



“These People Had to Be Hunted Down”: Witness Provides Testimony on Alleged Executions of Lon Nol Soldiers and Officials

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On Thursday, May 2, 2013, a former Khmer Rouge soldier stationed in Pursat province during the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) period became the second person to testify before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) in connection with the alleged execution of a large number of Lon Nol soldiers at the fort Tuol Po Chrey. The witness, Lim Sat, testified how Khmer Rouge leaders had “cheated” former soldiers and policemen from the Lon Nol regime, telling them that they were being taken to a training session but instead leading them to their brutal execution at Tuol Po Chrey. However, as with the previous witness who had testified on this crime site, Mr. Sat was unable to provide an eyewitness account of the alleged executions themselves, having been stationed along the road several kilometers away from the execution site.

Witness Lim Sat Provides Biographical Details and History of His Early Military Days

All parties to the proceedings were present this morning, Trial Chamber Greffier Duch Phary reported, except for National Co-Counsel for Khieu Samphan Kong Sam Onn. Accused person Nuon Chea was participating in the hearings from his holding cell pursuant to a Trial Chamber order responding to Mr. Chea’s health concerns. Approximately 200 villagers from Prey Veng province attended the morning’s hearings. The majority of these people appeared to have been born before or during the DK period.

Today’s witness, Lim Sat, was escorted to the witness stand, joined by his duty counsel Mom Rithya. First to question the witness was Trial Chamber President Nil Nonn who, in accordance

¹ Cambodia Tribunal Monitor’s daily blog posts on the ECCC are written according to the personal observations of the writer and do not constitute a transcript of the proceedings. Official court transcripts for the ECCC’s hearings may be accessed at <http://www.eccc.gov.kh/en/case/topic/2>.

with his usual practice, sought a few biographical details from Mr. Sat. Mr. Sat advised that he is a 54-year-old rice farmer and lives in Bakan district, Pursat province, with his wife and seven children.

President Nonn advised Mr. Sat of his right against self-incrimination and reminded him that he could consult Mr. Rithya if he felt his response might be self-incriminating. Mr. Sat confirmed that he had given three interviews to investigators of the Office of the Co-Investigating Judges (OCIJ). The president sought clarification on whether there were in fact three interviews or only two. Mr. Sat confirmed there were three, which took place at an office and his home. Mr. Sat had reviewed the records of the interviews. Asked to confirm their accuracy, Mr. Sat advised, however, that he was able to recall only some of the accounts he had given to the OCIJ investigators.



The president also noted that Mr. Sat wore a hearing aid and that as such, the Court had adjusted the volume of his headset to assist him.

National Assistant Co-Prosecutor Seng Bunkheang began questioning on the part of the Office of the Co-Prosecutors (OCP). Mr. Bunkheang drew Mr. Sat's attention to his first interview with the OCIJ, in which Mr. Sat had said that he was a soldier from 1971 to 1975 in Platoon 202.² After Mr. Sat was given a copy of the relevant record of OCIJ interview, Mr. Bunkheang then asked him to detail where he had been based during that period and what he had been required to do. Mr. Sat initially responded, "From 1975 onwards ... when the country was at peace, we were stationed in Pursat." Pressed for more details, Mr. Sat added that his unit was "stationed at Sector 7" and mainly "engaged in the battlefields at the front at Sector 7."

The prosecutor asked if Mr. Sat engaged in fighting with Lon Nol soldiers. Mr. Sat agreed, explaining that the fighting "started from 1972 [and continued] all the way to 1975." Some of the Lon Nol soldiers were arrested, but Mr. Sat said that "nothing happened to them." Instead, "[w]e had to send them back to the rear. We even helped to treat the wounded by injecting medicine to cure them." Mr. Sat explained that "the rear" referred to "the heads of the district who were in charge of the rear where these people could be received and treated."

Moving on, Mr. Bunkheang asked Mr. Sat to explain how people communicated in the Northwest Zone. Mr. Sat replied, "In terms of orders, if we had to attack an enemy in a particular location, then we received an order from the upper echelon which rendered the order to our unit. So we received orders from our superiors who would render the orders to us. Then we carried out the orders."

Mr. Bunkheang noted that according to his statement to the OCIJ, Mr. Sat had said that the zone military chairman was Ta Ky.³ He asked who Ta Ky reported to, to which the witness replied,

² This record has the document number E3/364, and the relevant ERNs are 00242222 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

³ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

“He reported to the Center.” This prompted the prosecutor to ask for details of communications between the Zone and the Center. Mr. Sat said that orders were communicated “to the leaders.” As to who the Khmer Rouge leaders were, Mr. Sat said, “I did not know very much, but I believed that the senior leaders included Mr. Khieu Samphan, who was in charge of the military in Cambodia.” Pressed to elaborate on Mr. Samphan’s role, Mr. Sat said that he did not know but was “aware that he was in charge of the military.” Mr. Sat could not provide details of any other senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge.

The prosecutor asked how people were treated during the fighting between 1971 and 1975, presumably in reference to civilians. Mr. Sat instead responded, “On April 17, 1975, I knew that people in Phnom Penh had to be evacuated and they had to be transferred to the countryside.” Pressed to discuss the 1971 to 1975 period, Mr. Sat explained, “From 1971 to 1975, I was in Pursat in Leach district, and they actually captured Leach district to my knowledge.” He also advised that the Khmer Rouge captured two locations in Battambang.

“Markets were closed at that time,” Mr. Sat said next in response to a question in this regard. Mr. Bunkheang asked if the Khmer Rouge forced people to move or join cooperatives. The witness agreed, advising that “people who evacuated from Phnom Penh and arrived in Pursat province ... had to join cooperatives.” Cooperatives were first established in 1976, he added.

Evacuation of Pursat in 1975 and Witness’s Knowledge of Tuol Po Chrey

The Khmer Rouge “captured Pursat on April 17, 1975,” Mr. Sat said next. “In my location, they took control of it by about 11 in the morning.” Mr. Bunkheang asked if there was any fighting involved in the capture of Pursat. Mr. Sat said, “It took the Khmer Rouge some three to four years, resisting back and forth, before they captured the location where I stayed.”

“Two battalions, Battalion 202 and 201,” were in the area, Mr. Sat said. Asked how many soldiers they contained and who the commander was, Mr. Sat said that as for Battalion 201, “Mut was the commander. [The] deputy commander was Tan.” Mr. Bunkheang asked if Mr. Sat knew under whose command Pursat was captured. Mr. Sat advised that this occurred “under the command of the zone. Ta Kleng was the commander from the zone committee.”

