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# *The* CAMBODIA DAILY

## **National Staff Salaries Threatened at KRT**

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National staff at the Khmer Rouge tribunal will not receive their salaries on time this month and there are serious concerns they will not be paid going into next year, U.N. and court officials said yesterday.

Although international staff are assured payment in the coming months there are less assurances on the national side, which has had a long-running problem with funding shortages. Most staff on the Cambodian side of the court went unpaid between October 2011 and February this year.

The lack of pay caused discord at the court and forced national staff at the Pre-Trial Chamber and Trial Chamber to give notice only to rescind when funds started to trickle in.

Neth Pheaktra, a press officer at the court, said the outlook was grim going into next year. "For Cambodian side, we have money to run until the end of 2012 but we could face the cash flow [problem] and it will be late one or two weeks to pay the salary of national staff for December," he said in an email yesterday. "We are working on this issue with the fund administrator," he added.

Mr. Pheaktra said that no funding pledges from potential donors had been given to the national side of the court for the 2013 budget, save for \$2.5 million, of which \$1.8 million is coming from the government. The majority of this will fund operational costs and Victim Support Section activities.

According to next year's budget, the U.N. side requires \$34.2 million to see out the year while the national side needs a total of \$9.7 million. Mr. Pheaktra said the national budget has since been reduced to \$9.5 million.

"We hope that the ECCC's key donor countries will provide more funds to sustain the court's work and to avoid disrupting the current active and smooth hearing process," Mr. Pheaktra said.

In late October, U.N. special expert to the tribunal David Scheffer said the court needed to prepare contingency plans due to a shortfall of \$3 million needed to see the court through to the end of 2012.

In an email yesterday, he said that the situation is no longer so dire, but that there remains plenty of work to do in order to ensure that the court is able to proceed with its cases in 2013.

“Sufficient pledges and commitments have been made to support the international component until the end of February 2013,” he said. “We continue to work closely with existing and new donors to solicit full funding for 2013. Thus the situation has improved since October but much work remains to be done.”