREZ
DATE/CASE ID: 04 DEC 2006 200503422

Sincerely

Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr.

Robert N. Culshaw,
Director of the Americas and Overseas Territories,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
British Embassy,
Washington, D.C.

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Classified by PM Assistant Secretary Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr.

Reason: E.O. 12958, 1.4 (b) and (d)

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