

30 April 2005

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Agreement between UN and Cambodia on Khmer Rouge trials takes effect

29 April 2005 – An agreement between the United Nations and Cambodia to set up a special court to try the ageing leaders of the Khmer Rouge took effect today, paving the way for the tribunal to begin operations.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan notified Prime Minister Hun Sen in a letter yesterday that the UN has fulfilled its legal requirements under the agreement approved by the General Assembly in 2003. Cambodia sent its notification to the UN in November.

According to a UN press statement, sufficient pledges and contributions were now in place to fund the staffing of the two Extraordinary Chambers – one court will conduct the trials of those accused of killing thousands of civilians during the 1970s while the other will hear appeals within the existing justice system – and their operations for a sustained period of time.

The three-year budget for the trials is about \$56.3 million, of which \$43 million is to be paid by the UN and \$13.3 million by the Government of Cambodia. A pledging conference last month raised about \$38.5 million of the UN share.

“The Secretary-General reaffirms that the United Nations looks forward to the expeditious implementation of the agreement, and no efforts will be spared on his part to help ensure that the extraordinary chambers and their related institutions are established as soon as possible and that they begin to function promptly,” the statement said. “Administrative arrangements in this regard are now under way.”

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