

**Building Democracy in Cambodia through Legal Education
Witnessing Justice 30 Years Later**

Villagers Reflect on the Truth

July 8-10, 2013

Introduction

Obtaining the truth about the Khmer Rouge (KR) leaders was the general expectation from the Cambodian people and others when the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) was being established to try surviving KR leaders. As justice will become a thing of the past in the not-too-distant future, twenty five villagers from Stung Treng, Kampong Thom and Koh Kong provinces continued to closely observe the trial proceedings on July 9, 2013, and afterward they made their own reflections on whether the ECCC could meet their expectations and help them mentally.



Villager views mug shots at Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

Cambodia (ECCC) was being established to try surviving KR leaders. As justice will become a thing of the past in the not-too-distant future, twenty five villagers from Stung Treng, Kampong Thom and Koh Kong provinces continued to closely observe the trial proceedings on July 9, 2013, and afterward they made their own reflections on whether the ECCC could meet their expectations and help them mentally.

The July 9 Hearing: Contesting Evacuation Plot

The July 9, 2013 trial proceedings were highly impressed by Nuon Chea's refusal to acknowledge any document implicating him in the KR atrocities and his utterance in separating himself from any of the state's decisions, mainly the evacuation plan.

Nuon Chea said that the evacuation was made on a voluntary basis and in a non-violent manner. At that time, the people, he claimed, supported the idea by agreeing to evacuate as they grasped the KR leadership's explanation. Nuon Chea further pointed out that there were two reasons that led KR leaders to decide and implement the evacuation. Firstly, he said there was a fear of US bombardment. He explained that the United States supported the Lon Nol regime, which was antagonistic against North Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea (DK). Their later alliance had already been bombarded for 300 days and nights during the early 1970s in Cambodia. As a result, the aerial bombardment caused so many people to die and their property destroyed. Nuon Chea argued that the US would bombard the victorious KR revolution as its close ally, Lon Nol's Khmer Republic, was toppled. Secondly, Nuon Chea said that anticipating such a calamity and starvation, the KR leaders, especially Pol Pot, decided to evacuate the people because after 5 years of civil war,

the shortage of food was an urgent issue that required the people to take part in building their family and nation.

Nuon Chea's argument for evacuation on April 17, 1975 was contested by a series of popular reactions, who considered it as unconvincing and illogical. Their overall responses challenged his non-factual utterance that the evacuation was voluntary and peaceful. Fifteen out of twenty five villagers made their quick reactions right in front of ECCC's court room in the very morning of July 9, 2013.

Ms. Tou Bunchan, 61, of Stung Treng province responded, "What Nuon Chea said was not true. He said the evacuation was to avoid being bombarded. So, why was my community also evacuated if we were already in the countryside? I was separated from my entire family. I want to ask Nuon Chea that if people were evacuated from one place, why did the KR send new people in as replacements to live in our homes. My community and family rather were sent to build dams, dig canals and do hard work in other places. In regard to food, my community and family had food in place and rice fields there. So why did we need to evacuate? Nuon Chea's word was not true at all. He's a liar."

Mr. Yim Kan, 59, of Kampong Thom province responded, "What Nuon Chea said would never be convincing and logical. People from provincial towns were evacuated and, worse, executed. Many suffered from starvation. If the KR leaders were really afraid of people being bombarded, I want to know why the people were killed in each cooperative. They should have protected the people, as arguably intended. I myself was starved."

Mr. Bieng Sinut, 72, of Stung Treng province responded, "Nuon Chea was wrong in making the claims. It's purely not about being afraid of bombardment. While the KR ordered the people to evacuate Phnom Penh, they threatened people to leave their homes. Nuon Chea's word was not truthful; rather he attempted to confuse the public's perception."



A villager in front of ECCC's court room

Ms. Chin Sem, 67, of Koh Kong province, responded, "The KR acted arbitrarily. The evacuation would not be in a voluntary manner. What Nuon Chea said was not true. He tried to manipulate the truth in order to find the opportunity to let himself off the hook."

Ms. Chun Roeun, 76, of Koh Kong province, responded, "It does not represent the truth of what Nuon Chea argued in the court hearing. People were forced and threatened at gunpoint. His words were illogical and unreasonable. He might not have seen the evacuation, while the people suffered immensely from it. People had to walk fast; if not, the KR members would point the guns at us to make us move faster. Can you imagine how much of a hardship it was when a family with small children had to walk? My husband was killed at that time. It was a painful memory. My family was forced to move into a jungle, while the KR members tricked me and said that I would be sent to my native village. Overall, Nuon Chea was a liar."

