



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

866 UN PLAZA, SUITE 420, NEW YORK, NY 10017
TEL: (212) 223-0676 FAX: (212) 223-0425



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INTERVENTION

H.E. SEAN Visoth
Executive Secretary
Royal Government Task Force on the Khmer Rouge Trials

at

**The Pledging Conference for the United Nations Assistance
for the Khmer Rouge Trials**

United Nations Secretariat

Monday, 28 March, 2005

Excellency Mr Secretary-General
Distinguished Representatives,
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset I would like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for convening and presiding over today's Pledging Conference for United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials.

I would also like to thank all of the distinguished Representatives of Diplomatic Missions gathered here today. Your presence demonstrates the continuing concern of so many with this issue, and gives us great encouragement.

We are pleased to be here today to represent the Royal Government Task Force for the Khmer Rouge Trials to this important meeting -- the culmination of many years of work. To show our commitment to this process, despite our budgetary constraints, the Royal Government of Cambodia has decided to send a delegation to participate in New York. May I introduce the other members of our delegation:

Mr Tony Kranh, Under Secretary of State of the Office of the Council of Ministers and Legal Advisor to the Task Force

Dr Helen Jarvis, Advisor to the Office of the Council of Ministers and member of the Secretariat of the Task Force

With your permission, I would now like to read the Message to the Pledging Conference by His Excellency Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Royal Government Task Force.

**MESSAGE TO THE PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR THE
EXTRAORDINARY CHAMBERS
UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT
NEW YORK, 28 MARCH 2005**

**H.E. MR. SOK AN
Deputy Prime Minister
and
Minister in Charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers
Chairman of the Royal Government Task Force for the
Khmer Rouge Trials**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives

I regret that I cannot be with you at this historic moment, but it is my honour to address this message to the Pledging Conference for the Khmer Rouge Trials, held at the United Nations Secretariat in New York on 28 March 2005.

After many years of negotiation and discussions with the United Nations and members of the international community, in October 2004, Cambodia reached a milestone in its nation's history with the adoption and ratification of The Agreement between the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia concerning the Establishment of the Extraordinary Chambers for Prosecution under Cambodian Law of Crimes Committed during the Period of Democratic Kampuchea, thereby on our side satisfying the legal conditions for its entry into force.

The Secretary-General has said that before the UN side considers the Agreement in force, he wants to be satisfied that the undertaking is financially viable. To that end, on 17 December 2004 he issued an appeal to interested member states of the United Nations for contributions.

We have been most pleased to see that in the intervening months several countries announced their initial contributions, and particularly that on 10 February Japan made the very welcome announcement that it would contribute \$21.5 million – fully 50% of the international share of the budget. Together with pledges already made by Australia, France, and the United Kingdom as well as several further positive indications made by other countries at the Preparatory Meeting for Pledging Conference for the Khmer Rouge Trials held in New York on 22 March, it would now seem that the target for the international share is well on its way to being reached.

On Friday 25 March the Royal Government Task Force organised a meeting with the Group of Interested States and Asean member states in Phnom Penh, in which we presented details of the Cambodian share of the budget and details of the new premises. We were delighted to hear the announcement that Canada will contribute 2 million Canadian dollars (equivalent to US\$1.64 million) and that Japan will transfer the full amount of its pledge by 28 March. We therefore join the other interested states in this Pledging Conference with high confidence of success and the prospect of moving forward to the establishment of the Extraordinary Chambers in the coming months.

Complementary to the Secretary-General's appeal for the international share, we are appealing to interested states to assist Cambodia in meeting its allocated share of the budget, amounting to \$13.3 million. The Royal Government of Cambodia will contribute \$6.7 million (consisting of \$1.5 million in cash, and an estimated \$5.2 million in kind expenses which lie outside the budget itself). This pledge from Cambodia amounts to over 10% of the total costs of the Extraordinary Chambers (\$61.5 million – \$56.3 in the budget plus the \$5.2million extra-budgetary expenses).

In requesting bilateral contributions to help us meet the total allocated to the Cambodian share, I would like to emphasise that both sides of the budget are of equal importance to the challenging task of establishing a sound process that meets international standards.

At this time of seeking your financial support for the Extraordinary Chambers, may I express our profound thanks for your consistent support during the negotiation process, without which we could not have achieved the Agreement. We are confident that the formula we have agreed to establish will not only meet our country's needs for justice in this egregious case, but will also assist the wider process of legal and judicial reform by providing a model court meeting international standards. Furthermore, we are hopeful that the Cambodian model may also serve as an inspiration for other countries in their search for justice.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives

May I take a moment of your time to place this Pledging Conference into its historical context, as it takes place at a time of great significance for us. The month of April, our high summer, is the time when we hold our traditional new year celebrations – the main cultural festival of our calendar. Thirty years ago this month we had special cause to celebrate, as the bitter and tragic war in our country was finally over – a war in which we suffered bombing of a greater scale even than that suffered by Japan during the Second World War, and that displaced over a third of our people and destroyed almost all our infrastructure and draught animals.

On 17 April 1975 our people flooded onto the streets of Phnom Penh to welcome the liberating troops. But our happiness at the end of the war was short lived. We

entered into a nightmare lasting three years, eight months and twenty days, in which we lost a quarter of our population – up to three million of our people perished in miserable circumstances of starvation, untreated illness and also from torture and execution.

It has taken a whole generation to arrive at this moment today when we stand on the brink of establishing an appropriate mechanism to reach accountability for these crimes.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Task Force on the Khmer Rouge Trials, may I express our deepest thanks to all Member States, staff of the UN Secretariat and other individuals who have worked so hard to establish the legal framework for the Extraordinary Chambers. We are confident that the formula we have agreed to establish will not only meet our country's needs for justice, but will also assist the wider process of legal and judicial reform by providing a model court meeting international standards. Furthermore, we are hopeful that the Cambodian model may also serve as an inspiration for other countries in their search for justice.

We have only one final hurdle to jump before establishing the Extraordinary Chambers – securing the \$56.3 million that has been estimated by the United Nations and Cambodia to enable it to function properly, meeting international standards, for a period of three years. We would like to point out that, in comparison to the expenditures of the existing International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda as well as the mixed courts in Sierra Leone and Kosovo, our budget estimates suggest that the Extraordinary Chambers will be the most cost efficient and cost effective.

We recognise that this is a significant amount of money, and that Member States have had to support a number of other tribunals in recent years, as well as other requests for humanitarian and reconstruction aid. To those countries that have expressed a willingness to assist we express our deepest appreciation.

We earnestly hope that today the financial hurdles will indeed be jumped, so we can approach the 30th anniversary of the Khmer Rouge coming to power – on 17 April 2005 – in the knowledge that we may at last implement the long-delayed process of achieving justice for the people of Cambodia who suffered one of the greatest crimes of the 20th century.

Sok An

Deputy Prime Minister

Chairman of the Task Force for Cooperation with Foreign Legal Experts for the Preparation of the Proceedings for the Trial of Khmer Rouge Criminals