

Khmer Rouge Court Judge's Credentials Challenged **Bridget Di Certo** **June 20, 2012**

Despite multiple searches, requests to administrative officials and even the hiring of an investigator, Brother No 2 Nuon Chea's defence team said yesterday they had found no evidence to support the bibliography of Khmer Rouge Trial Chamber president Nil Nonn published on the court website.

Emails by senior defence lawyer Michiel Pestman, leaked by pro-opposition website KI-Media yesterday, requested the Trial Chamber senior legal officer to provide specifics on Nil Nonn's previous publications and his participation in politics.

"We were told that [Nil Nonn] was an active member of a [ruling Cambodian People's Party] cell when he was at the Battambang court," Pestman said by telephone.

"These are relevant facts that go to judicial independence, which would make a difference if this was a real court," he added, pointing to precedent in other international tribunals for judges to be disqualified.

Nil Nonn has previously admitted to accepting bribes during his tenure at the Battambang Provincial Court in the early 2000s.

Pestman said it was also important to know whether Nil Nonn, who obtained his Bachelor of Law in Vietnam, was ever part of forces fighting the Khmer Rouge.

Tribunal legal affairs officer Lars Olsen said he would not clarify the academic qualifications of Nil Nonn because he was contacted after 4:30pm.

"If you called me during office hours, I would answer the question, but now I cannot," Olsen said.