

UK-Mauritius Chagos Deal Secures Diego Garcia Base Operations



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LONDON, Jan. 20: The 2025 agreement between the United Kingdom and Mauritius to transfer sovereignty over the Chagos Islands ensures the continued operation of the joint U.S.-UK military base on Diego Garcia, a British government spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The move follows U.S. President Donald Trump’s criticism, calling the handover “great stupidity” on social media, claiming the UK acted “for no reason whatsoever” and raised national security

concerns.

The British spokesperson emphasized that the UK “will never compromise” on security. The handover was necessary after court rulings threatened Britain’s legal position over the islands, potentially affecting base operations. Under the agreement, Mauritius gains sovereignty while Diego Garcia will be leased back to Britain and the United States.

Historically, the Chagos Islands were separated from Mauritius in 1965 when it was a British colony. The UK invited the U.S. to establish a base on Diego Garcia, which involved relocating thousands of residents. In 2019, the International Court of Justice ruled Britain had illegally separated the islands and should cede control to Mauritius.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer signed the agreement last year, formalizing the transfer and reinforcing security arrangements. The deal balances Mauritius’ sovereignty with strategic defense priorities, ensuring the continued operation of one of the region’s key military facilities.