Next, Mr. Sat confirmed that he knew the location Tuol Po Chrey. He advised:

Tuol Po Chrey was the battlefield. It was a place where I struggled against the opposing force over there. ... I do not know exactly how many [soldiers] there were from the Lon Nol side. I can only guess that there could have been around 100 or a little over 100. ...

Under the Lon Nol side, to my recollection, Pel was the commander. He had the rank of captain, and Run was his deputy.

Moving on, Mr. Bunkheang asked what happened to Pursat town dwellers after the evacuation. Mr. Sat responded instead “[In] 1976, I was transferred to a mobile unit. I was tasked to dig canals. I stayed with the mobile unit.” Mr. Bunkheang clarified his initial question, prompting the witness to reply, “When I first arrived in Pursat provincial town, people had already been

evacuated. They had already left in different directions from the city center. ... Following the liberation in 1975, I think people were all evacuated out of the town within three weeks or so.”

Mr. Bunkheang queried who ordered the evacuation to occur. Mr. Sat said, “It was the order from the zone committee, and I also believe that they received the order from the authorities in Phnom Penh.” Regarding their motivation, Mr. Sat said, “I learned from the others that if people were to be kept in the city, in the markets, there would be some infiltrating forces from among the people. That’s why people were required to leave the city, to go to the countryside.”

The prosecutor asked who had been involved in the evacuation of people. “I do not know whether the military was involved. I only know that there were orders from the zone and sector committees. ... Ta Kuon from the zone and Ta Soth from the sector” were involved, the witness explained. As to whether he was also involved, Mr. Sat said that that his unit was in the lowest rank and in the “civilian force.” He did not know if they were given any specific instruction in connection with the evacuation. Mr. Bunkheang asked if Mr. Sat’s unit was allowed to use weapons to ask people to leave the city. Mr. Sat confirmed, “We were actually armed ... when we were guarding people [evacuating] along the street.” Mr. Bunkheang asked where the people were evacuated to. Mr. Sat said that they “went in different directions, particularly down south along National Road 5.”

Plans to Execute Lon Nol Soldiers and Officials

Mr. Bunkheang turned back to the topic of Tuol Po Chrey, which he had briefly mentioned earlier. He noted that Mr. Sat had previously testified to the OCIJ about a meeting in Pursat province attended by chairmen of Khmer Rouge companies, battalions, and regiments and chaired by Ta Nhim of the zone committee and Ta Soth of the sector committee. At that meeting, orders were given that Lon Nol officials in the area had to be killed.⁴ Mr. Bunkheang asked who advised that these people had to be killed. Mr. Sat said that this was an order from the zone committee, from “Ta Nhim and Ta Kuon.” He denied that these commanders provided reasons for this order, however. Mr. Bunkheang noted that the witness had previously mentioned that a “Ta Soth” was from the sector. Asked what he was in charge of, Mr. Sat advised that Ta Soth was in charge of Sector 7. There were three districts: Krakor, Kandieng and a third location, he said.⁵ As to how many commanders had been present at the meeting with Lon Nol officials, Mr. Sat said that he “knew only that there were people present from the zone and the sector.” \

Referring the witness to his testimony to the OCIJ that he received an order to assemble ranking Lon Nol officials and kill them at Tuol Po Chrey,⁶ Mr. Bunkheang asked Mr. Sat to confirm this. Mr. Sat said he did not know these people were going to be killed, however. Mr. Bunkheang asked who had designated Tuol Po Chrey as the location where people were going to be killed, to which Mr. Sat replied that it was the zone commander.

Mr. Sat had testified in one of his OCIJ interviews that he received the Lon Nol soldiers’ execution order on April 19, 1975⁷ but in another interview, that he received the order three to

⁴ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

⁵ The name of this location was not clear from the English translation.

⁶ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

⁷ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

five days after the liberation of Pursat. In this respect, Mr. Bunkheang asked Mr. Sat how soon the Pursat area was captured by the Khmer Rouge. Mr. Sat advised that this occurred “a week after that meeting.”

Mr. Bunkheang asked how former Lon Nol soldiers were identified in the meeting. Mr. Sat said, “We were told that the soldiers and officials would be gathered to attend a study session, and after that session, people would be allowed to resume their function.” Mr. Bunkheang asked when the meeting of Lon Nol soldiers took place. Mr. Sat said that he did not know but thought it was “about one or two weeks after April 17, 1975.” The meeting with Ta Nhim and Ta Soth to order the execution of the Lon Nol soldiers took place “a few days” after April 17, 1975, he stated.

According to one of the records of his OCIJ interview, Mr. Sat had said that “there were about 30 to 40 trucks of people” arriving at the Pursat provincial hall⁸ for the meeting of Lon Nol soldiers. Mr. Bunkheang asked the witness if he or his colleagues were at the provincial hall when these people arrived. Mr. Sat said that he was not and was instead about “five kilometers away” from the hall. The prosecutor queried if Mr. Sat had in fact seen the trucks since he was so far away. Mr. Sat confirmed that he had because he “was on duty on that road.”

Concerning the size of the trucks, Mr. Sat said, “They were military trucks; ... they were like GMC trucks.⁹ They could accommodate 30 people.” Mr. Sat also confirmed that these were the trucks used to transport the Lon Nol officials to both “the provincial hall and all the way to Tuol Po Chrey.”

Meeting of Lon Nol Officials at Pursat Provincial Hall and Transportation to Tuol Po Chrey

Mr. Bunkheang highlighted how, in his testimony to the OCIJ, Mr. Sat had said that the Lon Nol soldiers called to the meeting convened by Ta Nhim and Ta Soth “were cheated. They were tricked, as they were promised to obtain their previous rank in the meeting.”¹⁰ Mr. Bunkheang asked if Mr. Sat had attended the meeting with Lon Nol soldiers personally. Mr. Sat denied this. Asked how he could then testify as to the contents of the meeting, Mr. Sat said, “I learned this from ... the commander of my regiment. I was told that the [Lon Nol] police and soldiers were gathered to attend the meeting because they were afraid that these police and soldiers would revolt against the Khmer Rouge.”

When asked, Mr. Sat said that his regiment commander was named Hoeun, and his deputy was Mol. The prosecutor asked if Commander Hoeun had mentioned the names of any Lon Nol officials who would be allowed to resume their former ranks. Mr. Sat said he “learned that people who were from the center would be allowed to resume these ranks.” Mr. Bunkheang also asked where the meeting of Lon Nol officials was held. Mr. Sat advised that it was “conducted in the Pursat provincial hall.”

The prosecutor shifted forward to focus on how Lon Nol soldiers were transported away from the provincial hall. Mr. Sat said that he “saw them being loaded onto the trucks. Two trucks

⁸ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

⁹ This is a model of truck produced by General Motors.

¹⁰ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

would be allowed to leave at a time.” His unit had been stationed in “Kandieng district, three kilometers from [the provincial hall] but about 10 kilometers from Tuol Po Chrey.”

