

# The Phnom Penh Post

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## **Opposition Party President Puts Blame on China, Vietnam for Khmer Rouge Meas Sokchea April 18, 2012**

An opposition politician fingered Vietnam and China as veritable puppet masters of the Khmer Rouge yesterday, the 37th anniversary of the day the murderous regime seized power and began forcibly evacuating Phnom Penh.

Speaking at a memorial ceremony held at the Choeung Ek killing fields, acting Sam Rainsy Party president Kong Korm claimed that Vietnam and China sought dominance over Cambodia through opposing factions in the Khmer Rouge.

“Khmer Rouge is just a small ember. China and Vietnam are a big fire burning brightly. One Khmer Rouge [faction] is in China’s control and another Khmer Rouge is in Vietnam’s control,” Kong Korm alleged.

Eponymous party president Sam Rainsy spoke via video conference from Canada, asking the Khmer Rouge tribunal to summon and convict political leaders including, Senate President Chea Sim and Prime Minister Hun Sen, for their alleged involvement in the genocide.

Hun Sen, Chea Sim and National Assembly Chairman Heng Samrin were among former Khmer Rouge cadre who abandoned the regime before its fall, seeking refuge in Vietnam, where they helped found the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, which swept to power with the 1979 Vietnamese invasion.

Documentation Center of Cambodia researcher Ly Sökkheang said Vietnam had good relations with the Khmer Rouge at the start of the regime, but these had soured as the regime launched military attacks on provinces along the Vietnamese border.

Cheam Yeap, senior lawmaker for the ruling Cambodian People’s Party, dismissed the allegations.

“This is a complete twist, [an] exaggeration. I am a Khmer child, a Buddhist, we have seen that [Vietnam] came to chase out Pol Pot’s group,” he said.

Present political leaders should not be summoned by the tribunal, because its objective was to convict top Khmer Rouge leaders, and they were only rank and file, he added.

A Chinese Embassy spokesman declined to comment on the allegations, saying the Khmer Rouge trial was an internal affair of Cambodia.