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Judges will not investigate corruption

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Co-Investigating Judges at the tribunal denied a request Friday that they investigate allegations of corruption at the court. The request had been lodged by Nuon Chea's defense team, and was supported by two other defense teams.

The Co-Investigating Judges wrote that probing such allegations was outside their jurisdiction.

"Whilst reiterating their desire for an irreproachable Court, they noted that the primary condition for fair trials is that the judges themselves respect the Law, particularly the jurisdictional limits laid down by their founding documents," according to a release from the court. "Accordingly, they were obliged to note that they did not have jurisdiction, under the 27 October 2004 Law and Internal Rules, to conduct the action requested by the Defence."

Investigating corruption allegations is the responsibility of the UN and the Cambodian government, the judges wrote.

Unfortunately, the UN and the Cambodian government have not fulfilled this responsibility very efficiently.

A day after Ieng Sary's lawyer was muzzled for trying to raise the corruption issue in court, controversial lawyer Jacques Verges brought the topic before the judges once again Friday.

Verges also mentioned Prime Minister Hun Sen's recent statement that he hopes the tribunal will run out of funding.

Hun Sen "has publicly stated that he wants this court to end," Verges told the chamber during a pre-trial hearing for his client, Khieu Samphan. "You are mere squatters."

He remained uncharacteristically quiet the rest of the day, explaining that it was "not good to be shooting on ... dying institutions."