

Twenty-fourth Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations
(31 July-4 August 2006)

Draft Statement by the Government of the Republic of Mauritius
Under Agenda Item

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation wishes to exercise its right of reply to clarify some issues raised by in its statement earlier today.

We would like to state for the record that there are no indigenous peoples on the Chagos Archipelago and that the Chagossians who used to inhabit and work on the Chagos Archipelago are all from Mauritius. All Chagossians are full-fledged citizens of the Republic of Mauritius and they derive their status as citizens of Mauritius from the Constitution of Mauritius.

The Government of Mauritius has always expressed concern over the plight of the Chagossians who were forcibly displaced from the Chagos Archipelago as a result of the unlawful detachment of that Archipelago from the territory of Mauritius prior to its independence, for the purpose of establishing a military base.

Mauritius maintains its sovereignty over the entire Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, as it has always done in the past. The Government of Mauritius will continue to press for the exercise of its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago whilst also supporting the right of return of the Chagossians to the Chagos Archipelago.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.