

**UN Faces Tough Decision in Appointing New Judge: Analyst  
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The resignation of a second investigating judge at the Khmer Rouge tribunal has put the United Nations at a crossroads, a leading rights advocate says.

The UN must now decide whether it will again replace the judge, who will face two cases that are opposed by senior government officials, or give up on the court altogether, Ou Virak, president of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights, told “Hello VOA” on Monday.

Swiss investigating judge Laurent Kasper-Ansermet announced his resignation last week, making him the second UN-appointed judge to vacate that post.

The judge said he battled with obstruction from within his office and his Cambodian judicial counterpart, You Bunleng, as he tried to investigate two cases at the court that would require five more indictments of Khmer Rouge leaders.

“If the UN appoints a judge to replace Kasper-Ansermet and [the new judge] still meets with obstruction, I think the UN should withdraw from the court completely,” Ou Virak said.

Kasper-Ansermet had pushed forward on cases 003 and 004, which accuse five former Khmer Rouge leaders of atrocity crimes. Both cases are starkly opposed by Prime Minister Hun Sen and other government leaders and would require five more arrests.

He has said he was not allowed to use the full resources of the investigating judges’ office, including the official seal of the court. You Bunleng has said he did not recognize the judges’ UN appointment, because it had not been approved by the government’s Supreme Council of Magistracy.

“His resignation came as a surprise,” Ou Virak said. “The UN is showing a lack of leadership and has not stood firm, which is quite pitiful.”

UN spokesman Martin Nesirky told VOA Khmer the UN is “seriously concerned about these worrying developments.” But it remains unclear what will happen next.

For court observers like author Peter Maguire, Kasper-Ansermet’s achievements amounted to little, despite his efforts.

Maguire, a professor of international law and the author of “Facing Death in Cambodia,” said the UN should not concern itself with the third and fourth cases. “For the United Nations to get distracted by trials that will never take place at this point, I find it completely ridiculous.”