Ms. Dip Kauy, 65, of Kampong Thom province, responded, “I would not agree with Nuon Chea. I wonder if the KR leaders really wished to save the people from the US bombardment, why did the regime turn out to be cruel and let people die numerous deaths and starve during its entire rule in 1975-1979?”

Ms. Ham Koem, 65, of Kampong Thom province, responded, “The evacuation on April 17, 1975 caused many people to die along the way. People were killed. For example, my sibling was killed. The evacuation was forceful, thus leaving them vulnerable to starvation and execution.”

Mr. Heang Bunthoeun of Koh Kong province responded, “My entire family was forced to leave home. Nuon Chea was wrong in his argument as all the people could not escape but leave their homes and community and enter cooperative life. The evacuees were later being forced to endure years of overwork.”



A villager in front of ECCC's court room

Ms. Ou Yim, 64, of Kampong Thom province responded, “How could people volunteer to leave their homes unless there was a threat? I remember that many people came from Phnom Penh, suffering from starvation, torture and execution. Even my family members were also killed. Nuon Chea was a liar to say people agreed with the evacuation.”

Mr. Pao Then, 82, of Kampong Thom province responded, “The evacuation was executed under the threat from the KR members. A village chief threatened and forced my parents to evacuate.”

Ms. Pruoch Korn, 77, of Kampong Thom province responded, “It was a threat and violence that compelled the people to evacuate their homes. The evacuees were further separated and killed. I never believe in Nuon Chea’s argument.”

Mr. Sa Chan Nara, 40, of Stung Treng province responded, “It’s not true as the people got so frightened. They had no choice but to leave their homes. Nuon Chea tried to lie to the public now. It’s his exaggeration and manipulation.”

Mr. Si Nin, 61, of Stung Treng province responded, “It’s true that there was a bombardment in my area during the early 1970s. However, I was not convinced to hear that the April 17, 1975 evacuation was made to avoid any possibility that the US would drop bombs again.”

Mr. Sok Yoeun, 60, of Koh Kong province responded, “What Nuon Chea said doesn’t represent the truth. People were forcefully evacuated and even divided into two categories—base and new people. Some did not know the place of arrival, thus leaving them vulnerable to mines and other deadly scenarios.”

Ms. Thang Buntlean, 60, of Stung Treng province responded, "Nuon Chea was not truthful. The April 17 people were evacuated to the countryside and many were executed during the KR rule. However, I was not so sure if there would be a possible bombing in Stung Treng province as it used to take place only in the early 1970s."



A villager interviewed by DC-Cam's Film Team inside Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

It's not the first time to hear Nuon Chea's flagrant denial of the KR crimes committed between 1975 and 1979, although he was widely known as the second in rank after Pol Pot. The only soul that the accused put the blame on was the latter, who passed away in 1998. No doubt that Nuon Chea consistently attempted to set himself clear from any decisions regarding the evacuation on April 17, 1975, let alone the decision made on the second evacuation through Cambodia's railway between November 1975 and 1977, the third evacuation of Eastern Zone people to the Northwestern Zone, and possibly the fourth evacuation when the Vietnamese forces toppled the DK regime on January 7, 1979.

As for Khieu Samphan, former DK head of state, he remained firm in exercising his rights to be silent and uttered that he no longer believed in the ECCC's work to deliver justice. He said, "I would like to tell the reasons that I exercised my rights to be silent. The reasons were that the court did not obey my rights and the rights of my counsel. At the beginning, I believed in the court. Now, it's almost at an end. I no longer believe in this court."

As both former KR leaders have tried their utmost to argue for their honesty and integrity, that they did not commit the KR crimes believed to be responsible for the death of nearly 2 million people, the July 9, 2013 hearing inspired twenty five villagers to make further discussion about the truth as previously expected before and during the trial proceedings.

Truth in Doubt

As the above respondents saw Nuon Chea's argument as a lie at this point, the people began to wonder about other arguments the KR leaders have made in the past. It's been years since the ECCC has commenced its work on Case 001 against Kaing Guek Eav, alias "Duch", and Case 002/01 against Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan. The Cambodian people and most commentators expected that the ECCC's hearing would elicit a certain degree of reconciliation as the truth is highly sought.