At this point, Mr. Bunkheang advised Mr. Sat that a recent ECCC witness, Ung Chhat, had testified that the Lon Nol soldiers were transported from the provincial hall to Po village before being transported to Tuol Po Chrey.¹¹ Mr. Bunkheang asked Mr. Sat if this was consistent with his own recollection. Mr. Sat agreed that it was because “Po village was on the road to Tuol Po Chrey.” Mr. Sat added that Po village and the place where he was stationed at the time “were in the same commune” and that “only one unit, my unit, was stationed in the vicinity.”

Mr. Sat had testified to the OCIJ that he received radio communications from Tuol Po Chrey that more people had to be transported there.¹² Mr. Bunkheang asked Mr. Sat to elaborate on how he communicated via radio with the Khmer Rouge soldiers at Tuol Po Chrey. Mr. Sat said, “People at Tuol Po Chrey fort communicated with us by radio asking us to have more soldiers transported there. . . . My commander was talking on the radio communication and I [overheard] this.” At the Tuol Po Chrey end, the radio operator was “from . . . the zone committee.” Pressed for this person’s name, Mr. Sat said, “He was Ta Kleng. He was the military commander for the zone.” Asked for Ta Kleng’s rank in relation to other commanders at Tuol Po Chrey, Mr. Sat explained, “He was in charge of the zone committee command, and he was there” at Tuol Po Chrey. The witness also advised that there were about 50 to 60 Khmer Rouge soldiers at Tuol Po Chrey.



Khmer Rouge soldiers greet their colleagues during the Democratic Kampuchea era.

(Source: Documentation Center of Cambodia Archives)

Witness Testifies on Executions of Lon Nol Soldiers at Tuol Po Chrey

After the mid-morning break, Mr. Bunkheang referred Mr. Sat to another part of his OCIJ testimony in which he had said that through radio communication, he learned that Lon Nol officials sent to Tuol Po Chrey were shot to death, although one managed to escape.¹³ Mr.

¹¹ Mr. Chhat testified at the ECCC on April 29 and 30, 2013. Cambodia Tribunal Monitor’s daily blog posts on his testimony may be accessed at <http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/blog/2013/04/fearful-civil-party-refuses-continue-testimony-without-lifelong-police-protection> (April 29), and <http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/blog/2013/04/witness-testifies-alleged-execution-lon-nol-soldiers-tuol-po-chrey> (April 30).

¹² This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

¹³ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 to 60 (in English), and 00282197 to 98 (in French).

Bunkheang asked the witness to confirm how he learned this. Consistent with his OCIJ testimony, Mr. Sat said that he learned this through radio communication. The prosecutor asked Mr. Sat if he heard gunshots from Tuol Po Chrey, which Mr. Sat said that he could hear through the radio communication. As to the Lon Nol soldier who escaped, Mr. Sat explained that he did not hear anything else about him.

The prosecutor directed the witness's attention to his OCIJ testimony that he had seen empty trucks returning from Tuol Po Chrey.¹⁴ Mr. Bunkheang asked where Mr. Sat was at this time and on how many occasions he saw this. Mr. Sat said that he was by the roadside at the same location and saw them "about three or four times before we had to go back to the barracks." He denied that his colleagues were driving the trucks, advising that they were instead "driven by the drivers from the zone." The trucks were "private trucks that were collected to transport the soldiers." Mr. Sat had also advised the OCIJ that the truck transportation took place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.¹⁵ Mr. Sat said that it took place on "one day only."

The witness had also testified to the OCIJ that bulldozers were sent to bury corpses at Tuol Po Chrey.¹⁶ Asked when this occurred, Mr. Sat said, "I only saw them when ... the bulldozers returned from Tuol Po Chrey," adding that "it was the zone committee" that ordered the bulldozers to be sent there. As for the trucks, he testified that "about 10 to 15 trucks" were involved in the transportation and that "perhaps ... close to 2,000 people" were transported.

Turning to the period following the events at Tuol Po Chrey, Mr. Bunkheang asked what Mr. Sat's unit had done next. The witness advised that they were "made to transplant rice." The prosecutor also queried whether, after the Tuol Po Chrey massacre, the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) attempted to find "more former Lon Nol officials." Mr. Sat recalled:

More searches were underway to find out who were former Lon Nol soldiers and officials. If they could find them ... I don't know where they could have taken them to, but wherever these people were brought to, they just disappeared. ... To the best of my knowledge, they were trying to find out who were the former [Lon Nol] soldiers, students, and teachers.

The prosecutor asked if the witness believed they could have located a lot of these people. Mr. Sat said that he "could not say exactly how many people were found, but," gesturing animatedly, "these people had to be hunted down." Mr. Sat "heard that these people were asked to attend study sessions, and that's all I know."

Mr. Sat recounted, "Everyone in the military was asked and obliged to produce their biographies, and anyone who was found out to have family in the [Lon Nol] military ... would be removed." "Removed" meant that "these people had to be sent back home to cooperatives." Evacuees also had to produce biographies, he said. Asked about the purpose of the biographies, Mr. Sat explained, "For example, if the husband was a soldier, then the wife would then be purged. ...

¹⁴ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

¹⁵ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

¹⁶ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

People who had affiliations with the Lon Nol soldiers had to be [gotten] rid of. ... 'Purged' here means that they were executed."

Second Forced Transfer to Pursat and a Study Session with Nuon Chea

The prosecutor turned to questions concerning the second forced transfer and asked the witness if more evacuees were sent to the Northwest Zone in 1976. Mr. Sat denied this and said he knew only about the third transfer in 1978. Mr. Bunkheang queried whether Mr. Sat knew that people were transported by train to Pursat province. Mr. Sat confirmed this, and added, "The final batch happened in 1979 when people from Svay Rieng were transported." This prompted the prosecutor to ask about earlier transports, including in late 1975 and early 1976. Mr. Sat confirmed that this happened in 1976. Asked how many people could have been transferred, the witness denied any knowledge of this "because the evacuees would then be transferred to different cooperatives."

These later evacuees transported by train were treated in the same way as other evacuees, the witness stated. He denied receiving any orders about their treatment, however, because "other teams were tasked with carrying out these orders." Mr. Bunkheang asked if Mr. Sat was told why these evacuees were to be sent to the Northwest Zone. Mr. Sat said he was not but that Angkar sent them.

Mr. Bunkheang asked whether Mr. Sat attended zonal trainings or study sessions. The witness denied this but explained that he "did attend some trainings at district level." The meetings "took place at Kandieng district at a school by the name of Svay Lhong." They lasted three days and were chaired by "the deputy secretary of the zone and also the district committee." The subject matter of discussion was "digging canals, building dykes, and dams."

