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## **UN Spokesperson: Judicial Committee Meets to Discuss Khmer Rouge Trials**

In a further effort to resolve differences that have stalled the long-awaited trials of former Khmer Rouge leaders, accused of mass killings and other horrific crimes during the 1970s in Cambodia, a judicial review committee is again meeting this week and next in the capital Phnom Penh, a United Nations spokesperson said today.

The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) Review Committee, which is made up of both international and national judges, is discussing various outstanding issues that have so far held up adoption of the Internal Rules for the conduct of the trials, spokesperson Michele Montas told reporters.

This meeting is scheduled to conclude on 16 March at which time it is hoped a date for the official adoption of the internal rules can be announced, Ms. Montas added. This latest session of the Review Committee follows an earlier one in January. The UN is funding most of the \$56.3 million three-year budget for the Khmer Rouge trials.

Judges and prosecutors for the trials were sworn in last July. Under an agreement signed by the UN and Cambodia, the trial court and a Supreme Court within the Cambodian legal system will investigate those most responsible for crimes and serious violations of Cambodian and international law between 17 April 1975 and 6 January 1979.

The UN will pay \$43 million of the \$56.3 million budget for the trials, with the Government of Cambodia providing \$13.3 million.

At a pledging conference in 2005 to support the UN assistance to the trials, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that the crimes committed under Khmer Rouge rule "were of a character and scale that it was still almost impossible to comprehend," adding that "the victims of those horrific crimes had waited too long for justice."

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