As lay persons, Mr. Si Nin, 61, and Mr. Suoy Kham Saen, from Koh Sampeay commune, Stung Treng province, expressed their pessimism over the realization of truth, as shown in Nuon Chea's interpretation of the evacuation. Mr. Si said that to obtain the exact truth from the proceedings remained wishful thinking as they would never learn about it in the Case 002/01 against Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea. It's evident that a series of evacuations, mainly on April 17, 1975, were never accepted as a mistake that the accused

made, being among the decision makers of the DK regime. That's why Mr. Suoy was not surprised that both Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea would not reveal anything about the truthfulness behind the curtain of the regime. What they both argued was that they did not kill people, but loved the people and the country. This made Mr. Suoy think of Duch's courage to make an apology. He heard only Duch confessing his guilt. Although he was still unhappy with it, he could no longer feel tired with painful anger toward Duch.



A village interviewed by DC-Cam's Film Team inside Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

However, as legal justices at ECCC collect full evidence that both accused could never contest anymore, it's hoped that ECCC's final judgment on Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan will demonstrate that the past has been set clearly straight and the truthfulness of the KR crimes will be established based on its hearings and other documents left behind by the KR regime.

Conclusion

The truthfulness of the KR atrocities has been generally expected to emerge from ECCC's work. However, the people also have become skeptical over the contesting arguments by Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea. The July 9, 2013 hearing was a case in point when the people reacted strongly to Nuon Chea's utterance that the evacuation of people was made voluntarily and in a non-violent fashion and his refusal to acknowledge it. They could say so as they experienced the worse scenarios at that time. But a last hope remains as the ECCC wraps up its work and issues a final judgment that it will depict undeniable evidence to prove the guilt. Its judgment would be a clear and consistent argument.

APPENDIX

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Building Democracy in Cambodia through Legal Education Witnessing Justice 30 Years Later

... A RECONCILIATION TRIP, IF POSSIBLE...

List of People Invited for the ECCC Hearing on July 8-10, 2013

No	Name	Sex	Story
1	Pruoch Korn	F	Korn, 77 years old, lives in Kleng commune, Sondan district, Kompong Thom province. Kon said before the Khmer Rouge regime, her family lived together and made a family living as usual. However, when the Khmer Rouge came in, her family was separated, lived at different places, and never had a chance to meet

each other. Kon wasn't evacuated anywhere. They asked her to work in a district mobile work unit; they asked her to build a dike and to farm, which was very hard work and they forced people to do it. If anyone didn't work hard, they would send them to be killed. In addition to being overworked, there wasn't enough food to eat. Kon lost two relatives who died because of sicknesses. She joined the tribunal because she wanted to see the faces of the Khmer Rouge leaders and to hear how they would confess.

2 Ham Koem F Koem, 65 years old, lives in Kleng commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province. She has six siblings, three of whom are female. Kim is an orphan whose mother passed away. Before the Khmer Rouge regime, Kim was living in Sangkat Kor village, Sambor district, Kampong Chhnang province. The Khmer Rouge broke into her village and forced the villagers to live collectively, including eating, sleeping, and working. Kim was asked to work in a mobile work brigade and made to do farming, build dikes, carry the soil, and other tasks. She was arranged to marry a man who worked in the same brigade. There were two other couples who had an arranged marriage at the same time as her. She added that the work was so hard and the food was insufficient, so people were starved. Her first brother who worked in a mobile work unit disappeared in that regime. Her second brother who was an ordinary cowherd was deported somewhere and disappeared since then. Her third brother died of disease since he received no treatment. Kim was very interested in joining the court. She felt very excited that she got to share her past untold story to these many people.

3 Doek Kauy F Kauy, 65 years old, currently lives in Kleng commune, Sandann district, Kampong Thom province. She has eight children, four of whom are female. Nowadays, she is a farmer. She got married in 1972, and she was pregnant when the Khmer Rouge broke into her village. While she was pregnant, the Khmer Rouge ordered her to feed the pigs and to do some farming. She said that working while being pregnant was hard and painful but she did not dare to complain even the slightest bit. She had no one to take care of her because her husband lived far away from her and he could only get back once a month. Her relatives were evacuated and separated from her. It was unlike nowadays, when pregnant women have doctors and

relatives to take care of them and they have enough food to eat. After she gave birth to her child, she was assigned to take care of children whose parents were working. Three or four months later, she had to work in the paddy field as other people did. Each and every member of her two cousins' families was killed. The reason for attending the hearing is to witness how the court process works and she is curious whether it can compensate for her pain she endured or not.

