

CAMBODIA: Draft agreed for KR genocide tribunal

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United Nations and Cambodian negotiators yesterday reached a draft agreement on an international genocide tribunal to try surviving leaders of the Khmer Rouge, senior Cambodian negotiators said.

“Up to now both sides have agreed on and completed technical work,” said Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen's adviser Om Yinteng, who is also a member of the government's legal task force on the Khmer Rouge trial issue.

“Both sides will wrap up their work [today] and submit the draft agreement to their top leaders to make a final political decision,” he said.

UN legal counsel Hans Corell is to report on the results of his mission to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who is to submit the findings to the UN General Assembly.

Hun Sen must also submit the draft to his National Assembly for approval, but Om Yinteng said it was likely to be ratified after national elections in July.

Mr Corell met yesterday with Hun Sen to discuss the results of his five-day mission and then sat down for a final working lunch with Cambodia's top negotiator, according to Sok An, the minister attached to the premier's office.

The UN negotiator declined to reveal details of the draft.

“It is not for me to express an opinion on the result,” Mr Corell said after the meeting.

“It is important to note that if the General Assembly approves this agreement, and it is ratified by competent Cambodia, this is only the beginning.”

Sok An, however, struck a more optimistic tone. “Today we concluded our responsibility at the technical level by initiating the text of the draft agreement to be ratified by Cambodia and approved by the UN General Assembly,” he said.

“We have traveled a long road,” he said, reminding diplomats that it had

been six years since Cambodia asked the UN for help to establish a tribunal.