

SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS SPECIAL  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA

Australian Justice Michael Kirby To Guide First Field Office Opened by  
United Nations Centre for Human Rights  
26 November 1993

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has appointed the Hon. Justice Michael Kirby of Australia as his Special Representative for Cambodia in pursuance of the Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/6. In the resolution, entitled "Situation of human rights in Cambodia," the Commission requested the Secretary-General to appoint the Special Representative to:

- Maintain contact with the Government and people of Cambodia;
- Guide and coordinate the United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia;
- Assist the Government in the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session and the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session under the agenda item entitled "Advisory services in the field of human rights."

In the same resolution, the Commission on Human Rights also requested the Secretary-General to ensure a continued United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia after the expiry of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

The Government of Cambodia has taken note of the contents of the Commission resolution 1993/6 and confirmed the full support and cooperation of the Royal Government of Cambodia to facilitate the task of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Centre for Human Rights in fulfillment of their respective mandates.

Justice Kirby is president of the Court of appeal, New Supreme Court of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists. A

recipient of the Australian Human Rights medal, he has been active in a number of areas, including international labour, cultural, communications and human rights matters, as well as the global fight against AIDS.

The field office is the first established by the Centre. The Centre has been entrusted with the important mandate of implementing in Cambodia educational and technical assistance programmes in the field of human rights, assisting the newly established Government and supporting Cambodian human rights groups, thus contributing to the development and strengthening of a national environment respectful of human rights.

During the transitional period, a number of positive results have been achieved in Cambodia, partly thanks to the generous contributions made by donors to the UNTAC Trust Fund for Human Rights Education Programme in Cambodia, which was fully utilized and is now in the process of being liquidated.

"Now that a Government has been democratically elected, it is especially important that assistance be provided to strengthen human rights infrastructures and ensure the widest possible realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms," said Mr Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, and Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.