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February 21, 2002

Cambodia and the U.N.

To the Editor:

Re "Cambodia Won't Easily Find Justice on Its Own," by Youk Chhang (Op-Ed, Feb. 14):

In 1976, my father died of dysentery under the care of Khmer Rouge "medicine." Although he, along with more than a million other dead Cambodians, deserves justice, I applaud the United Nations for its refusal to be taken down the Mekong by the Phnom Penh authorities.

What surprised me most was that it took four and a half years for the international body to realize what was happening, slightly longer than the Khmer Rouge's own reign of terror, and another missed opportunity for global action.

A tribunal governed solely under Cambodian law with a United Nations side agreement reduced to the status of a technical and administrative document would have been a disservice to the Cambodian people. All the United Nations did was to call a spade a spade.

SOPHAL EAR

Oakland, Calif., Feb. 17, 2002

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