

Tribunal Announces International Judges After Some Delay
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Mark Harmon, a US judge, and Olivier Beauvallet, a French judge, have been named to the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal to the controversial office of investigating judges, the court announced Monday.

Harmon will be placed as international co-investigating judge, with Beauvallet in reserve, the court said in a statement.

Harmon comes in amid ongoing scandal at the office, which is supposed to be dealing with two cases that are opposed by the government, and amid a budget shortfall.

The office has seen the resignations of two international judges who said they could not do their jobs there, as well as a massive walkout of international staff last year.

“The United Nations is in the process of making the necessary arrangements for Mr. Harmon’s deployment to Phnom Penh,” the court said. “His deployment will enable the [tribunal] to continue the critical task of pursuing accountability for the crimes committed during the period of the Khmer Rouge regime.”

The office of investigating judges still has cases 003 and 004 to consider. Those cases would require five more indictments and arrests and have divided the office in the past.

Clair Duffy, a tribunal monitor for the Open Society Justice Initiative, welcomed the appointments but expressed some concerns over the court. There remain staffing shortages in the office of investigating judges, and now a freeze on hiring international staff has been announced, due to budget, she said.

“We are still not sure how this will impact [Harmon’s] ability to staff his office,” she said. “This is of course very important to what judge Harmon will have to do.”

Credible investigations have yet to be undertaken in cases 003 and 004, she said.

There have not been fixed dates for the judges' arrivals, tribunal spokesman Lars Olsen said, "but we hope it's going to be as soon as possible."