



Four Khmer Rouge leaders head for trial January 13, 2011

Cambodia's United Nations-backed war crimes court has upheld indictments against four Khmer Rouge leaders.

Appeals to dismiss the case have been rejected, paving the way for a major trial.

The four face charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and related crimes under Cambodian laws in connection with the deaths of up to two million people between 1975 and 1979. The accused - the communist regime's most senior surviving members - are "Brother Number Two" Nuon Chea, Ieng Sary, Ieng Thirith and Khieu Samphan.

Reach Sambath, public affairs chief for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia, told Radio Australia's Asia Pacific program the decision is long-awaited.

"This means that the top four senior Khmer Rouge leaders will be sent to trial and we expect that the trial will take place during the first half of 2011," he said. "But it is up to the trial chamber to decide the exact date and time when they are ready."