

UK Note Verbale on continued extension of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea to BIOT

The United Kingdom Mission of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to a Note Verbale from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations to the Secretary-General dated 9 January 2020 (N° 03/20 (NY/UN/395), contained in a Communication by the Secretary-General on 31 January 2020. This concerns the United Kingdom's extension of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).

The United Kingdom rejects the claims contained in the Note Verbale of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius. The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the territory of BIOT, which has been under continuous British sovereignty since 1814. Mauritius has never held sovereignty over the islands that now form BIOT and the United Kingdom does not recognise its claim.

The United Kingdom's position in respect to our continued sovereignty over BIOT is set out in more detail in the United Kingdom's submission to the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/834) dated 18 May 2020.

The United Kingdom therefore continues to extend the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to BIOT and apply its provisions.

The United Kingdom kindly requests that the present objection to the Note-Verbale be duly recorded, circulated and published, including in any relevant publication issued by the United Nations.

The Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.