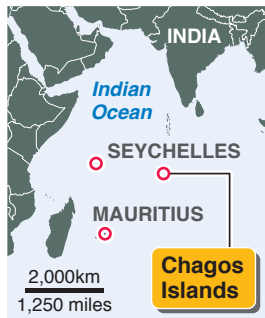


# Britain to hand over last African colony

The United Kingdom says it is giving up sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius after a decades-long dispute



**Chagos Islands**

**CHAGOS ISLANDS**  
(British Indian Ocean Territory)



**Diego Garcia: Naval/air base**

Land Shallow reef Submerged reef

## CHAGOS HISTORY

■ **1814:** Britain takes possession of islands after capturing French colony of Mauritius

■ **1965:** Mauritius sells islands to Britain three years before it gains independence. Islands become **British Indian Ocean Territory**



■ **1966:** Largest island, Diego Garcia, leased to U.S. for military base

■ **1967-73:** Britain moves around 2,000 islanders to Mauritius and Seychelles to make way for base

■ **1982:** Britain pays small amount of compensation to some Chagos islanders in Mauritius

■ **2017:** UN asks **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** to examine legal status of islands

■ **2019:** ICJ says UK should end rule over islands as soon as possible

■ **Oct 2024:** UK to cede sovereignty. Deal allows Mauritius to resettle islands, except Diego Garcia, where UK-U.S. base will remain



*B-52 bombers at Diego Garcia – base has played key strategic role in U.S. operations in Indian Ocean*