

Verges skips hearing to nurse injured colleague

Written by

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For the second time this week, judges at the tribunal adjourned and rescheduled an appeal hearing. Khieu Samphan's appeal against extension of provisional detention, along with additional translation arguments, will be hashed out April 3.

Khieu requested the hearing be delayed because his infamous French lawyer, Jacques Verges, was unable to make it to court. The reason for his absence is somewhat unclear.

Thursday afternoon, the court notified journalists that Khieu's hearing would begin at 10 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. because Verges' flight had been delayed. But as the hearing opened Friday morning, Verges had not yet arrived.

Sa Sovan, Khieu's Cambodian co-lawyer, explained to the court that Verges had actually been detained in Paris, where he was at the bedside of an injured friend. During a press conference following the adjournment, he said it was actually a colleague of Verges' who had been hospitalized. Sa also said, at different points, that the injured party had been in a traffic accident and had fallen down a flight of stairs. (Perhaps this discrepancy was a translation gaffe.)

Sa told journalists he had known as of Thursday afternoon that Verges would not be in attendance. However, he said they could not notify the court at that point because it was impossible to obtain an official medical report. Sa was able to provide the court with such a report Friday morning.

Some left the court wondering if Verges' sudden absence was a calculated tactic. Over the course of his career, he has [developed a reputation](#) for creating disorder in the courtroom.