



## **Germany pledges US\$2.4 million for cash-strapped Cambodian genocide tribunal**

July 11, 2008

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia: The German government Friday pledged €1.5 million (US\$2.4 million) to Cambodia's cash-strapped tribunal, which is charged with prosecuting former Khmer Rouge leaders with war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The main aim of the funds will be to allow victims of the communist dictatorship "to play a more prominent role in the proceedings" of the U.N.-assisted tribunal, the German Embassy said in a statement.

Some 1.7 million people died from starvation, disease and overwork or were executed during the Khmer Rouge's radical rule that turned Cambodia into a vast slave labor camp during the mid-1970s.

The tribunal, which has detained five former senior Khmer Rouge leaders on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes, is seeking more money to carry out its goal of bringing the suspects to trial.

The embassy statement said Friday the money will be used to finance activities of the tribunal's victim support unit, which is designed to protect the rights of people who suffered under the regime.

"Up to now, victims have found it difficult to make their voices heard and, for that reason, the unit helps to inform the victims and to represent their interests," it said.

It said Germany had already given US\$5.5 million to the tribunal since 2005.

In June, a revised budget estimated the cost of carrying out the tribunal's work through 2010 to be US\$143 million. The tribunal is US\$86.7 million short of that goal.

The US\$56.3 million that was originally budgeted proved inadequate because the tribunal has had to recruit more staff and expand its work.