According to the witness's testimony to the OCIJ, Nuon Chea had been present at some of these meetings. Asked for details about these particular meetings, Mr. Sat said that "the meetings were political education sessions" and that he was present at only one meeting at which Mr. Chea had been present. The prosecutor asked where this meeting took place. The witness advised that it took place in Pursat province and spanned two days. Attendees included a few "people from the zone committee and sector committee."

Mr. Sat had also testified to the OCIJ that in 1976, there had been a meeting to discuss plans to purge people, and the meeting had been attended by zone, sector, and district committees and chiefs of cooperatives and mobile units.¹⁷ Mr. Sat confirmed to Mr. Bunkheang that this meeting took place after he had already been promoted to the head of a mobile unit. It appeared this was the meeting that Mr. Chea attended, as Mr. Bunkheang asked whether Mr. Chea gave a lecture at this meeting. Mr. Sat confirmed that Mr. Chea talked about "something" and then, when pressed, said that this included "building dams, digging canals." Mr. Chea spoke only briefly, for approximately half an hour, Mr. Sat said, although he could not recall what Mr. Chea said.

However, Mr. Bunkheang pointed the witness to the following testimony to the OCIJ concerning what Mr. Chea had said at the meeting:

¹⁷ The relevant ERNs are 00242423 (in Khmer), 00250760 (in English), and 00282198 (in French).

From what I remember, he talked about the goal of creating socialism by not allowing having markets. If the market existed, internal enemies would exist. Only the evacuation of people from the markets to the base could help find the internal enemies.¹⁸

Mr. Bunkheang asked how “internal enemies” could be identified, but Mr. Sat only confirmed that he learned that such enemies would exist. The prosecutor pressed the witness on whether Mr. Chea spoke about the reasons for the evacuation of the population. Mr. Sat denied this, saying, “I don’t remember him talking about any other things.” The prosecutor again pointed the witness to his previous testimony that stated:

I saw Mr. Nuon Chea convene those meetings to prepare plans to purge internal enemies like the soldiers and commandos with connections to the Sangkum Reas Niyum¹⁹ and Lon Nol eras. Purge meetings were held two to three times during 1976. The plan to purge internal enemies was to place spies in the units, districts, sectors, teams, and units, with approximately 10 to 15 spies within each district.²⁰

Mr. Bunkheang then asked what else Mr. Sat could recall Mr. Chea saying about Lon Nol soldiers and commandos. Mr. Sat advised that Mr. Chea said, “All internal enemies had to be purged.” Mr. Sat also asserted that he attended only one meeting. Mr. Bunkheang pressed on this point and asked the witness how he knew about the other two meetings to plan purges if he had not attended them. Mr. Sat said that he learned this from the sector. The prosecutor asked whether Mr. Sat was also advised that Mr. Chea had been present at these meetings, which the witness confirmed.

Next, Mr. Bunkheang referred the witness to his testimony to the OCIJ that he knew Nuon Chea ordered the purges because Mr. Chea had come to attend meetings with the zone, sector, and district committees and the district committee told the witness that Mr. Chea relayed the plans for the purges.²¹ The prosecutor asked where the witness had been advised that Mr. Chea had ordered the purges. “They actually came to my unit, and they told us directly,” Mr. Sat replied. “Those who were with me at that time were aware of this matter because they listened to what they told us,” he added. Asked who advised him about this, the witness advised that their names were Ky and San and they said that Mr. Chea had ordered as follows:

I cannot recall it very well, but they told us that we had to build dykes and dig canals, but aside from this, they told us that we had to ... find the internal enemies. ... They told us that the enemies could be seen by simple gestures. For example, if they broke a pair of chopsticks, then they may be someone who might be against us.

¹⁸ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

¹⁹ This was a political party founded by the late King Father Norodom Sihanouk and which controlled the government in Cambodia prior to the Lon Nol administration.

²⁰ The relevant ERNs are 00242423 (in Khmer), 00250760 (in English), and 00282198 (in French).

²¹ The relevant ERNs are 00242425 (in Khmer), 00250762 (in English), and 00282201 (in French).

Witness's Experiences while in Charge of a Pursat Mobile Unit

Moving to a new topic, the prosecutor advised that the witness had testified to the OCIJ that in 1976, Sector Committee Soth and Bakan District Committee Ky transferred him to the position of mobile unit chief and directed people to build dykes at Bakan and Kandieng district.²² Asked which sector these districts were located in, Mr. Sat advised that this was Sector 7. He added that Pursat province was comprised of Sectors 7, 2, and 4. He was required to report to Kandieng district. Asked to clarify the Kandieng District Committee, he confirmed that it was Ky, while another person named Seth was in charge of youth in the district.

Mr. Sat had also testified to the OCIJ that sometimes Seth²³ gave orders directly that people in the mobile unit were to put up paddy dykes and canals and that he was occasionally asked to attend meetings at the Svay Lhong School at which Soth from the sector also attended.²⁴ Mr. Bunkheang asked if the sector committee advised from where they originally received their orders, to which Mr. Sat responded simply, "The Party." He had heard that the orders were from the Party and "also heard the word Angkar" but did not know where the Party or Angkar were.

The prosecutor asked whether, while in charge of the mobile unit, Mr. Sat ever observed "new people." Mr. Sat confirmed that there were both "old people" and "new or April 17 people." Mr. Sat clarified that there were in fact two categories of people: "March 18, 1970 people" and "April 17, 1975" people. Focusing on the latter group, Mr. Bunkheang asked how many of them there were. Mr. Sat said, "People from the Pursat provincial town were considered the 'April 17' people. ... The entire Sya commune, Kandieng district" was comprised of "April 17" people. Asked if he received any instructions in relation to the "April 17" people, Mr. Sat said that he was only ordered to have these people build canals or dykes.

Finally, Mr. Bunkheang asked whether Mr. Sat knew why these different groups existed. Mr. Sat responded, "At that time, there was a clear designation for them. The 'March 18, 1970 people' were considered 'old people,' and the 'April 17, 1975 people' were considered 'new people.' So there was a clear designation between people at that time." The prosecutor explained that he was interested in why there were different designations, for instance, whether the groups were subject to different treatment. Mr. Sat denied any knowledge of this.

Clarifications on Issues Including a Meeting to Plan Execution of Lon Nol Officials

Next, International Assistant Co-Prosecutor Dale Lysak posed some follow-up questions to the witness. He first noted that when the witness had discussed his 1971 to 1975 position with the OCIJ, he had said he was the commander of Company 82 in Battalion 202. Mr. Lysak asked if Mr. Sat still had this position in April 1975. Mr. Sat confirmed this, advising that at that time, "in battalions, there were 360 soldiers, and 30 were in platoons; 100 soldiers were in the company." Mr. Sat also clarified that he was the commander of a platoon "comprising of 30 members," not a company.



