

**JOINT STATEMENT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF
ADMINISTRATION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY CHAMBERS IN THE COURTS
OF CAMBODIA**

**By His Excellency Sean Visoth, Director of the Office of Administration and
Ms Michelle Lee, Deputy Director**

10 May 2006

Today is almost exactly three months since the start-up team of UN and Cambodian staff moved into the premises designated for the Extraordinary Chambers on 6 February. We have just presented to the diplomatic corps a briefing on what has been achieved in this quarter of a year, and what remains to be done in the immediate future.

The most important recent event was the selection of judges, co-prosecutors and co-investigating judges on 4 May by the Supreme Council of the Magistracy, chaired by His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni, who on 7 May signed the Preah Reach Kret (Royal Decree) appointing to their posts 29 judicial officers - 12 international and 17 Cambodian judges, co-prosecutors and co-investigating judges.

We both congratulate the ten countries whose nationals were appointed - Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Sri Lanka and the United States. We look forward to meeting them at the earliest possible time for an initial meeting in Phnom Penh together with their Cambodian counterparts, whom we also congratulate on their appointment.

In selecting the Cambodian judges the Supreme Council of the Magistracy followed guidelines for interpreting and applying these mandatory criteria - such as seeking a balance between experience and formal education. In addition, they took into account a number of desirable criteria, namely language ability, gender and ethnic representation, ability to operate in a modern court environment and inter-cultural sensitivity.

(Please find available copies of the Preah Reach Kret (Royal Decree) and the criteria for selection.)

Meanwhile, at the ECCC premises the start-up team led by Director (Sean Visoth) and Deputy Director (Michelle Lee), have continued to work together cooperatively. On the UN side, some 11 staff have arrived to take up their positions alongside their Cambodian counterparts. This joint activity is like two teams of workers constructing a house - each bringing their own skills and experience to the common endeavour.

This small start-up team has been busy setting up the infrastructure for the Extraordinary Chambers. Initial building modifications have been made, and furniture and equipment installed. In the past week major steps have been made to overcome the problem of power supply (with which all of us have unfortunately become familiar during the present hot season). A high-capacity electricity connection and back-up generator have been installed to alleviate the situation. At the same time, Internet connectivity and backup are also in place, and razor wire has been installed above and below the existing security wall around the compound. In the coming weeks more procurement arrangements will be made to build the fence dividing the military zone from the ECCC, installation of floodlighting, as well as construction of the detention facility, asphalt roads and secure car park and extension of fibre optic cable over the six kilometres from Phnom Penh International Airport to the ECCC.

We understand that the overall facilities and services provided by the Royal Government of Cambodia for the ECCC are by no means inferior to those available in other hybrid or international courts, and we see no physical obstacle to the two Co-Prosecutors taking up their posts at the earliest possible moment, and commencing the legal and judicial process to address the crimes committed in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979.

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