

Plans Tentative for Renewed Tribunal Talks

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A senior UN official said Wednesday he is planning to hold Khmer Rouge tribunal talks with Council Minister Sok An early in December.

"We are hoping to be able to have a meeting with Cambodia in the first week of December," UN Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs Peter Taksoe-Jensen told VOA Khmer. "We haven't nailed down the exact meeting time, but it looks as if we will be able to find time to meet and discuss cooperation between the UN and Cambodia on the tribunal."

Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said Wednesday there was so far no schedule for a meeting and referred questions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Officials at the ministry were not immediately available for comment.

A visit by Taksoe-Jensen, who is an assistant to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon would coincide with the tribunal's struggle with corruption allegations and donor confidence, as well as preparations for the courts' first-ever trial, of prison chief Duch, early next year.

Cambodian tribunal officials have denied the allegations.

Talks would show the UN's continued attachment to the courts' credibility and effectively, said James Goldston, executive director of the Open Society Justice Initiative, the tribunal monitor that first pointed out allegations of corruption and mismanagement.

"Reports of corruption must be treated seriously, addressed properly, and acted on immediately if the [tribunal's] trials are to be seen as fair and credible," Goldston said.

Staff who initially reported corruption, on the Cambodian side of the courts, should meanwhile be protected against reprisals, he said.



Sok An