²² The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250760 (in English), and 00282198 (in French).

²³ The spelling of this name was unclear in the English translation channel.

²⁴ The relevant ERNs are 00242423 (in Khmer), 00250760 (in English), and 00282198 (in French).

Mr. Lysak turned to the meeting held shortly after liberation in which Ta Nhim and Ta Soth provided instructions. Mr. Sat had testified to the OCIJ as follows:

There was [an] invitation at that time of chairman of companies, battalions, and regiments to join the meeting at Pursat provincial hall presid[ed] over by Ta Nhim, the zone committee, and Ta Soth, the sector committee. The meeting was held three days before another meeting with Lon Nol military and policemen. It was after April 17, 1975, and just about four to five days after the liberation of Pursat. In the meeting, Khmer Rouge soldiers were told that all dignitaries from the Lon Nol regime had to be killed. If we kept them alive, there would be resistance, so they all had to be executed.²⁵

The prosecutor asked if the witness had been present at that meeting. Suggesting that he was not present, Mr. Sat said, “The regiment commander told me” and that this information had been disseminated “immediately after they left the meeting.” Mr. Sat said that at that time he “was still at Kandieng district.” At this point, the president adjourned the hearing for the lunch break.

After lunch, a new audience comprised of some 100 villagers from Takeo province took their seats in the public gallery. As with the morning session, the majority of these villagers appear to have been born before or during the DK period.

Continuing his questioning, Mr. Lysak directed the witness’s attention back to Tuol Po Chrey. He asked whether there were any soldiers from Sector Battalions 201 and 202 assigned to participate in the executions at Tuol Po Chrey or whether they were all from the zone military. Mr. Sat advised, “Soldiers from the zone were sent to that battlefield; ... people from 201 and 202 were only tasked with guarding the roads.”

Mr. Lysak highlighted Mr. Sat’s earlier testimony today that there had been 10 to 15 trucks transporting people to Tuol Po Chrey. He asked if this was an estimate of trucks leaving Mr. Sat’s location. The witness explained that in fact these trucks had been leaving the provincial hall and had passed Mr. Sat’s location.

Video Clip from Documentary “One Day in Po Chrey”:

At this point, Mr. Lysak was granted permission to show the witness an excerpt from the Thet Sambath documentary *One Day in Po Chrey*,²⁶ which the OCP had already screened during the April 30, 2013, hearing. In the video, three men sitting on a bed underneath a traditional Cambodian provincial house took it in turns to describe an event to an interviewer off-camera. One of the men was wearing a white Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) t-shirt, and all three men spoke animatedly as they recalled an event. They said that at a meeting, they were told that they needed to rise at 4 a.m. to attack Tuol Po Chrey. They rose at the appointed time, boarded trucks, and arrived at Tuol Po Chrey by dawn.

²⁵ This is from the record with the document number D232/65.

²⁶ This has the number E186.1R and has the video number V00800935, and the time points are 7.53 to 11.15.

At Tuol Po Chrey, the men were met by Commander Kleng.²⁷ He was on a guard post announcing a plan by loudspeaker. Commander Kleng advised that soldiers from the zone and Units 18 and 19 were to make a 1,000-strong cordon. The three men in the video, meanwhile, were made part of a group called the “preventive unit” and were told that if targets managed to escape the “smashing unit,” the “preventive unit” was to take all necessary measures. At 7 a.m., trucks approached Tuol Po Chrey, at which point it was announced, “Special unit, stand by to carry out the plan.”

The documentary then cut to another interview, this time with a man wearing thin wire-framed glasses sitting alone outdoors under a tree and again speaking to an off-camera interviewer. The interviewee recounted how the men on trucks “were important officials from the Lon Nol regime” who thought they would be going away for a few nights to meet the prince.²⁸ They were in civilian clothes, while “the provincial governor wore white with a straw hat.” “They tried to look like farmers,” he added. The interviewee made small talk with them while driving his truck, he said, creating “a relaxed atmosphere so they did not suspect what was about to happen.”

When the Lon Nol officials climbed down from trucks, they heard an announcement, “Comrades, do not be afraid!” The announcement explained that the officials were going to meet the prince and had to be tied up for that purpose. The interviewee described how the men were then instead led away to the killing field. The documentary then cut back to the three men sitting under the provincial house. The man in the CPP held up his hand, folding down each finger in turn to signify how the Lon Nol soldiers were then shot dead one by one.



Still from the Thet Sambath documentary One Day to Tuol Po Chrey, as shown by the prosecution in court on May 2, 2013.

Mr. Lysak asked if Mr. Sat knew any of the people shown in the clip. Mr. Sat denied this. Asked if he knew which parts of the army the “preventive unit,” “smashing unit,” and “units 18 and 19” belonged to, Mr. Sat said that he did not recall this clearly “because we were in different regiments. Even in my own unit, I can’t even remember my colleagues, so it is possible that I did not know these people.”

²⁷ In the documentary subtitles, this name was translated as Klem.

²⁸ This is presumably a reference to the late King Father Norodom Sihanouk.

Conditions in Pursat Cooperatives and Treatment of Evacuees

National civil party lawyer Kim Mengkhy was the next to take the floor. He first noted that Mr. Sat had testified being in charge of five cooperatives and asked the witness to name them. Mr. Sat said he was in charge of cooperatives in Sya commune and Tlok and Kbal Chheu Puk villages. Mr. Mengkhy sought further information from Mr. Sat about how evacuees were classified and treated. The witness obliged, describing, “People were living together in cooperatives. They ate in a communal hall. With regard to the food ration, they were not different. They ate the same food equally. But there were different people: the ‘March 18’ and ‘April 17’ people. ... Additional shelters were built to accommodate these new people.”

As for whether statistics were gathered on the evacuees, Mr. Sat confirmed, “At the sector level, they would ask that a report regarding the number of people in the villages be made to the sector level.” The civil party lawyer asked who gave orders concerning the treatment of the evacuees. Mr. Sat said, “We received orders from different people, for example zone to sector, sector to district and sub-district.”

Mr. Mengkhy noted that people had been transferred from Svay Rieng to Pursat and asked why this occurred. Mr. Sat responded that this was in 1979 and that he knew they were from Svay Rieng because “I talked to them. I asked them some questions because they lived in the same cooperative as us. These people were then made to live in different cooperatives. I asked where they were from. They said they were from Svay Rieng.”

Mr. Mengkhy asked if they had any identifying features, for example *kramas*.²⁹ Mr. Sat confirmed that while they were wearing the same clothes, they were also wearing blue *kramas* and carried luggage. Asked what the evacuees arriving from Svay Rieng had to wear, Mr. Sat explained instead, “Immediately upon arrival, it was the rainy season, the rice transplant season. So these people were made to transplant rice immediately.”

