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KRT staff to receive salaries for this month

James O'Toole

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NEW donations to the Khmer Rouge tribunal announced this week will allow staff members from its national side to receive salaries for this month that officials previously said would be withheld because of budgetary concerns, court spokesman Reach Sambath said Thursday.

At a UN pledging conference for the tribunal in New York this week, foreign governments came forward with US\$3.4 million in new donations for the national arm of the hybrid court, Reach Sambath said.

Although this leaves roughly \$3.1 million in donations still required for the national budget through the end of 2010, salaries this month for the court's 290 national staff members will now be paid out, Reach Sambath said.

"Our Cambodian staff have been very patient, and we appreciate their commitment," Reach Sambath said. "Even with no salary, they did not complain – they continued to do their work."

UN court spokesman Lars Olsen said Japan and Australia had announced new donations to both the national and international sides at the pledging conference, and five other countries had donated only to the international side.

Khieu Samphan a no-show

Former Khmer Rouge head of state Khieu Samphan failed to appear for a public hearing scheduled for Thursday at the tribunal, despite the rare presence in Cambodia of his international co-lawyer, Jacques Verges.

"Khieu Samphan notified the Pre-Trial Chamber an hour in advance that he did not want to attend the hearing. Apparently, he claimed to feel tired," Olsen said.