

# “TO-MORROW IN CHAGOS”

## Chagossian Heritage Villages in Peros Banhos and Salomon

The restoration and reconstruction of small **heritage villages & infrastructure** in **Peros Banhos** and **Salomon** is a deeply meaningful and strategically important initiative for the Chagossian resettlers; as these villages would serve **three interconnected purposes: residential use, cultural preservation, and tourism development**. It will be the **heart** of the resettlement.

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### 1. Cultural and Historical Reconnection

- Prior to their forced removal in 1971–1973, Chagossians lived in vibrant, self-sufficient villages rooted in a **creole culture** that blended African, Malagasy, Indian, and French influences.
  - Rebuilding these villages provides descendants with a tangible **link to their ancestral identity**, traditional knowledge, and a way of life that revolved around **coconut plantations, fishing, music, dance, storytelling, and Catholic religious practices**.
  - These sites would act as **living museums** of memory and pride, offering opportunities for **intergenerational transmission of traditions**, language, and craftsmanship.
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### 2. Residential and Community Use

- With the gradual resettlement process, restored villages will provide **eco-conscious, culturally respectful housing** for Chagossians returning to their islands.
  - These villages will incorporate **modern prefabricated, insulated and solar-powered housing** while maintaining the aesthetic of **traditional architecture** (wooden walls, thatched, pitched roofs & communal kitchens).
  - Community structures like **chapels, communal kitchens, village halls, and boat docks** will help restore a sense of unity and autonomy, anchoring a renewed and sustainable lifestyle in harmony with nature.
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### 3. Tourism and Economic Empowerment

- These restored villages can become **cultural tourism destinations**, offering immersive experiences for international visitors and Chagossian-descendants living abroad.
  - Activities such as **guided historical tours, artisan workshops, culinary experiences, and eco-lodging** will promote cultural exchange and generate local income.
  - This tourism model emphasizes **low-impact, sustainable development**, aligned with conservation goals and the sensitive ecology of the Chagos.
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## Conclusion

The rebuilding of Chagossian heritage villages in Peros Banhos and Salomon is not only a **symbolic act of justice and reparation**, but also a **practical foundation for sustainable living and cultural revival**. It is a vision of **dignity, remembrance, and resilience**, paving the way for a future where the Chagossian Resettlers can live, thrive, and welcome the world on their own ancestral soil.