

Leaders Face Another Year in Tribunal Jail

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Arrested Nov. 12, 2007, former Khmer Rouge minister of foreign affairs, Ieng Sary, and his wife, Ieng Thirith, will see at least another year in detention, according to investigating judges at the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

Meanwhile, Khieu Samphan, the former figurehead of the regime, could face the same extension.

In a decision dated Nov. 10 and announced Monday, tribunal judges You Bunleng and Marcel Lemonde explained the necessity of the detention of the leaders, who are facing atrocity crimes charges.



Former Khmer Rouge leaders Ieng Thirith, left, and Ieng Sary.

Releasing them could lead to the destruction of evidence, intimidation of witnesses, or the disturbance of public order, the judges said in the decision. The broad dimensions and complications of the cases and seriousness of the crimes against them led to the decision, the judges said.

Phat Touv Siang, defense for Ieng Thirith, said he planned to discuss with his international counterpart the decision.

"We will appeal, because if she remains detained, it will make trouble, physically and psychologically," he said.

Ang Udom, defense of Ieng Sary, said he was taking an appeal "under consideration."

"We have one month from now" to file the appeal, he said.

The extension of detention must be decided year by year, over a three-year period.

Ieng Sary, 83, and Ieng Thirith, who is around 67, were arrested together at their Phnom Penh villa and are both charged with crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Khieu Samphan's one-year detention anniversary is Wednesday.

"Now the court is taking his case under consideration, whether the court will extend his detention or not," You Bunleng said.