

# The Phnom Penh Post

## **Elusive KRT staffer surfaces Cheang Sokha & James O'Toole August 9, 2010**

The Khmer Rouge tribunal's chief of administration appeared in public on Saturday at a government function after going on extended sick leave almost two years ago amid a flurry of corruption allegations.

Sean Visoth left the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, as the tribunal is formally known, in November of 2008. According to defence lawyers for former Khmer Rouge Brother No 2 Nuon Chea, a report from a German parliamentary delegation that visited the tribunal one month before Sean Visoth's departure found that he was "guilty of corruption".

On Saturday, Sean Visoth joined government officials at Phnom Penh International Airport to welcome home a group of Cambodian officials led by Deputy Prime Minister Sok An who were arriving from Brazil. The former tribunal administrator appeared healthy and energetic as he greeted the delegation.

"My health is very much improved now, but I still cannot handle any heavy labour," Sean Visoth said. "At the moment, I don't really care about the work of the ECCC – my health is my priority."

Asked when he might return to the court, Sean Visoth was noncommittal.

"I don't know. I dare not go now because Case 002 is coming and there is plenty of work to do," he said.

In January of last year, lawyers for Nuon Chea filed a complaint to Phnom Penh Municipal Court accusing Sean Visoth and the court's former chief of personnel, Keo Thyvuth, of violating criminal law by "perpetrating, facilitating, aiding and/or abetting an organised regime of institutional corruption at the ECCC during the pending judicial investigation".

A former tribunal worker said in late 2008 that Cambodian employees at all levels of the court had been required to give a portion of their salaries to Sean Visoth, sometimes as much as 70 percent.

“Let’s say you are the supervisor. You have 30 people under you, so the people under you know to give their envelope [containing the kickback] to you, and you hand it to Sean Visoth,” the employee said. “In all sections, it’s the same thing.”

Corruption allegations first surfaced at the hybrid court in 2006, eventually prompting a review by the UN in July 2008 that has never fully been made public.

Court spokesman Reach Sambath said yesterday that he had no new information about Sean Visoth’s status.

“My only comment is that he’s still on sick leave, and we don’t have any further information about him,” Reach Sambath said.

Sean Visoth’s successor, Tony Kranh, “has the full capacity as acting chief for the office of administration”, Reach Sambath said.