Execution of Lon Nol Officials and Fate of Phnom Penh Evacuees in Pursat

Taking over for the civil parties, international civil party lawyer Beini Ye turned to the execution of Lon Nol soldiers and policemen to Tuol Po Chrey and asked Mr. Sat what happened to their families. Mr. Sat denied knowledge of this “because I lived in a separate location [from] where they lived. I do not know what happened to their families.” As for whether the families were informed about the deaths of their husbands and relatives, Mr. Sat said:

These people were told about this about four to 10 days after their death. ... I knew this because people in my neighborhood, or soldiers in my unit, talked to me about the [Lon Nol] soldiers who had been executed earlier on. After knowing this, nothing happened. The people were just sad.

Moving on, Ms. Ye asked about the witness’s testimony that he knew people had to be evacuated from Phnom Penh and transferred to the countryside, inquiring how he knew of this evacuation. The witness said that he just saw them being transferred. As to what these people were made to

²⁹ A *krama* is a traditional Cambodian scarf.

do in the cooperatives, Mr. Sat explained, “In cooperatives, they were made to do farming, to dig canals, and build dykes. That’s all they had to do.”

Ms. Ye highlighted Mr. Sat’s testimony to the OCIJ that he was imprisoned in Thkoul office from September 1976 and that the majority of prisoners were from Phnom Penh.³⁰ She asked if the majority of these people were transferred there after the liberation. Mr. Sat confirmed this and added, “Evacuation took place from 1976 all the way to 1978.” Ms. Ye asked when the Phnom Penh dwellers arrived at Thkoul office. Mr. Sat replied, “People had to be evacuated from different places, not necessarily Phnom Penh, and they were made to live in cooperatives. That happened in 1976. And they were made to move to Thkoul office. Later on, they were moved to another office named Trach Kraol.” Ms. Ye asked whether this meant that the evacuees were first sent to cooperatives, then imprisoned at Thkoul office, and then released to another office. The witness confirmed this was the case.



Mr. Sat had also testified to the OCIJ that at Thkoul office, “there were ‘light offense prisoners’ and ‘serious offense prisoners,’ and they were treated differently.”³¹ Ms. Ye asked into which category the Phnom Penh dwellers fell. Mr. Sat explained that even Pursat dwellers could be considered serious offense prisoners and that it depended on the offense committed, not the origin. Ms. Ye asked whether the people from Phnom Penh were treated any differently within the prison. However, before Mr. Sat could respond, International Co-Counsel for Nuon Chea Victor Koppe objected. He argued that Mr. Sat was not imprisoned as a Khmer Rouge cadre and this prison was not within the scope of Case 002/1. Ms. Ye responded that she was focusing on people who had been evacuated from Phnom Penh and she was attempting to show how people from Phnom Penh were treated when they were transferred from Phnom Penh to Pursat.

After a momentary deliberation with Judge Silvia Cartwright, the president gave the floor to International Co-Counsel for Khieu Samphan Anta Guissé. She said that Ms. Ye’s response forced her to rise. She asserted the question at hand was whether, at this stage in Case 002/1, it was appropriate to discuss security centers and argued that they were not within the scope. Ms. Ye said that it was for this reason that she was not asking about the conditions of Thkoul office. She was instead focusing on the fate of evacuees from Phnom Penh upon their arrival at the base, as this matter is within the scope of Case 002/1.

Following this exchange, the Trial Chamber judges gathered in deliberation around the president’s chair. After several minutes, the president advised that the defense counsels’ objections were sustained. He directed the witness not to answer Ms. Ye’s prior question and directed Ms. Ye to confine her questions to the scope of Case 002/1. This prompted Ms. Ye to ask Mr. Sat one final question, concerning whether people evacuated from Phnom Penh were also killed like the prisoners at Thkoul office. Mr. Sat denied this but said, “They were made to work, and they also went hungry for a long period of time.”

³⁰ The relevant ERNs are 00242423 (in Khmer), 00250761 (in English), and 00282199 (in French).

³¹ The relevant ERNs are 00242423 (in Khmer), 00250761 (in English), and 00282199 (in French).

Numbers Game: Defense Counsel Seeks Clarification on Witness's Biographical Details

National Co-Counsel for Nuon Chea Son Arun took the floor for the defense. Mr. Arun first asked the witness to clarify his date of birth, noting that in his November 23, 2008, OCIJ interview, he said that he was born in 1965; and in his November 18, 2009, and May 23, 2011, interviews, he said he was born in 1955, suggesting that Mr. Sat had misrepresented his date of birth each time. Mr. Sat said that he “did not pay much attention to my birthday. I was born in the year of the monkey.”³² Mr. Lysak objected that the defense counsel had mischaracterized Mr. Sat’s testimony, since in two of his interviews he had stated the same year of birth. Mr. Arun said that his question was based on the records of Mr. Sat’s OCIJ interviews and he wanted to know if Mr. Sat stood by his statements or not. At this point, the president intervened, saying that this line of questioning was rather confusing and asking which year Mr. Arun was referring to, 1955 or 1965. He also noted that Mr. Sat had referred to being born in the year of the monkey. Mr. Arun confessed that he himself was confused and had been interested in whether Mr. Sat had been born in 1955 or 1965. Mr. Sat clarified that he was born in 1955.

Mr. Arun asked the witness what his level of education was. Mr. Sat explained that he did not attend formal schooling as the school was too far away from his home. Instead, he attended school in a pagoda.

Next, Mr. Sat confirmed, when asked, that he was in the military from 1971 to 1975. When he joined, he “did not hold any rank.” Mr. Arun asked how quickly Mr. Sat was promoted to a position commanding 30 soldiers. Mr. Sat explained that it was “not until 1974” that he was promoted to that post. Asked what his rank was at that time, Mr. Sat instead responded that in a platoon, there were three ranking officers: the commander, deputy commander, and member; there was also a section that dealt with food supply. Mr. Sat explained that he was the “deputy commander” and was in charge of “tactical training.”

The defense counsel noted that, according to his testimony to the OCIJ, Mr. Sat had said that he was the commander of Company 82 with 130 soldiers under his command.³³ Asked if he could recall this testimony, Mr. Sat clarified that there was someone in a higher position than him. This prompted Mr. Arun to read Mr. Sat’s testimony to the OCIJ verbatim and ask whether the witness had in fact been a commander. At this point, Mr. Sat conceded that he was “the commander of Company 82.” Asked to describe its activities, Mr. Sat explained, “Company 81 comprised of 130 soldiers; this was divided into three companies. Company 82 comprised of 30 members. These three companies would form into a battalion.”

