



Khmer Rouge defendant to stay detained until new exam determines mental fitness for trial

December 13, 2011

A Cambodian tribunal says a Khmer Rouge defendant once ruled unfit to stand trial will remain detained to see if her mental condition improves.

The highest chamber of the U.N.-backed tribunal on Tuesday reversed a ruling by junior judges that would have freed Ieng Thirith because doctors concluded she had Alzheimer's disease.

She was social affairs minister in the Khmer Rouge's 1975-79 regime. Prosecutors had appealed the ruling that she was unfit and should be released. She will be re-examined within six months to determine her condition.

The tribunal is seeking justice for 1.7 million people who died of starvation, lack of medical care or execution under Khmer Rouge rule. The trial for her three co-defendants is continuing.