

Khmer Rouge Tribunal to announce new budget plan today

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The cash-strapped Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT) has announced completion of a newly revised budget plan, which will be presented to the donor community this week in hopes of meeting dramatically increased budget requirements.

A methodical review of the court's work has taken place and a revised down budget will be presented to the court's steering committee today before it is presented to donors during a meeting scheduled for June 20 in New York.

In January the KRT announced it was seeking to triple its budget from the originally budgeted US\$56.3 million to US\$170 million in order to keep it operating through March 2011.

Though the most recent budget plan will be less than the one made in January, no court source has clarified the exact amount. The reduction has been made following a request from international donors for a detailed explanation of the court's expenses.

Isham Mousar, KRT project coordinator for Adhoc, predicted that the fund request would drop by US\$14 million, but stressed that any request should take into account the needs of the victims.

"The injection of these funds may make the KRT officers, judges and prosecutors feel happy to work, but there is no word of any help offered to victims," he said. "They spend their own money to file lawsuits without any financial support from the KRT; it's unfair." Kek Galabru, president of local rights Licadho, said that the KRT should deal with rumors relating to corruption to gain more financial assistance from the donor community. "If everything is not

clearly revealed, then the international communities will be hesitant to provide more donations.”

Prime Minister Hun Sen said in an interview with The Mekong Times on June 3 that the international community must help fund the KRT as Cambodia is poor.

Cambodia needs money to build bridges, roads and irrigation systems for its citizens, he said, adding that any disruption resulting from lack of budget for the KRT process is not Cambodia’s responsibility and would tarnish the UN’s reputation.