

Less Money Pledged Means the Court Needs to Work, Not Fight: Observers
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Donors endorsed a budget proposal last week to fund the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal for two more years. The court needs \$89.6 million for 2012 and 2013 to cover its operation cost. However, there were only a few countries made monetary pledge during the meeting in New York.

Observers see that the amount pledged, which is far less than what the court has asked for, is an indication that donors still pay attention to the tribunal, but it would have to settle its internal disputes and show more cooperation. This includes moving forwards the controversial cases 003 and 004.

“This means donors really care about the tribunal process... particularly issues regarding the progress and cooperation over case files 003 and 004,” said Long Panhavuth, a court monitor at the Cambodian Justice Initiative.

The tribunal has received heavy criticism over political interference related to cases 003 and 004. The government does not want them to move forward. The UN judge Laurent Kasper-Ansermet, who is willing to carry on the controversial additional cases, has not been officially appointed by the Supreme Magistracy.

“If the dispute continues to drag out, they certainly will have a hard time collecting money from donor nations,” said Peter Maguire, author of “*Facing Death in Cambodia*”.

Japan has pledged \$ 6 million, UK \$1.2 million, Germany \$1.5 million, Australia Aus \$1.5 million, and EU \$1.7 million. Cambodia will contribute \$3.5 million.

Staff at the Cambodian side has not been paid since October.

However, a tribunal spokesman Huy Vannak said the budget endorsement means that justice is within reach.