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UN Approves Location for KR Tribunal BY LEE BERTHIAUME AND THET SAMBATH

The UN has approved the newly constructed RCAF headquarters on the capital's outskirts as the location for the planned Khmer Rouge tribunal.

The decision was made during a closed-door meeting in New York on June 30 between the UN and representatives from countries that are involved in the tribunal, a diplomat said on condition of anonymity Monday.

"The group of Interested States is of the view that the UN should accept the premises offered by the Royal Cambodian Government at the Royal Armed Forces High Command headquarters" for the tribunal, the diplomat quoted the meeting's minutes as saying.

However, the decision was not made without demands, according to the diplomat.

First, the areas where the tribunal will be held must be totally isolated from active military personnel and operations.

Separate and direct entrances that are also removed from the chance of military interference must be provided.

Finally, adequate transportation arrangements between the center of Phnom Penh and the site must be provided to ensure the widest public attendance possible.

The meeting ended with the representatives agreeing to notify the Cambodian government of the decision.

UN country representative Douglas Gardner is in New York until August and could not be reached for comment.

The proposal to use the headquarters, located in Kandal province's Ang Snuol district on Route 4, was first presented by the Cambodian government during the final round of budget deliberations in December.

Originally, the tribunal was to have been held at two sites in Phnom Penh: Chaktomuk Theater and the National Cultural Center. But the government said using the military headquarters would save money and simplify the logistical requirements.

Human rights NGOs expressed concern that the government and military could use the military presence at the base to intimidate witnesses and victims who were to testify or wanted to attend. As a result of these concerns, a UN technical team from New York examined the site in January.

Helen Jarvis of the government's Khmer Rouge tribunal taskforce said the UN's logistics and security teams had already given the site the green light following their visits, so the UN acceptance was expected.

"The building requirements are much less at this site," she said Monday. "It would be much easier to hold the tribunal on one site."

Jarvis said some work still needs to be done at the headquarters such as wiring for computers, installing air conditioners and preparing it for the tribunal, but otherwise everything is ready.

Co-Defense Minister Nhiek Bun Chhay said Monday that once the tribunal begins, all military personnel and operations will be moved from the new headquarters to the old headquarters in Phnom Penh.

"When they come in, our staff will move from it," he said. "Don't worry. There will be no intimidation of the accusers, victims and witnesses. It will have no soldiers in it."

Despite the UN stating the site meets their approval, Ad hoc president Thun Saray said there are still concerns about the security of victims and witnesses and human rights groups will continue to lobby the UN to ensure adequate protection is provided.

"I think we need to emphasize this more, victim and witness protection," he said.

The government has said it is still waiting for the international community to cover its \$11.8-million budget shortfall and for the UN to appoint key personnel to the tribunal before moving forward.