

## Clinton Begins Asia Trip Amid N Korea Threat

BY ARSHAD MOHAMMED  
REUTERS

TOKYO - US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton began a one-week Asia visit by praising the US-Japan alliance and saying the US and Asia needed to work together on the global financial crisis and climate change.

Kicking off her first trip as secretary of state, Clinton called the US-Japan alliance "vitally important" as she landed in Tokyo after weeks of bellicose North Korean rhetoric and reports it is preparing for a long-range missile test.

Searching for a way to end Pyongyang's nuclear program is likely to be one of the main topics on Clinton's trip, which also takes her to Indonesia, South Korea and China.

"I have come to Asia as my first trip as secretary of state to convey that America's relationships across the Pacific are indispensable to addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities of the 21st century," she said at an airport arrival ceremony.

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A worker makes final preparations in front of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia building in Phnom Penh on Monday. The tribunal opens its first trial today with 66-year-old Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Duch, facing charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture and homicide when he ran the S-21 torture center.

## Duch's Path: From KR Zealot to Soldier of Christ

BY STEPHEN KURCZY  
AND NEOU VANNARIN  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

KCHACH POY VILLAGE, Battambang - The Sangke River meanders through the rice paddies of Kchach Poy, a remote outpost where in 1996, the former chief of the notorious Khmer Rouge detention center S-21 waded into the river to be baptized a Christian.

Kaing Guek Eav, better known

as Duch, stood chest-deep before a minister dipped him backward below the murky water, recalls Suon Sito, a former neighbor and friend who witnessed the event.

In a series of interviews last week, friends and neighbors recalled Duch as strict, but fair, friendly, but a loner, an intellectual, and also a Christian evangelist.

Duch's long-delayed trial begins today, with the 66-year-old accused

by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia of overseeing the deaths of more than 12,000 prisoners who passed through the S-21 detention and torture facility. Duch is not expected to address the court today, but family members and onetime friends and neighbors believe his conversion to Christianity will have an impact on his statements when he finally does

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## Chavez Decisively Wins Bid To End Term Limits

BY SIMON ROMERO  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

CARACAS, Venezuela - Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez handily won a referendum Sunday that will end presidential term limits, allowing him to run for re-election indefinitely and injecting fresh vibrancy into his socialist-inspired revolution.

The results, coming after voters had rejected a similar effort by Chavez just 15 months ago, pointed

to his resilience after a decade in power, as well as to the fragmentation of his opposition, which as recently as November had won key mayoralities and governorships.

The vote opens the way not only for Chavez to run for a new six-year term when his current one expires in 2013, but could also bolster his ambitious agenda as an icon of the left and a counterweight to US policies in Latin America.

It also creates a new foreign policy challenge for the administration of US President Barack Obama, strengthening a leader who has made a career of taunting and deriding the US, even though Chavez just this weekend seemed to open the door for a different relationship.

At the risk of polarizing Venezuela's deeply divided society further, the victory could also strengthen

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