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|---|--|
| 4 | Ou Khy | F | <p>Ou Khy, 68 year-old, lives in Kleng commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province. She had eight siblings, five of whom were male. During the Khmer Rouge regime, Khy was asked to build dikes and do the farming from dawn to dusk without enough food. She used to witness the executions and cruel torture committed by the Khmer Rouge. All five of her brothers were executed during the KR period. Her first brother was a former colonel, the second was a student, the third was a doctor, the fourth was a Lon Nol soldier, and the fifth was working in a mobile brigade. Her first brother was accused of being a traitor, and her fifth brother died of malaria. Khy is keen to join the court because she believes that it could bring her justice, so she wants to witness it.</p> |
| 5 | Sao Khen | M | <p>Khen, 80 years old, lives in Kleng Commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province.</p> |
| 6. | Yoem Koam | M | <p>Koam, 59 year-old, currently lives in Kleng commune, Sandann district, Kampong Thom province. He has seven siblings, two of whom are female. In 1972, he served in the liberation army of the KR. In 1977, he was fired from his position because they found out that his father was a former village chief. In 1976, the Khmer Rouge broke into his village and took over that territory. They asked people to do the collective farming and forced the villagers to harvest three tons of rice per hectare. The work regulation was so strict. No one was allowed to get away from the work. As for Koam, he was made to plow 20 hectares of paddy field per day. If he could not finish the task, he would not receive any food rations. In addition, he would be made to work twice as hard if he did not appear on the paddy field on time. People only got to eat water porridge. Rights were simply stripped. People could not even entertain themselves. His father, uncle, and elder brother were detained and were tortured badly because someone spoke ill about them. Regarding his visit to the court, he would like to witness the real</p> |

- proceedings since he has never since them before.
7. Ke Khoen M Khoen, 68 years old, lives in Kampot Chhouk village, Kleng commune, Sandann district, Kampong Thom province. Khoen has three brothers. He said during the KR regime, he worked in the district mobile unit to build the dams and transplant rice seedlings and other work. He worked relentlessly from early morning until midnight. There was no religion and all people were deprived of rights. It was unforgettable and untold suffering. Khoen's cousins were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime because they were Lon Nol soldiers. The interest in attending the court hearing is that he wants to know who actually committed the crimes. He wishes that the court would accelerate its legal process.
8. Sem Ngiem M Ngiem, 69 years old, lives in Prey Chor village, Kleng commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province. Ngiem has two sisters and five brothers. During the KR period he was a fisherman. He went fishing far from the place where he stayed and came back at midnight. Besides this work, he was assigned to husk rice. He said that one day the cadres told his work unit that if each of them could not finish husking 500kg of rice within a day, they would be killed. He was so worried and tried to do it. There was not sufficient food. Three of his brothers died when they were at war. Ngiem expressed his interest in coming to ECCC to see how the trial process is going on and if it is fair. Lastly, Ngiem wishes that the court would punish those Khmer Rouge leaders the same as what they have done in the past.
9. Suoy Khoemvien M Khoemvien, 63 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. Vien has three siblings, one of whom is female. The Khmer Rouge broke into his village in 1975. At that time, he was assigned to do farming, build dams and complete other tasks. He said that people had to eat together, and small shanties were built near the eating hall. Sometimes, they were ordered to chop down trees in the forest far from the village, and they never had a chance to meet their families. In the forest, they ate rice together in a small shanty, and they were afraid of wild animals, for it was too dark. He was also assigned to go to the province by Khmer Rouge cadres to take the provided clothes. Along the road, he witnessed people, including children and elderly people, being tied and

tortured. They screamed in agony before they were killed. Vien still remembers that the killing site was at Trapeang Kilofour in Pursat province, and he felt much pity and was so frightened. He lost an uncle who was accused of being a secret agent. Vien requested of the court to find the answers to why the Khmer Rouge killed people viciously. In addition, his intention to attend the hearing is to witness the legal proceedings and appeal to the court to condemn those Khmer Rouge leaders.

