



Testimony of the Accused: Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan Speak, While Ieng Sary Remains Silent

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Trial 002 in the ECCC continued today with a spotlight on the accused. Although Nuon Chea took center stage for all of the morning session, the other two accused also spoke, albeit briefly, in front of the court in the afternoon session. While neither Ieng Sary nor Khieu Samphan agreed to respond to substantive questions at this time, Mr. Samphan did provide the court with a comprehensive response to the Closing Order paragraphs at question during this first phase of the trial, revealing a high level of understanding of the proceedings.

After a series of late starts the previous week, President Nil Nonn called the court to order promptly at 9 a.m. The president informed the parties and the public gallery, filled with the usual audience of students and villagers, that the health of witness Long Norin had not yet improved; therefore, the court would continue the questioning of the accused today. Unlike previous days of trial, no preliminary matters arose to delay the hearing of testimony, so the security guards were then instructed to take the accused Nuon Chea to the witness dock.

Nuon Chea informed the court that, despite the time to rest over the weekend, his health is still an issue. But, he stated, he would cooperate with the Trial Chamber to the best of his ability, seeking allowance to rest as needed. President Nonn responded that Mr. Chea would be questioned only for the morning session, taking into consideration his health condition, and that the court would call upon the other accused Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan to testify during the afternoon session. The president then indicated that the court had noted how difficult it was for the accused to be moved to the dock and requested that, in the future, he be given a wheelchair.

Judge Cartwright Continues Examination of Nuon Chea

Judge Sylvia Cartwright was then given the floor to continue her questioning of Nuon Chea, which had been suspended on Tuesday, 6 December, to allow the court to hear the testimony of prosecution witness Long Norin.

Returning to where she had left off, namely the development of the political line of the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), Judge Cartwright summarized the comments Nuon Chea had previously made regarding his and Pol Pot's study of the status of the country in 1955-1959 and their decision that a nationalist revolution was necessary. She then asked Mr. Chea to

confirm that these political and strategic lines were discussed at the Party General Assembly in September 1960.

In response, though not necessarily to the question asked, Mr. Chea sought to clarify Judge Cartwright's summary, stating that the party had determined that two distinct tasks were necessary: (1) liberating the nation, meaning eliminating the remnants of colonialism present in the country at the time; and (2) liberating the people, meaning eliminating feudalism and improving the situation of the peasants by reducing the cost of land and the interest on loans so that the people would have enough food to eat.

After thanking him for clarifying that point, Judge Cartwright again asked the question of whether the political lines had been discussed at the Party Assembly in 1960. Mr. Chea explained that the Party had gathered information and suggestions from the ground level up and, after these ideas were brought together, the political line was discussed at the Assembly.

Turning to the subject of armed revolution, which had been addressed only briefly the week before, Judge Cartwright asked how the Party planned to conduct the revolution and whether it would include armed struggle. Mr. Chea responded, "This was the stage of political struggle. It was not yet the stage of political and armed struggle. The armed struggle commenced only in 1968, if I am not mistaken." Calling the period of 1960 to 1967 "the period of democratic revolution," he explained that they attacked the remnants of colonialism and the power of feudalists only through political means at that time.

Reading from the 8 August 1975 issue of the *Revolutionary Flag* magazine, Judge Cartwright noted a "lengthy" article on the history of the Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea (RAK) that said, after the Party Assembly in 1960, the cadres in the various cities gradually set up a revolutionary army based on the strategic lines of the CPK and that this army went by many names, including the "Secret Defense Unit." Asked if he remembered those discussions and that name in particular, Mr. Chea requested that the judge restate the question in a short way, on one topic at a time, so that he can provide accurate answers.

After being asked again if the RAK was originally known as the Secret Defense Unit, Mr. Chea reiterated that the revolution started only as a political struggle. He stated, however, that they did start the Secret Defense Unit in order to protect the peasants against arrest by the police and to escort cadres on missions. Recruited from the children of the peasants, the unit did not carry arms, but only "sticks, knives or axes." When asked if they were also tasked with "covertly smashing the enemy," as stated in the *Revolutionary Flag* article, Mr. Chea said their duty was to "defend the cadres," not to kill or smash anyone. "Only in case of necessity," he said, such as when the cadre was attacked or detained, was this unit allowed to use force to protect the cadre "to their best ability." With regard to the statement in *Revolutionary Flag* about "smashing the enemy," Mr. Chea explained that while the Secret Defense Unit did not actively seek out spies in order to smash them, if any showed up in a Party meeting to arrest the cadre, then the unit "had the authority to smash" those spies.

Judge Cartwright then turned to the specific birthdate of the RAK. Referring again to the article in *Revolutionary Flag*, she read that the Secret Defense Unit "opened fire for the first time" in a

village near Battambang City on 17 January 1968. When asked if this was his recollection, Nuon Chea did not directly answer the question but instead attempted to give an explanation for why the unit may have resorted to arms in 1968. He claimed that, at that time, Lon Nol had sent his army to the Battambang area “in the hundreds and thousands” to repress the peasants, and many were beheaded. “Lon Nol’s barbarous clique ... acted at their own pleasure in killing people,” he said. In order to avoid death or arrest, the people from this area fled into the mountains, where there was no food, in order to avoid being arrested. Some of these people were voluntary units organized by children of the peasants, and in response to Lon Nol’s forces, these voluntary units attacked a police post and seized several weapons, beginning the armed struggle. This struggle then spread throughout the country, and, within one year, he claimed, there were armed activities within 17 of the 19 provinces of Cambodia. These people, he said, “had no choice but to resist.”

