# UK government's rushed decision on Chagos Islands raises concerns



The UK government, now under the leadership of Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, is on the brink of making a calamitous decision regarding the Chagos Islands. This initiative has stunned many with its rush towards a controversial agreement that sees the cession of sovereignty over the islands to Mauritius, all while evading thorough parliamentary scrutiny. Utilizing the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, they are attempting to limit the debate in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords to a mere three weeks—a schedule reminiscent of a government too eager to push through an agenda without due diligence.

Financially, the proposed terms are nothing short of reckless. The UK would be obligated to pay Mauritius £90 million annually, with inflation adjustments, over an astonishing 99 years. Furthermore, it includes the leasing back of Diego Garcia, a strategically critical military installation that hosts a significant US military base pivotal to the UK's security and defence strategy. Facilitating operations in the Indo-Pacific region, this base should not be bartered away in what appears to be a poorly thought out diplomatic bargain.

Stephen Doughty, the minister for British overseas territories, defended this hasty deal with claims of safeguarding UK security and that of our allies. His remarks in Parliament fail to address the potential long-term ramifications of such a precipitous action: “This deal is rooted in a rational and hard-headed determination to protect UK security and that of our allies.” However, what Doughty overlooks is that allowing such a critical element of UK sovereignty to be decided without appropriate scrutiny shows a blatant disregard for democratic process and accountability.

The alarm bells are ringing as this fast-tracked deal draws widespread criticism. Stakeholders are uniting in concern that the hastiness undermines parliamentary integrity, effectively ignoring essential issues that demand thorough evaluation before the British government relinquishes control over the Chagos Islands. As fierce discussions unfold, the implications of this agreement could prove detrimental, impacting not just the UK’s sovereignty but its standing with both Mauritius and the United States, while clearly demonstrating the dangers of a government that appears more interested in settling quick political scores than securing the nation’s interests.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/uk-mauritius-close-deal-chagos-islands-after-us-120378409> - This article supports the claim that the UK and Mauritius are finalizing a deal to transfer sovereignty over the Chagos Islands, with the UK leasing back the Diego Garcia military base. It also mentions U.S. approval and the strategic importance of the base.
* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/trump-approves-uk-mauritius-deal-for-chagos-islands/articleshow/119883762.cms> - This article corroborates the details of the agreement, including the 99-year lease of Diego Garcia and the challenges faced by the deal, such as criticism from U.S. Republicans and UK political parties.
* <https://classe-internationale.com/2024/12/15/the-sovereignty-transfer-of-the-chagos-islands/> - This article provides background on the sovereignty transfer, discussing historical and legal aspects, as well as security concerns related to the deal.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/constitutional-reform-and-governance-act-2010> - This resource includes information about the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, which can be used to understand the legal framework behind the UK's decision-making process regarding treaties and agreements.
* <https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/new-parliament-2019/uk-parliamentary-scrutiny-of-treaties/> - This webpage discusses the process of treaty scrutiny in the UK Parliament, which is relevant to understanding the government's approach to parliamentary debate on the Chagos Islands agreement.