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Foreign Minister meets Ban Ki-moon Cheang Sokha & Thomas Miller September 28, 2010

Foreign Minister Hor Namhong met United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on the sidelines of the General Assembly meeting in New York on Monday, seeking help in securing funds to address the US\$44 million Khmer Rouge tribunal budget shortfall.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Koy Kuong confirmed the meeting, saying: “Cambodia has made a request about [the budget shortfall] to Japan and Ban Ki-moon.”

Chan Tani, secretary of state at the Council of Ministers, reported this month that the tribunal faced a combined budget shortage for 2010-2011 of \$44 million. This included \$6.4 million for 2010 and \$29.8 million for 2011 on the international side of the court, and \$1 million for 2010 and \$7.7 million for 2011 on the Cambodian side.

Cambodia met with donor countries on September 7 to discuss the issue.

According to the Foreign Ministry statement, Hor Namhong also spoke with Ban about the country’s progress toward its Millennium Development Goals, which the Cambodian representative described as “remarkable”.

The UN recently presented an award to Cambodia for reducing the country’s HIV/AIDS infection rate, and has recognised its progress in reducing child mortality.

Other UN statements, however, indicate that Cambodia is “off track” in efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, improve maternal health and ensure environmental sustainability.

According to a statement issued by the secretary general’s office, the pair also discussed Cambodia’s border dispute with Thailand, which flared up following the July 2008 listing of Preah Vihear temple as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Also on the agenda, it said, was the issue of Myanmar, where polls were scheduled for November 7.

Prime Minister Hun Sen said last month that Ban Ki-moon would visit Cambodia in October. The UN has not confirmed the meeting.