



Australia Pledges Funds for Cambodia Trials
Bob Carr, Clair Duffy, Mark Colvin and Stephanie March
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MARK COLVIN: Australia's pledged an additional \$1.4 million towards the Khmer Rouge genocide trials in Cambodia. But it's only a tiny fraction for a process that is expected to have cost \$US 200 million by the end of the year.

The funding comes at a crucial time, the cash-strapped court has never been in a worse financial position, and it's biggest donor, Japan, may not be in a position to provide the bulk of the funding required in coming years.

Justice groups have welcomed Australia's contribution but they say that if donor nations don't offer more cash in the very near future, the trials could collapse all together.

Stephanie March reports.

STEPHANIE MARCH: At least 1.7 million people died in the Khmer Rouge killings of the 1970s. Few surviving Cambodians have been left untouched by the tragedy.

After five years and a cost of \$US 150 million to support trials for some of the alleged perpetrators, only one senior Khmer Rouge figure is behind bars for his involvement.

Another three are currently on trial.

BOB CARR: They're very senior Khmer Rouge people. It includes Pol Pot's Head of State, Khieu Samphan, Foreign Minister, Leng Sary, and Brother Number Two, Nuon Chea.

And the charges include the very weighty ones of genocide and crimes against humanity.

STEPHANIE MARCH: While in Cambodia, Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr announced an extra \$AUS 1.4 million in funding to support the trials.

BOB CARR: This is an add-on to the funding that's been made so far. The tribunal funds bring our total contribution to \$19.7 million since 2006.

So I think Australians can be very proud.

STEPHANIE MARCH: The donation couldn't have come at a more critical time, says tribunal monitor Clair Duffy of the Open Society Justice Initiative in Phnom Penh.

CLAIR DUFFY: I actually think Australia's contribution to the trials has been very significant so far. I think it's the second largest donor to the courts and it comes at a particularly needful time because the court's been cash strapped for years and I think especially right now is facing one of its most difficult financial predicaments since its inception.

STEPHANIE MARCH: The special court relies entirely on voluntary contributions.

Until now, Japan has been its largest donor, contributing about 50 per cent of the total running costs. But that could soon change.

CLAIR DUFFY: Japan's contribution up until now has definitely been the most significant but I think everyone's been concerned, especially since the tsunami in Japan last year, how that might affect its contribution.

And I believe Japan has said that it won't continue funding the court to the levels it has in the past.

STEPHANIE MARCH: Is there any chance that the current case number two that's seen three senior figures on trial, is there any chance that that trial may collapse before the end because of a lack of funding?

CLAIR DUFFY: I think there's definitely a chance, yes. There is always a chance.

STEPHANIE MARCH: Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr says he hasn't ruled out boosting Australia's contribution in the future.

BOB CARR: We'll continue to monitor the situation but our contribution has been big and generous.

It's enabled this process to run and I think it's exceptionally important in the development of Cambodian society and the strengthening of Cambodian society.

MARK COLVIN: The Foreign Minister Bob Carr ending that report from Stephanie March.