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## **Bid to End Deadlock in Cambodia Genocide Tribunal**

Judges at Cambodia's Khmer Rouge tribunal will meet from May 31 hoping to resolve a long-running dispute over rules that has delayed the start of genocide trials, a spokesman said Wednesday.

The two-week meeting of foreign and Cambodian jurists has been deadlocked for months over internal tribunal regulations, threatening to derail attempts to prosecute one of the 20th century's worst atrocities.

"We fully expect on June 13 ... that we will be announcing the adoption of the internal rules," tribunal spokesman Peter Foster told AFP.

UP to two million people died of starvation and overwork, or were executed, during the communist Khmer Rouge's 1975-79 rule over Cambodia.

The regime abolished religion, schools and currency, exiling millions onto vast collective farms with the aim of creating an agrarian utopia.

Rights groups and legal advocates have called for swift trials amid concern that ageing Khmer Rouge leaders will die before being brought to justice.

So far only one possible defendant is in custody, while several live freely in Cambodia.

The only other person to have been arrested for crimes committed during the regime, military commander Ta Mok, died in prison last July.

Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot died in 1998.

The first trials of former Khmer Rouge leaders has been initially expected this year after nearly a decade of negotiations and setbacks.

However, the repeated delays mean trials are unlikely to start before early 2008, officials say.

"Once the internal rules are adopted, the judicial investigation can start in the following weeks," co-investigating judge Marcel Lemonde said.

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