

Kasper-Ansermet: Khmer Rouge Tribunal Staff Tampering with Case 004
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Current and former staff at the Khmer Rouge tribunal have criminally interfered with investigations into government opposed Case 004 and their actions have been reported to prosecutors within the Cambodian court system, the outgoing reserve international co-investigating judge said on Friday.

In his final statement in the role, Laurent Kasper-Ansermet slammed staff at the court, including his Cambodian counterpart You Bunleng, whose conduct the Swiss national said amounted to “a serious interference with the conduct of the judicial investigation in Case Files 003 and 004”.

“The Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge has therefore brought this matter to the attention of the Supreme Council of the Magistracy of the Kingdom of Cambodia,” Kasper-Ansermet said in his statement.

Before departing the court on Friday, Kasper-Ansermet said he had also reported the results of his own internal investigation of the interference by court staff in the two government-opposed cases 003 and 004 to prosecution authorities in Cambodia.

After announcing his resignation in March, Kasper-Ansermet issued a lengthy note describing the “egregious dysfunctions” at the court including a mafia-like system of orders, originating from You Bunleng and disseminated throughout offices involved in investigations in cases 003 and 004, to block the Swiss national and his investigators from conducting their work.

In a press release on Friday, Kasper-Ansermet described a “highly hostile environment” – indicating matters have not improved. He could not be reached yesterday.

His successor has not been announced, but two nominations for an international co-investigating judge and a reserve will be given to the government and Supreme Council of the Magistracy for endorsement shortly, UN Special Expert for the tribunal David Scheffer said in a meeting on Friday with Deputy Prime Minister Sok An.

Sok An told Scheffer that Kasper-Ansermet’s concerns were groundless, government spokesman Ek Tha said.

“[Sok An] said to Mr David Scheffer: ‘He [Kasper-Ansermet] has made a statement of problems from no problems’,” Ek Tha said yesterday, adding Cambodia’s main concern

was to see the tribunal proceed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

“Money doesn’t grow on trees, you know, and the donors will get bored,” Ek Tha said. “The government does not want to see the cases in limbo.”

Sam Prachea Manith, director of the minister’s cabinet at the Ministry of Justice, said yesterday that he had not received any complaint or letter addressed to the Supreme Council of the Ministry about tribunal matters.

“I work for the administration office [so I would know],” he said.

Cambodian co-prosecutor Chea Leang, who serves as the general prosecutor at the national Supreme Court and sits on the Supreme Council of the Magistracy, which refused to endorse the UN nomination of Kasper-Ansermet, said his accusations were baseless.

“There is no proof, he is leaving, so he is just making pain for others,” Chea Leang said.