

MONEAKSEKAR KHMER (Khmer Conscience)

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The members of the European Union fear the Khmer Rouge leaders will be killed before they are tried.

Although Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen claimed that the Cambodia People's Party (CPP) would [prioritize] the discussion about the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, countries from the European Union have shown their concern about the possibility that Khmer Rouge leaders could be killed before the establishment of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal.

There was no discussion about the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in the draft agenda of the CPP's 31st Central Committee Convention. It was included in the agenda during the convention, meaning that the Khmer Rouge leaders' trial is like a bone in the CPP leaders' throat.

And now Duch's illness is critical, so members of the European Union are worried about the destiny of the Khmer Rouge leaders. Duch, former chief of the Toul Sleng prison [S-21], fell ill immediately in a suspicious case.

Due to the abnormal health of the Khmer Rouge leaders, countries from the European Union are in a hurry to find help for the tribunal. Great Britain has announced emergency help of US\$1 million to the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. The British Embassy announced that the United Kingdom promised US\$1 million for the Khmer Rouge Tribunal during the meeting between Douglas Alexander, Great Britain's minister of Justice, and Ang Vong Vathana, Cambodian minister of Justice, last Thursday.

During the meeting, Alexander announced that Great Britain would give \$940,000 Pounds to the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. The budget will be given through the United Nations and not to the Cambodian government directly.

During the speech of Great Britain's minister of Justice, he said his country grants the money for the integrity of the trial. He added that the trial will help the law enforcement in this country. The minister added that it is important if Cambodia can end its culture of impunity, which would be a victory after the Khmer Rouge era.

Dr Helen Jarvis, an advisor to the government's [tribunal task force], welcomed Great Britain's budget for the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. She added that Cambodia is happy with the additional budget and hopes that the tribunal will be established in the next months.

The Khmer Rouge Tribunal will last for three years and will cost US\$56.2 million. Dr Jarvis said that Japan and the European community are considering contributing the rest of the budget for the tribunal.

Officials from European Union member embassies said that countries in the European community are now concerned that the Khmer Rouge leaders might die before the tribunal is established. A diplomat who spoke on condition of anonymity said he did not want to say that the Khmer Rouge leaders would die, since they are killed, but comrade Duch, who suddenly fell ill, is a concerning problem for us.

Military Court officials agree that Duch's illness is suspicious. We need a transparent investigation to search for the truth to ensure that the Khmer Rouge Tribunal can provide justice to victims.

Sok An, deputy Prime Minister and minister of the Council of Ministers, made a statement on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, saying that in 2005, we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the collapse of the genocidal regime in Phnom Penh. Sok An added that in cooperation with the United Nations, Cambodia hopes to establish a court to try the people who are responsible for this [serious] crime. Diplomats claim that the government always talks about the trial of former Khmer Rouge leaders but it, in fact, is willing to eliminate evidence, for example, by killing important Khmer Rouge leaders.

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