



## **China Played No Role in Khmer Rouge Politics: Ambassador Kong Sothanarith**

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China's ambassador to Cambodia told a group Friday that the Chinese had not aided the Khmer Rouge but had sought to keep Cambodians from suffering under the regime.

"The Chinese government never took part in or intervened into the politics of Democratic Kampuchea," the ambassador, Zhang Jin Feng, told the opening class at Khong Cheu Institute.

The Chinese did not support the wrongful policies of the regime, but instead tried to provide assistance through food, hoes and scythes, Zhang said.

"If there were no food [assistance], the Cambodian people would have suffered more famine," she said.

The comments come as the Khmer Rouge tribunal prepares for its second trial, of five high-ranking members of the regime.

However, a leading documentarian of the regime said the Chinese may want to revise that statement, given all the evidence that points to their involvement with the Khmer Rouge.

"According to documents, China intervened in all domains from the top to lower level: security, including the export of natural resources from Cambodia, like rice, bile of tigers, bears and animal skins to exchange for agriculture instruments," said Youk Chhang, director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia.

"In the domain of security, Chinese advisers trained units to catch the enemy, and some of the trainers went to inspect the outcome of the training at the local level," he said.

China maintained close diplomatic ties with the Khmer Rouge after they came to power. It was one of only nine communist countries to keep an embassy in the country after April 1975.