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KR victims question Jarvis's politics

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Victims representing themselves at Cambodia's war crimes tribunal have sent a letter to Helen Jarvis, head of the court's Victims' Unit asking her to explain "how she can lead" victims of a Leninist regime when she is currently a member of a Leninist party herself.

Defence lawyers were first to voice concern over the recent appointment of Jarvis, who before changing portfolios at the start of the month was the court's chief of public affairs.

Lawyers for former leaders Nuon Chea and Ieng Sary said that an open letter signed by Jarvis declaring, "We too are Marxists and believe that 'the ends justify the means'," made her radically at odds with the job's requirements.

"We, civil parties, would like your response to the following ... How can you lead us, victims of Leninist theory and ideology?" a copy of the letter obtained by the Post stated.

Jarvis said Thursday she had received the letter and was in contact with the civil parties.

Court Deputy Director of Administration Knut Rosandhaug said last week he "fully supports" Jarvis's right to her own political opinion.