



Ieng Sary Found Fit to Stand Trial at Tribunal
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November 27, 2012

Jailed Khmer Rouge leader Ieng Sary is fit to stand trial, the UN-backed tribunal said Monday, following a hearing on his health earlier this month.

The former foreign minister of the regime, who is 87, has spent an extensive amount of time in the hospital since September, and his defense team had sought to have him released to house arrest as he undergoes an atrocity crimes trial.

Medical expert Joh Campbell, who examined Ieng Sary for the court, said in the Nov. 8 hearing that Ieng Sary's health was "normal" for a person his age. He also said Ieng Sary did not need to stay in the hospital and is "fully capable" of keeping up with hearings against him.

Ieng Sary is being tried alongside Nuon Chea, the regime's chief ideologue, and Khieu Samphan, its nominal head of state, for crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge under their leadership. Regime victims and court observers fear the aging leaders will not live long enough to see the case, only the court's second, to its conclusion.

In a 24-page decision released Monday, the tribunal's chief Trial Chamber judge, Nil Nonn, said Ieng Sary has been found capable of participating in his own defense and is "fit to stand trial." Ieng Sary's case will not be separated from the other two men, he said in the decision.

In September, Ieng Sary's wife, former social affairs minister Ieng Thirith, was found mentally unfit to stand trial and was sent to house arrest, pending a future trial should she regain her faculties.

A tribunal spokesman said Ieng Sary's defense will have an opportunity to appeal the chamber's decision.