

High Court upholds not guilty verdict for Chen

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The Taiwan High Court yesterday acquitted former president Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) in an embezzlement case involving US\$330,000 in secret diplomatic funds.

The Taipei District Court in June last year found Chen not guilty in the embezzlement case and the Taiwan High Court yesterday maintained the lower court's ruling.

Chen Hung-ta (陳 Hung-ta), a spokesman for the Special Investigation Panel (SIP) of the Supreme Prosecutors Office, said prosecutors would decide whether to take the case to the Supreme Court after receiving the ruling.

Yesterday's ruling said that evidence provided by prosecutors failed to prove that Chen had pocketed diplomatic funds.

The SIP alleges that during 11 foreign visits from August 2000 through September 2006, Chen embezzled US\$30,000 each time from the US\$100,000 government funds earmarked for improving foreign relations, for a total of US\$330,000.

The court said that although prosecutors suspected Chen had kept the balance of the diplomatic funds and transferred them to the US accounts of his son, Chen Chih-chung (陳智雄), there was no proof.

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