



AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Senator the Hon Bob Carr

Media release

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SUPPORT FOR GENOCIDE TRIALS

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Bob Carr today announced Australia would provide \$1.4 million to help finance the trials of three Khmer Rouge leaders accused of involvement in the deaths of at least 1.7 million people in the 1970s.

The three accused are Pol Pot's Head of State Khieu Samphan, Foreign Minister Ieng Sary and 'Brother number two' Nuon Chea.

They face charges including genocide and crimes against humanity, arising from involvement in the starvation, torture and murder of more than one quarter of the Cambodian population between 1975 and 1979.

The trials are the first genocide cases to be conducted in the country where the alleged offences occurred, since the Nuremberg Trials following World War Two.

Speaking from Phnom Penh in Cambodia, Senator Carr said the \$1.4 million would support judicial and legal costs and the hearing of witness testimony.

"These are among the most important international criminal trials in the last thirty years," Senator Carr said.

"The Cambodian 'killing fields' are etched in the memories of all Cambodians and great many of their friends and neighbours including Australia.

"During Pol Pot's reign at least 1.7 million Cambodians died from murder, torture, starvation or preventable disease. Millions more were driven from their homes.

"The world has a duty to see that those responsible face trial.

"Funds such as these are essential to support these trials and maintain the principle of judicial independence.

"That's why I'm proud to make this \$1.4 million commitment of Australian assistance to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia."

Trials for the three former Khmer Rouge leaders commenced in June 2011 before the ECCC. The accused are the most senior surviving members of the Khmer Rouge since the death of Pol Pot in 1998.

A previous trial against Kaing Guek Eav -"Comrade Duch"- commander of the Tuol Sleng prison where more than 17,000 Cambodians were tortured – concluded with a guilty verdict and life sentence on February 3, 2012.

More than 89,000 people have attended one or more hearings of the trials.

The additional funds bring Australia's total contribution to the Khmer Rouge Tribunal to \$19.7 million since 2006.

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