

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Mauritius Monthly Briefing April 2026

Mauritius Summary 27 April 2026

The United Kingdom (UK) places the Chagos Island deal indefinitely on hold after the parliamentary session to approve the bill elapses and it fails to get the United States (US) approval. The Mauritian government reacts strongly to the announcement, stating that it will do whatever is possible to regain sovereignty of the islands. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) releases a critical report detailing the extensive economic repercussion of the Middle East conflict on Mauritius' economy, specifically in the energy, food, and tourism sectors. Mauritius, Seychelles, and Madagascar revoke Taiwan's presidential aircraft flight permissions – cancelling Taiwan's president's trip to Eswatini – likely due to pressure from China.

The UK indefinitely places the Chagos Island deal on hold

The **United Kingdom (UK)** announced on 11 April that it has set [aside](#) the bill to return the **Chagos Islands** to **Mauritius**, citing a lack of support from the **United States (US)** to proceed with the deal. The UK government was forced place the legislation on hold as the current parliamentary session to approve the bill has [elapsed](#) and the US did not reapprove the deal in time. The US' support is necessary for the UK to sign off on the deal as the two countries share a joint military base on the biggest island, **Diego Garcia**.

A UK government spokesperson noted that the UK has only ever said that it will proceed with the deal if it has the full support from the US. The US rescinded its support over the deal in the beginning of 2026, with US President **Donald Trump** (2015-2021; 2024-present), [commenting](#) on his social media platform, **Truth Social**, that it is “a great act of stupidity” to release control of the islands, especially amidst the political turmoil in the **Middle East**.

The Mauritian government has reacted very strongly to the announcement of the deal being dropped, noting that it would [exhaust](#) all options available to regain sovereignty of the island - even [hinting](#) that it is willing to take legal action against the UK. To try salvage relations between the two countries, the UK [sent](#) a delegation to Mauritius in the last week of April to discuss possible ways forward. During the visit, the Mauritian government stated it is willing to give the UK until the end of July to finalise the deal.

Considering the initial optimism regarding the deal and Mauritius' eagerness to push the deal through, this significant setback in the process is highly likely to have consequences on UK-Mauritius relations. Although the two countries have largely shared positive bilateral relations, economic risks are low as the UK is not one of Mauritius' largest trading partners. As of [2024](#) Mauritius only exported 6% of its commodities to the UK; total export trade was worth \$165m. Similarly, the UK is one of Mauritius' smaller [import](#) destinations, as Mauritius only imported \$128m worth of goods from the country in 2024.

However, with possible deteriorating relations, Mauritius is more likely to face increased geopolitical risks. One of the US' major concerns regarding the Chagos Island deal is Mauritius' relations with **China**, even though the island only shares significant trade relations with China and not any formal military alignments. If relations between the UK and Mauritius deteriorate significantly, it could see Mauritius move its alignment towards China and a deepening of their relations. This would increase the US' concern over China and Mauritius' bilateral relations.

The fallout of the deal is also likely to have consequences on broader cooperation within the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**. Amidst the uproar of the UK indefinitely putting the Chagos Island deal on hold, the **Maldives** has spoken out against the deal, saying that Mauritius has no real claim of sovereignty over the Chagos Islands. Maldives President **Mohamed Muizzu's** (2023-present) office [released](#) a statement saying that it is relieved of the deal being lapsed and is not in favour of Mauritius receiving sovereignty over the island as the Maldives also has a claim over its sovereignty. In 2019, the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** issued a ruling that the UK's separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965 was unlawful, demanding a swift end to UK administration. This led to **United Nations (UN)** resolutions recognising Chagos as part of Mauritius

UNDP provides next steps forward for Mauritius regarding escalating energy costs

The **United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Economics Lab** [released](#) a report at the end of March considering the economic implications of the Middle East conflict for Mauritius, with immediate economic repercussions expected as it imports 100% of its crude oil and natural gas. The report also highlighted that Mauritius faces a [triple](#) economic threat as the conflict will impact the energy, food, and tourism sectors.

Mauritius' reliance on energy imports means the island is facing an energy price shock, and it is anticipated that electricity prices will increase in the immediate term, which will increase operational costs for businesses and public services in the medium term. To this point, the government [announced](#) on 10 April that as of 1 May, electricity tariffs are set to rise by 15% due to rising energy costs, a direct consequence of the conflict in the Middle East. To help guarantee energy security, the government requested assistance from its main partner, **India**. The Indian government responded that it would supply Mauritius with oil and gas but as the conflict drags on, this arrangement may have to be adjusted.

The UNDP report also noted that food inflation is also set to increase due to the rising transportation and fertiliser costs. Apart from increased food prices, the conflict also undermines food security on the island, as Mauritius [imports](#) up to 77% of its total food requirements. This has created a serious risks of food insecurity as limited fuel availability for ships to travel to the island or transportation disruptions is the current reality.

