



## **UN's Ban to Appoint New Judges for Cambodia Tribunal**

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U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced on Friday that he would appoint two new judges for Cambodia's troubled U.N.-backed Khmer Rouge war crimes tribunal and urged the government of the Southeast Asian nation to cooperate with them.

Swiss judge Laurent Kasper-Ansermet quit as reserve co-investigating judge of the tribunal earlier this month, while his predecessor, German judge Siegfried Blunk, left the post in October.

Critics have accused Cambodia of trying to stop further probes of cases tied to the communist-inspired Khmer Rouge's rule of the country between 1975 and 1979, in which as many as 2.2 million Cambodians were killed.

"The circumstances that have given rise to these two resignations remain worrying," Ban's office said in a statement.

The Cambodian government has issued no comment on the resignations. But Prime Minister Hun Sen, himself a former Khmer Rouge soldier, in 2010 told Ban that more indictments were "not allowed" and has also said he would be happy if the court left.

Kasper-Ansermet had been pursuing two unidentified suspects in the highly controversial cases known as 003 and 004.

"The Secretary-General believes that it is essential that the judicial process in relation to Cases 003 and 004 be brought back onto a positive course," said Ban's office, adding that he would appoint a new international co-investigating judge and a new reserve co-investigating judge for the U.N.-backed court.

"Their selection by the Secretary-General will not by itself, however, fully address the concerns that have arisen in regard to the judicial process in these cases," the statement said. "It is essential that the Royal Government of Cambodia extend full cooperation to the new judges."

The U.N.-Cambodian court is now hearing case 002, involving the three most senior surviving Khmer Rouge cadres, who are accused of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Pol Pot, the architect of Cambodia's "Killing Fields," died in 1998.

The court has spent more than \$150 million since it was formed in 2005, passing just one sentence, a 35-year jail term, commuted to 19 years, for Kaing Guek Eav - "Duch" - for his role in the deaths of more than 14,000 people at a torture center.

That sentence was extended on Feb. 3 to life imprisonment after an appeal by the prosecution.

Ban's office noted the court, known as the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, faced a serious funding challenge and he encouraged U.N. member states to provide funds.