- 10 Say Vannara M Vannara, 40 year-old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Stung Treng province. In 1975, he was just a kid, yet suffered a tragic life. He was forced to work in a child unit to build the dike and dig canals without receiving enough food rations. What made him suffer the most was the fact that he could not talk to his family when he met them. He dared not to even look at them. The only means to talk to them was in secret. During the Khmer Rouge regime, Vannara lost one uncle who was evacuated and disappeared since then. He used to follow the trial via television and wishes to witness the court in Phnom Penh because he wants to find out why those leaders refuse to admit all their acts.
- 11 Say Savy M Savy, 53 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. Savy has five siblings, three of whom are female. He could remember that the Khmer Rouge took control over his village in 1975 while he was young. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he was assigned to work in a child mobile unit to build the dike, dig the canal, herd the cattle, and husk rice. His mobile unit was deprived of food and worked twice as hard compared to others as a punishment because they worked slowly and could not meet the goal. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he witnessed the killings by his own eyes, and he ran away immediately because he was afraid that he would be killed if he was caught. In that regime, none of his family members or relatives died, but they endured so much hardship and suffering. He wants to attend the hearing on legal proceedings because his rage toward the Khmer Rouge still has not faded away from him, and he wants to witness it with his own eyes.
- 12 E Khamphak M Khamphak, 67 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. Khamphak has six siblings, two of

whom are female. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he was forced to work from dawn to dusk such as building dikes and digging canals. He was deprived of food and was only given watery gruel. Khamphak's brother was killed by the Khmer Rouge because he was accused of being a puppet. The purpose of visiting the hearing is to witness the process of the legal proceedings at ECCC, to observe whether there is justice, and how the court condemns those Khmer Rouge leaders in response to their atrocious actions in the past.

- 13 Lam Kha F Kha, 55 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. She has eight siblings, three of whom are female. During the Khmer Rouge regime, she was assigned to work in a district mobile unit to build dikes, dig canals, and do farming and other tasks assigned by Angkar. Though she worked hard, food rations were inadequate. She tried to work hard because she was afraid of getting killed. None of her relatives died at that time. She volunteered to attend the hearing because she has never visited the proceedings before and she wants to see the face of those atrocious Khmer Rouge leaders with her own eyes.
- 14 Tou Bunchan F Bunchan, 61 years old, currently lives in Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. She is a farmer. Chan has six sisters and one child. The Khmer Rouge broke into her village in 1974 and they were forced to eat together, to work in mobile a unit and to live separately from parents. Moreover, they were assigned to do loads of work without enough time to relax, no freedom, deprivation of food and they suffered from hardships. Chan said that there were a lot of killings at that time without any reason. She used to witness the killings with her own eyes, and most of them were new people and the those who complained about their work. During the Khmer Rouge regime, her uncle was killed because he complained about the work assigned. For her, she endured those hardships and worked without complaining because she was afraid of death. She wants to visit the court proceedings because she wants to know whether the testimony given is the truth or not.
- 15 Duong Sinet M Sinet, 71 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng

- province. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he was evacuated and sent to work in Tbaung Kla commune. He worked without rest from dawn to dusk, and he was separated from his family. He could meet his family only once a month and had no freedom at all. He was especially pained when he saw KR cadres ill-treating his wife and children, but he could do nothing. He lost one younger brother because he was evacuated to work in Ba Long and disappeared since then. The intent to visit ECCC was because there was a rumor that the tribunal was fake and he wants to witness this tribunal with his own eyes.
- 16 Souy Kham M Soeun, 67 years old, lives in Koh Sampeay village, Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bauk district, Stung Treng province. Soeun has three siblings, one of whom is female. Before the Khmer Rouge broke into his village, he was a farmer. After his village was controlled by the Khmer Rouge, he and other villagers ate and worked together, and he worked as a fisherman. Soeun used to see Khmer Rouge soldiers torturing and killing people while forcing them to answer whether they were the enemy or not. In case that person did not answer, he/she would be killed with a hard stick. Most of the people who were killed were new people. His older uncle was killed because he was accused of being a secret agent. His purpose to attend hearing is because he wants to know if the tribunal is real or not.
- 17 Kom F Chanthlan, 60 years old, is currently living in Koh Sampeay commune, Siem Bok district, Stung Treng province. Thlan claimed that no regime is as tragic as the Khmer Rouge regime. People had to work so hard. Women were asked to do the heavy work such as carrying the soil and plowing the paddy fields. Rights were completely limited; people could not even complain about their fatigue nor could they express their opinions. All they had to do was work as animals. She joined the court because her anger is yet to fade away, and she wants to witness how the court proceeds.
- 18 Chun Roeun M Roeun, 76 years old, is currently living in Chiphat commune, Thmor Baing district, Koh Kong province. During the Khmer Rouge regime, people were made to do heavy labor. She thinks their true intention of asking people to work so hard was to kill people because they worked without receiving any food or treatment. She added that those young armies were

