

Give Chagos back to Mauritius

Your article "Brown can build his green legacy on coral reefs" (Charles Clover, Comment, December 27) suggests that there are only two obstacles in the way of the establishment of the Marine Protected Area around the Chagos archipelago, namely, "the claim of the Chagossians — coconut farmers descended from Mauritian French [sic] stock, who were shamefully evicted by the military in the 1970s" and "what to do about a tuna fishery that pays the Treasury about £1m a year".

However, there is no mention of the illegal excision of the Chagos archipelago from Mauritius before Mauritius was granted independence by the United Kingdom, an act condemned by the international community on the grounds that it was in breach of international law.

The right of Mauritius to enjoy sovereignty over the archipelago, and the failure of the promoters of the marine project to address this issue meaningfully, are serious matters. There can be no legitimacy to the project without the issue of sovereignty and resettlement being addressed to the satisfaction of the government of Mauritius.

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