

US Assails Timing of Talks for KR Tribunal

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The US will distance itself from discussions about the formation of a Khmer Rouge tribunal due to its disapproval of the proximity between the talks and July's national elections, a US Embassy official said Thursday. [Discussions] "should be postponed so it will not be used by any political party to gain political advantage in the elections," the official said, adding that the US still would provide diplomatic support for the tribunal regardless of when it is set up. "We recognize there is a consensus, and we're not going to block a consensus but we're not fully going to go along with it," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The UN General Assembly on Tuesday approved an agreement with Cambodia to establish a tribunal. Minister of Cabinet Sok An said in a statement Wednesday that the Council of Ministers has approved the agreement and is waiting for a visit from UN head negotiator Hans Corell to submit it to the National Assembly for ratification. Sok An said Corell's visit, tentatively scheduled for Sunday, was postponed due to commitments in New York. On Tuesday Charles Twining, senior area advisor for the US' UN mission, said the US "will dissociate itself due to concerns about timing."

(Kate Woodsome)