At the time, Mr. Sat testified, his battalion commander was Hoeun, and there were two deputy commanders, Mol and Seth. The chairman was in charge of politics, while the two deputies were in charge respectively for training and food and uniforms. Mr. Arun responded to this testimony, however, that the witness had testified to the OCIJ that Seth had been the battalion commander and that the zone commander was Ta Ky. Asked if he stood by this, Mr. Sat agreed that this was so. When pressed, Mr. Sat conceded that Mr. Seth was not battalion commander but deputy

³² According to the zodiac calendar, this would place the witness as having been born in either 1956 or 1957, or 1968 or 1969.

³³ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

commander. Mr. Arun asked Mr. Sat to confirm that he did not stand by his previous statement. Mr. Sat advised that when he was interviewed by the OCIJ, he “did not pay much attention” and was willing to accept Mr. Arun’s suggestion. Mr. Arun pressed Mr. Sat to definitively identify which statement he thought to be correct. Mr. Sat said, “I only knew that one was a commander and another was a deputy commander, but of course, both were in a commanding post.”

Following the mid-afternoon break, Mr. Arun asked the witness to confirm that he was promoted to the position of head of Company 82 in 1974. The witness confirmed this was so. Next, Mr. Sat confirmed that, in 1975, he left the Khmer Rouge army and “was transferred to a mobile unit instead.” Pressed on whether he could recall the exact date of the transfer, Mr. Sat advised that he could only recall the year.

Tuol Po Chrey Trucks and Execution of Northwest Zone Soldiers

Moving on, Mr. Arun asked the witness how he was able to arrive at his estimate of there being 30 to 50 trucks transporting Lon Nol soldiers to their death. Mr. Sat denied saying this, saying he that he had only described there being approximately 10 to 15 trucks. This prompted Mr. Arun to



recall to the witness his testimony to the OCIJ that “altogether, about 3,000 people were transferred on trucks to the Pursat provincial hall. At least 30 to 50 trucks were used to transfer people to the provincial hall.”³⁴ Mr. Arun asked which was the correct estimate of the number of trucks; Mr. Sat said that it was about 10 to 15 trucks.

The defense counsel pressed, then, as to the correct number of people who were transferred to the Pursat provincial hall from across Pursat province. Mr. Sat said that he was not in charge of this. Mr. Arun pushed the witness to clarify whether the 3,000 people estimate was correct. Mr. Sat said that there were “more or less 3,000 people.” This prompted Mr. Arun to ask how many people could be carried on each truck. Mr. Arun said that this was approximately 30 people. Thus, Mr. Arun calculated, approximately 100 trucks would have been needed to carry 3,000 people. He asked whether the witness thought this was correct. This prompted Mr. Sat to concede that the estimate of 15 trucks was not correct, that he “did not pay attention to the number of trucks,” and that “[i]t was a long time ago, I don’t remember very well.”

Mr. Arun next sought the witness’s clarification as to how he could have heard the radio communications from Tuol Po Chrey, including the radio communication concerning the one escapee. Mr. Sat said that the radio communication “belonged to us, to our unit; ... it was carried by a member [of the unit], who told me about this.”

The defense counsel said that according to the witness’s prior testimony to the OCIJ, people who were affiliated with the Lon Nol regime were killed, and then the executioners themselves were later sent to S-21 for execution because they were accused of revolting against orders by Nuon Chea. Mr. Arun said he did not understand this statement and asked Mr. Sat to explain what had

³⁴ The relevant ERNs are 00242422 (in Khmer), 00250759 (in English), and 00282197 (in French).

occurred. The witness said, “Simply speaking, these soldiers, the Khmer Rouge soldiers, later on were accused of betraying Angkar. I’m referring to the soldiers in the Northwest.” He said that he learned this from “the remaining soldiers in Battambang,” who told him in 1977. The witness confirmed that at that time, he was neither in the military nor the mobile unit.

Asked how he learned that the soldiers revolted under an order from Nuon Chea, Mr. Sat said that soldiers in the Northwest told him. This prompted Mr. Arun to press the witness to specify their names and ranks. Mr. Sat said that they were “in charge of a platoon, as I was. They had to flee Battambang. ... There was a man I remember by the name of Vorn.” Impelled to tell the court what Vorn told him, he recalled, “He just told me that there was a report that soldiers of the Northwest Zone betrayed Angkar. That’s why the soldiers were destined for execution somewhere near Boeung Kak. I don’t know where Boeung Kak is.”

Mr. Sat continued, in reply to Mr. Arun’s questions, “I believed that when they were sent to Phnom Penh, they must have been detained at S-21.” The witness then advised, however, that he did not know about S-21 when he was a soldier. He “read books and magazines about our old popular singers like Sin Sisamouth and Ros Sereysothea, and I learned about S-21 when I read those publications.” Mr. Sat confirmed that he learned about the existence of S-21, or Tuol Sleng, “at a very recent date.”

The defense counsel asked Mr. Sat how he determined his estimate that there were about 2,000 detainees at Thkoul office. However, before Mr. Sat could respond, Ms. Ye objected. She said that she objected to this question precisely for the same reasons that the defense counsel objected to her questions before, since they said that the conditions at Thkoul office were outside the scope of Case 002/1. Mr. Arun advised that he would move to a new question.

Moving on, Mr. Arun asked the witness how he knew, as he testified to the OCII, that Ta Khin and two others were executed at Svay Att office. The witness asserted that he was there. Mr. Arun asked if this meant that Mr. Sat saw these people being led away. International Lead Co-Lawyer for the civil parties Elisabeth Simonneau Fort objected that this question was irrelevant as it was from 1978. Mr. Arun explained that he sought to establish whether the witness saw the event happen. The president appeared not to obstruct this line of questioning, and Mr. Sat duly offered a response, but neither it nor the subsequent exchanges with the defense counsel were translated into English due to a technical issue. The translators could be heard checking the translation equipment. At the same time, the Trial Chamber judges took the opportunity to hold a conference between them, evidently deliberating on an issue.

Witness’s Recollection of Seeing Nuon Chea

After several minutes, the president advised that Mr. Arun could proceed with his questions but that he should not stray away from the scope of Case 002/1, since his team had started the objections concerning what was in and out of that scope. Mr. Arun duly moved on, referring to the witness’s testimony that he did not see Khmer Rouge leaders visiting the base and only saw Mr. Chea on one occasion. He asked if Mr. Sat recalled making this statement. The witness agreed that he had, advising that he saw Mr. Chea “at Pursat province, when he was on his way to Battambang.” Asked what Mr. Chea was doing, the witness advised that in fact, he saw Mr. Chea “with my own eyes” in 1979 at Battambang province and he was simply “on his trip ... on

a vehicle travelling to Battambang.” The defense counsel asked if Mr. Sat knew Mr. Chea before he saw him. Mr. Sat explained, “Our troops were stationed along this national road, and we were told who would be passing us,” and Mr. Chea passed him in a car.

