



**UN committed to corruption talks: official
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With an emergency infusion of Japanese funding keeping the troubled Cambodian side of the Khmer Rouge tribunal afloat, the UN remains committed to seeing corruption allegations properly dealt with, a senior UN negotiator said.

The Cambodian side of the UN-backed, hybrid court, which is conducting its first trial, will now be able to pay its staff salaries for April and May, thanks to \$4.1 million from Japan.

“The result of is that the court will not collapse for economic reasons,” said Peter Taksoe-Jensen, who is the UN’s assistant secretary-general for legal affairs.

“I have no other comment than the fact that we continue to need to normalize the flow of funds to the court,” he told VOA Khmer in a phone interview, “and the way to do that is to bring the issue of corruption behind us, together, the Cambodian authority and the UN.”

Taksoe-Jensen left Cambodia negotiations in April, having failed to reach an agreement on how the court should handle allegations of corruption, following reports from staff on the Cambodian side, who said they paid kickbacks for their positions.

The two sides deadlocked over whether to name future complainants or protect their anonymity, with the Cambodians demanding so-called “whistleblowers” be identified. The UN has remained firm on anonymity.

Some donors have proven reluctant to fund the national side of the court, claiming the allegations, if true, could harm the credibility of the court, which took years to make functional and is now trying a former Khmer Rouge prison chief, Duch, for atrocity crimes.

Taksoe-Jensen said he was “very optimistic” the sides would find a way to address the allegations, noting that donors had called on both the UN and the Cambodians to reach an agreement.

A cabinet spokesman, Phay Siphon, said by phone that Cambodia remains open to another round of talks in a negotiation that has spanned the last four months

But observers in the US worry prolonged corruption charges—denied by senior officials—could hurt the credibility and functioning of the court, damaging a chance for justice for the victims of the brutal regime.