- so rude, and they treated elders as if they were trash. Her husband was executed. She felt very happy upon arrival to the court, and she wishes the court would make a precise and fair judgment.
- 19 Sok Hoeun F Hoeun, female, 63 year-old, Pnorng ethnic group, a Buddhist, lives in Chiphat commune, Thmor Baing district, Koh Kong province. Hoeun has seven children, four of whom are female. During the Khmer Rouge regime, she was living at the Thmor Baing worksite where she did farming, built dikes, and carried soil. She suffered a tragic life without having enough food and proper shelter. She had a marriage arranged by Angkar during that time, and Angkar advised her not to live separately from her husband. Instead, they separated them and allowed them to meet each other once every three months. They even executed him without any reason, leaving her alone as a widow. In addition, her brothers, sisters, and nieces were all killed irrationally. Regarding the hearing, she wants to attend it to see if the proceedings are real and how it processes.
- 20 Sokh Yeun M Sokh Yeun, 60 years old, lives in Chiphat commune, Thmar Baing district, Koh Kong province. In 1979, he along with other villagers fled from Pralai commune under Khmer Rouge control to Chiphat commune because they were afraid of getting killed by the Khmer Rouge. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he worked in a district mobile brigade building dikes and breaking rock without receiving enough food. He was curious about why the Khmer Rouge killed so many people. His brother and father were killed by them, and his mother died of disease. The reason Heoun wants to attend the court is because he wants to know what will be the final judgment.
- 21 Sieng Thy M Thy, 43 years old, was born in Chamnabb commune, Thmar Baing district, Koh Kong province. He is currently living in Chiphat commune, Thmar Phat district, Koh Kong province. He has six siblings, two of whom are female. During the Khmer Rouge regime, Thy lived in a child care center because his parents were sent to work far away. He could only meet them once or twice a month. The elders could not take good care of the kids because the food was insufficient. Many children died of disease because they received neither treatment nor medicine. Thy lost contact with his brother and did not know if he survived the regime. He longs to attend the court

- because he wants to witness the proceedings. He used to follow the trial on television.
- 22 Dom Phan M Phan lives in Chiphat commune, Thmabaing district, Koh Kong province.
- 23 Set Sakpheap F Sakpheap, 70 years old, lives in Chiphat commune, Tmar Bang district, Koh Kong province. She has six siblings. She told us that during Khmer Rouge regime, her husband worked as a security guard at Pochentong Airport (now Phnom Penh Airport). One day, the Khmer Rouge started to investigate his biography, and he was arrested after they found out that he used to serve as a soldier before the Khmer Rouge regime. He was detained and tortured while she was made to plow the fields. Sometimes, she would secretly catch crabs to eat because she was so hungry. She also witnessed the Khmer Rouge kill her husband with her own eyes in a grave, but she pretended to smile instead of cry because she was afraid of being killed as well. Since the memory of her husband remains, she decided to visit the hearing and wishes the court would accelerate the proceedings because she wants to know the judgment.
- 24 Chen Sem F Sem, 67 years old, is currently living in Chy Phat commune, Tmar Bang district, Koh Kong province. In the Khmer Rouge regime, there was a large evacuation of people from his village who were sent to work in other villages, while people from other villages were brought to work in her village as well. Sem was ordered to leave but she asked permission from them to stay in her village since she did not want to leave her homeland. Many new people were killed in her village. She did not lose any relatives but they were seriously mistreated. She comes to attend the hearing because she wants to know how those Khmer Rouge leaders confess and whether it is the same as what they did or not.
- 25 Pao Khen, M Pao Khen, 81 years old, was born at Pean Kiliang commune, Tbong Khmum district, Kampong Cham province. Currently, he is living in Trakuon village, Kleng commune, Sandann district, Kampong Thom province. Khen said that the Khmer Rouge regime was the harshest era that he had ever experienced. All young and old people needed to work without rest or enough food to eat. People were provided with gruel. One can of rice was for five people each time. They weren't allowed to find any extra food. The most unforgettable moment for him during that era was

when he was asked to carry heavy loads of seedlings. He thought that he would not be able to endure that hardship and would die. Khen's son was a Khmer Rouge soldier, and he was captured and sent to Tuol Sleng prison because he was suspected of being a CIA agent. Khen is keen to see the Khmer Rouge trial because of the suffering that he has yet to witness, and he always thinks of the death of his son. Besides, he wants to witness the proceedings with his own eyes, and to see his son's picture at Tuol Sleng.

Rapporteur: Ly Sok-Kheang

Team Member: Un Sodavy of Documentation Center of Cambodia.

Funded by Office of Global Programs, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), U.S. Department of State.