Mr. Arun asked whether, between 1971 and 1975, Mr. Sat ever attended any meetings or trainings with Khmer Rouge leaders in Pursat province. Mr. Sat explained, “I never met any leaders from the Center. I only met leaders from the sector. ... The sector leaders would pass on the information to the people down below.”

Turning to a new topic, Mr. Arun asked the witness who had been presiding over or giving talks to the meeting of Lon Nol officials at Pursat provincial hall. Mr. Sat said that the speakers included Ta Kuon and Ta Ven, both from the zone committee. There were also sector committee representatives present. At that time, Mr. Sat had been “simply a security guard. I provided security around the province.”

Finally, Mr. Arun asked the witness to tell the court about the hierarchical structure in the Khmer Rouge army above platoon level. Mr. Sat said, gesturing with his hands to show the groupings:

We had platoons, comprising of 30 soldiers in a platoon, and in that platoon, there was a commander, deputy commander, and member. In a squad, there were 12 members. From squad [level], there would be platoon. Three platoons made up a company. Three companies made up a battalion. Three battalions made up a brigade, and then there was a [further] hierarchy above that.

Another Round of Questions on the Witness’s Age, Calculations, and Estimations

At this point, Mr. Koppe, with apologies, advised that he was going back to the question of the witness’s age. He said that when Mr. Sat was asked for his age, he had replied that he was 54. The defense counsel then noted that in answer to Mr. Arun, he had said that he was born in 1955. The witness agreed with this. This prompted Mr. Koppe to ask Mr. Sat what year it was now. Mr. Sat confirmed that it was 2013. Mr. Koppe asked if Mr. Sat was certain that he was 54. The witness explained that he was not, as he had not done the calculation beforehand. Mr. Koppe also noted that the witness said he was born in the year of the monkey. He asked whether it could be that the year of the monkey was in 1956. After a very long pause, the witness responded that he did not really know if this was correct, just that he “was born in the year of the monkey.”

Mr. Koppe asked the witness how old he was when he joined the revolution. Mr. Sat said that he was 21. The defense counsel asked how old the witness was when he left the pagoda school to join the revolution. Mr. Sat said that he “stayed in the pagoda when I was around 15 or 16 years old.” Mr. Koppe asked whether Mr. Sat was “taught how to make calculations” in the pagoda school. Mr. Sat denied this, explaining, “I was taught only the Buddhist dharma. I was not taught arithmetic or computing.”

This prompted Mr. Koppe to ask how many people the witness thought was in the trucks carrying Lon Nol soldiers. Mr. Sat said that he “did not pay attention to counting the number of people because my duty was merely to guard the place,” and stated there could have been about “20, 30” people to a truck.

Moving on, Mr. Koppe asked the witness to provide more details of the battles between the revolutionary army and Lon Nol soldiers before April 17, 1975. Mr. Sat obliged and said, “From 1971 through to 1973, they actually declared war. The upper authority had instructed the people in the lower ranks to be prepared to go into war. That was in 1973. In 1973, they waged war against the opposing force, up until 1975.”

The defense counsel explained that he was interested in whether Mr. Sat personally engaged in combat with Lon Nol soldiers. Mr. Sat agreed that he had and that in late 1974, in Pursat province, “I got injured by shrapnel. A piece of shrapnel got lodged inside my body. If I work hard, I can see my body swell because a piece of shrapnel got stuck inside my body.” Mr. Koppe asked if this location was near Tuol Po Chrey. Mr. Sat replied, “At the fort of Tuol Po Chrey, before April 17, 1975, I was stationed over there, but when I was wounded, it was not over there, it was somewhere else. My duty station was from one location all the way to Mong location in Battambang.”



Mr. Koppe asked whether Mr. Sat was ever engaged with revolutionary forces in an attack on Tuol Po Chrey. Mr. Sat confirmed that he was and that “my troops were fighting with them, and I could not even retrieve the dead bodies of my soldiers [when] they were killed during the fighting.”

The defense counsel noted the witness’s previous testimony that around 100 Lon Nol soldiers had been stationed at Tuol Po Chrey. He asked the witness how he had arrived at this figure. Mr. Sat simply said that this was the number of troops and they included “commandoes and soldiers.” Mr. Koppe pressed the witness again, asking whether Mr. Sat had actually been told that there had been 100 soldiers. Mr. Sat asserted, “On April 17, 1975, I actually went through this area, through Tuol Po Chrey all the way up to Pursat province, so at that time, I realized it.”

Mr. Koppe queried how many Lon Nol soldiers were stationed at Pursat town and Po village. Mr. Sat said he could not recall as “there were many fortresses ... six or seven fortresses. ... There were many other fortresses; there could have been hundreds of thousands of fortresses.” Asked if he could estimate how many soldiers were stationed in Pursat province, Mr. Sat responded, “There were so many soldiers all the way from Mong to Krokor stream. There were so many soldiers. I did not know ... there were many fortresses and there were so many soldiers of Lon Nol. I did not even know how many soldiers there were in each fort.”

Moving on, Mr. Koppe asked if Mr. Sat knew of a Commander Pel. The witness agreed and said:

Pel was the commander at that time at Po village. I actually stayed in Po overnight before I left for Pursat provincial town. ... I did not know how many soldiers were subordinate to him, but when they convened the soldiers to a meeting, they organized it, and they actually told me as well who the commander was and who the deputy commander was. As for the weaponry, they transported it to a different

location. I simply moved along from one location to another all the way to the provincial town.

The defense counsel pressed, asking if Mr. Sat knew whether Commander Pel and his deputy Run were engaged in active combat with Mr. Sat's platoon or others in the revolutionary army. Mr. Sat responded, "On this issue, it's a bit difficult. They were on one side, and I was on the other side ... and we were actually confronting with one another. The situation was fragile, and fighting could erupt at any time, so I didn't know that much at that time."

Mr. Koppe asked the witness if he knew other ranking Lon Nol soldiers. Mr. Sat replied, "I saw a person wearing a uniform with a captain's rank or a major's rank, but I did not know who they really were."

At this point, the president asked Mr. Koppe how much further time he would need to question Mr. Sat. The defense counsel responded that the defense would need the full allotted time and would finish at lunchtime on May 3, with approximately 20 to 30 minutes of questions from the Khieu Samphan Defense Team. The president duly adjourned the hearing for the day.

Hearings in the ECCC will resume on Friday, May 3, 2013, at 9 a.m. with the continued questioning of witness Lim Sat.