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KRouge trial not hurt by funding

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Khmer Rouge tribunal officials said Wednesday they are confident the trial of former S-21 prison chief Kaing Guek Eav will go ahead, despite ongoing funding problems that threaten to bankrupt the UN-backed court.

The tribunal, which on Tuesday formally indicted Kaing Guek Eav, more commonly known as Duch, for crimes against humanity and war crimes, has struggled to find money for the Cambodian side of its operations after diminishing UN Development Programme funds were halted this month amid graft allegations.

"We are always worried....We will just take it one step at a time, and be careful not to slip," said tribunal spokesman Reach Sambath.

Cambodian staffers, who were unpaid in July due to the funding freeze, are expected to have their salaries resume this week, with the money coming from an emergency infusion of US\$2.9 million from Japan.

The indictment - the first handed down by the court - has been met with muted optimism by survivors of Tuol Sleng, where court documents say more than 12,000 people were brutalised before being killed.

"I am very pleased with the indictment," said survivor Chum Mey. "But I am afraid that the court will not be able to bring all five leaders to justice because they are very old," he added.