Dear Editor,

I regret that yesterday the Phnom Penh Post misattributed its two letters to the editor, making it appear as if Ou Virak of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights had drafted a stinging criticism of me, and Ieng Sary defence lawyers Ang Udom and Michael Karnavas had drafted a well-argued plea for investigation of potential political interference in the work of the Khmer Rouge tribunal. Yet, the mistake ultimately demonstrates the cohesion of Cambodian civil society, as Ou and I were immediately in touch to discuss the humorous error.

The defence team’s reprimand was in response to my statements for the article “Ieng Sary team seeks ECCC judge’s ouster” (September 20). There were two points I had hoped to make clear in my comments, a selection of which appeared in the article. The public must prepare itself to accept that Ieng Sary may pass away before trial, as he is old and his health is fragile. I certainly do not wish him death as we approach the Pchum Benh ancestor holidays. For that reason, it is imperative that the trial move forward without delay so that Ieng Sary may live to tell us why Khmer killed Khmer and be judged accordingly.

I seek the truth, and would thus be a fool to support corruption in Cambodia, including at the Extraordinary Chambers/Defense Unit. Constructive defense challenges at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal benefit Cambodia, which suffers from a lack of fair trial standards in its national courts, but it is easy for the Ieng Sary defense to attack everything and themselves politicise the proceedings. Ieng Sary deserves better than to die and have his lawyers declare “victory”. He deserves to be tried.

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