

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
NOVEMBER 26 2019, THE TIMES



CHAGOS DEADLINE

Sir, The six-month deadline for implementing the UN general assembly resolution requiring the UK to return the Chagos archipelago to Mauritius and co-operate with that country over the resettlement of Chagossians expired on November 22. The Foreign Office has ignored it.

Chagos was excised in 1965 and its inhabitants deported between 1968 and 1973. The UK is isolated in the UN on this issue; now that it is on the UN general assembly agenda it will continue to dog British diplomacy. Litigation, which began in 1999, continues in the Court of Appeal. The case could reach the European Court of Human Rights and the International Criminal Court given that expulsion of a people is akin to a crime against humanity. The next government must bring an end to this humanitarian tragedy, which continues to undermine our reputation for upholding the rule of law and human rights. We cannot preach to other governments what we are unwilling to do ourselves. And we cannot afford further litigation and international isolation.

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