Finally, the report highlights that due to increasing travel costs, the island is facing vulnerability in its tourism sector. The Mauritian economy is dependent on tourism as a key revenue stream. Tourism [accounts](#) for 7.6% of GDP and about 15% of its workforce is directly employed through the tourism sector.

In response to the three highlighted threats, the report lays out a three step action plan. In the immediate term (0-3 months), it encourages the government to prioritise stability and to prevent and manage any immediate economic shocks and support target social groups. In the short to medium term (three months to three years), the report suggests accelerating investment into renewable energy and incentivising domestic agricultural production. In the long term (three years and beyond), the report suggests the island move completely away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy, and that the government promotes greater economic diversification.

While these suggestions are substantial to assist the government in mitigating the current, and possible future energy shocks, it is not feasible to completely move away from fossil fuels. Shifting to renewable energy will require significant investment into energy storage facilities and grid stability. Apart from technical challenges, the unstable weather patterns due to climate change are also a risk for renewable energy. While moving away from fossil fuels might be an ideal to aspire towards, it does not necessarily eliminate energy insecurity. The report does also make a valid point in encouraging the government to promote domestic agriculture production to ensure sufficient food security.

Mauritius is in a precarious position due to the country being dependent on international trade to supply it with food and energy. Even if the conflict in the Middle East is resolved in the near future,

this turmoil serves as a powerful reminder for the island to install better food and energy security systems.

Mauritius revokes Taiwan's flight permission

Taiwan's President, **Lai Ching-te** (2024-present), announced on 21 April that the presidency had to cancel plans for a Taiwanese state visit to **eSwatini** because **Seychelles**, Mauritius, and **Madagascar** unilaterally revoked the flight permits for Taiwan's presidential aircraft to cross their countries. A Taiwanese government spokesperson said that Chinese authorities placed these African countries under strong pressure to revoke the aircraft's flight permissions.

China [applauded](#) Seychelles, Mauritius, and Madagascar for their cooperation in forcing Lai Ching-te to cancel his trip to eSwatini, which is Taiwan's only remaining ally on the African continent, as eSwatini still recognises Taiwan – only one of 12 nations globally. Mauritius has as of yet not released an official statement regarding the incident.

As mentioned, Mauritius and China share no direct military alliances but China's pressure on the island to revoke flight permissions was highly likely driven by economic pressure, indicating the economic influence and power China holds over the Mauritian economy. The incident has unequivocally drawn the island further into the current geopolitical tensions.

Furthermore, this incident unintentionally adds further merit to the US' argument that Mauritius is unduly influenced by China and in turn places any future negotiations over the Chagos Islands under pressure. The US could use this as evidence that it cannot trust Mauritius to adhere to the initial deal under which the UK and US are able to rent Diego Garcia. Mauritius has also often promoted a stance of non-alignment but this incident highlights that this is not always the case.

Planner

Jul 2026 (Mauritius) 18 th United States-Africa Business Summit
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Chronology

23 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius) Techcabal**. Mauritius introduces the **National AI Strategy 2025-2029** alongside the **Fairness, Accountability, Inclusiveness and Integrity (FAIR)** guidelines, which aim to present a unified set of ethical and operational standards for Artificial Intelligence (AI) use within the country;

22 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius) Government Information Services**. An agreement is signed between **France's** state-owned power utility, **Électricité de France (EDF)**, and the **Central Electricity Board (CEB)** to strengthen the CEB's technical and operational capacities through a structured program of training and knowledge transfer;

20 Apr 2026 **Maharashtra (India) Mid-day**. A high-level delegation from **Mauritius** visits the **Maharashtra National Cadet Corps (NCC)** as part of a youth exchange to explore avenues of collaboration in youth development;

20 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius) Government Information Services**. The energy and public utilities ministry together with the **Central Water Authority (CWA)** and **Water Resources Commission** is working on developing a nationwide restriction plan in response to low reservoir levels;

12 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius) India Foundation**. Port Louis hosts the **9th Indian Ocean Conference** under the theme 'Collective Stewardship for Indian Ocean Governance', bringing together experts from across the **Indian Ocean Region** to increase regional cooperation;

11 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius) Financial Times**. **United Kingdom (UK)** abandons legislation to transfer sovereignty of the **Chagos Islands** back to Mauritius after the **United States (US)** withheld its necessary formal backing for the deal;

8 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius)** *Government Information Services*. The national workshop on 'Unlocking Trade-In Services Opportunities for youth and Women-led Businesses in SADC countries' kicks off in Mauritius, bringing together various stakeholders from the **Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)** to equip youth and women entrepreneurs with practical skills to grow within SADC regional markets;

7 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius)** *APA News*. Energy minister, **Patrick Gervais Assirvaden**, announces a three year plan to add 405MW of new generation capacity to the national grid;

6 Apr 2026 **Port Louis (Mauritius)** *Wion*. Mauritius and **India** sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) under which India pledges to implement projects worth \$655m to modernise the island's infrastructure and healthcare system;

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