

## **UN expert has final say on judge**

**Bridget di Certo**

**July 18, 2012**

UN Special Expert David Scheffer has hit back at criticisms of his recent remarks to news agency VOA Khmer, saying his remarks were “misunderstood”.

Last week, Scheffer was quoted by VOA as saying the problems plaguing investigations into the two government-opposed cases at the tribunal could be overcome by a new international judge who had “greater cooperation with the government”.

“I was referring to the fact that the new International Co-Investigating Judge, when officially announced, will have been formally appointed by the Supreme Council of the Magistracy,” Scheffer said in a statement yesterday.

“Thus the obstacles faced by the prior judge in his dealings both internally and externally (such as easy access to witnesses and various logistical issues in the field) because of his lack of a second official appointment by the SCM likely would be diminished,” Scheffer said in a separate email to the Post.

The SCM refused to endorse the UN’s nomination of Laurent Kasper-Ansermet, catalysing a fierce divide between Cambodian and UN staff at the Khmer Rouge tribunal over the authority and legitimacy of Kasper-Ansermet’s judicial actions.

Scheffer also highlighted the UN’s firm position that Swiss judge had full legal authority despite the absence of a second SCM appointment.

Co-Investigating Judge Siegfried Blunk quit the tribunal last year citing perceptions of government interference.