



Clinton praises Khmer Rouge prosecutions in New Year greeting April 11, 2010

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Sunday extended New Year's greetings to Cambodia in which she congratulated the country for recent moves to bring former Khmer Rouge officials to justice, and praised its deepening ties with the United States.

"This is an opportunity to honor Cambodia's culture and its accomplishments. This past year, Cambodians marked a historic milestone when, for the first time in three decades, a former Khmer Rouge official was held accountable for his crimes before an internationally recognized court," Clinton said in her statement.

Washington and Phnom Penh also have "expanded cooperation on law enforcement issues, food security, the environment, and international peacekeeping," the top US diplomat said, adding that the United States looks forward to the 60th anniversary of bilateral relations in July, which she said was "a testament to our enduring bonds," she said.

As many as two million people were executed or died of starvation, disease and overwork during the brutal 1975-79 Khmer Rouge rule, and a UN-backed court finished arguments in its first trial for former regime officials in November. The US secretary of state also issued separate New Year's greetings to the people of Laos, calling the Laotian New Year an "opportunity to honor Lao culture and heritage, and to come together to welcome new beginnings and new possibilities."