When asked if he specifically ordered the attack on this village as *Revolutionary Flag* reported, Nuon Chea objected, stating that he was not even living in that area at the time and that he had never received any military training.

Judge Cartwright then inquired whether this incident was made famous as the founding of the RAK, to which Mr. Chea answered that, to his recollection, the RAK started its functioning on 12 March 1968. Turning to a now-familiar enemy, he explained how Vietnam warned the CPK against instigating an armed struggle, saying, “it was too adventurous” for them to undertake on their own. Additionally, he asserted, Vietnam actively worked against the CPK, by not sharing weapons with them.

As for the financial support for the RAK, Mr. Chea explained that the funds were provided by the party members through monthly contributions of 1 riel. As the active RAK members were “the peasants’ children,” they received personal support from their families, though, due to the lack of food, they would need to turn to the forests, which provided animals and birds. Regarding how he supported himself, Mr. Chea stated, “I had nothing, I lived on the support of others.... They offered me anything they had.... Whenever I lived with families, they tried to hide me and not tell others that I am there.”

When asked how they afforded weapons to arm all of the soldiers, Mr. Chea’s answer was again non-responsive, moving again to blame Vietnam. Claiming that Vietnam had said they would share their weapons, he asserted, “Vietnam kept everything,” even though the Vietnamese forces were seeking sanctuary in Cambodia and had to rely on Cambodians to feed and support them. He stated that he told this story in order to make clear for the younger generation “who is indebted to whom.”

Returning to the issue of strategic and political lines, Judge Cartwright asked if the Party had also discussed the development of a CPK statute at the 1960 Party Assembly. Before allowing him to answer, she requested the court officials show a copy to Nuon Chea and then asked him to confirm that this is the statute of thirty articles to which he referred last week. After a brief delay in which the final page of the statute was misplaced and then found again, Mr. Chea confirmed that there were indeed thirty articles and that this was the statute to which he had referred during hearings the previous week.

When asked why the formation of the CPK was not officially announced until “some 17 years after its actual founding,” Mr. Chea replied, “It is not I alone to declare it official; it depended on the Standing Committee.” He stated that the main reason for not announcing the CPK’s formation earlier was because “it was a small scale” and was still developing for many years. “A public announcement would have consequences that would not be beneficial to the party,” he claimed, stating that they needed to wait until the Party had garnered support from the public and from overseas. Citing the support of the Chinese government as the turning point, he contended that the CPK was then a position to liaise with foreign Communist parties, and “the Party became gradually known throughout the Communist world.”

Judge Cartwright then turned the questioning away from the historical formation of the CPK and asked Nuon Chea when the decision to evacuate Phnom Penh was made by the Party. He responded that the final decision to evacuate had been formulated over a series of “extraordinary sessions” of the Central Committee, starting in 1973. Reiterating that the Committee was adamant that Phnom Penh be liberated before Vietnam could liberate Preah Nakor (now known as Ho Chi Minh City), he explained that the decision was then made that the attacks to liberate the city would commence on 1 January 1975. To prepare for the attacks, he stated, he and Pol Pot were sent to negotiate with Vietnam for the weapons that China had originally given to Cambodia but were being held by Vietnam. Vietnam did release the weapons, but the arms were soon destroyed by a bomb that hit the place where the cache had been hidden. Yet “the RAK continued with the struggle until they gained victory,” Mr. Chea declared.

According to Nuon Chea, the situation in Phnom Penh was dire and people had been starving since 1972. No more food was reserved and there had been riots. There were many beggars and soldiers did not receive their salaries. Lon Nol could not control the situation and, Nuon Chea repeated, people had no food to eat.

Explaining why the Central Committee decided to evacuate Phnom Penh, Mr. Chea explained, “The situation in Phnom Penh was dire,” with people starving and riots occurring over the food shortage. “We were in a better situation because we lived in cooperatives and had one another,” he asserted, meaning those people who were living in the rural areas, “Therefore, we had to evacuate residents of Phnom Penh temporarily, so they would have food to eat.” He then explained how the decision was made about where the residents of Phnom Penh would be sent and how these residents “took the hands” of the peasants and were “transformed” into laborers. He stated that they were tasked to do moderate work and were given enough to eat— gruel in the morning and cooked rice for lunch and dinner, and “once a week they received dessert.” This statement provoked visible anger among many in the public gallery, both the villagers and the students, some of who shouted, “No!” to Mr. Chea’s claims.

Perhaps in response to the public’s outburst, Mr. Chea maintained that any lack of food within the cooperative was due to “bad elements,” who intended to destroy the cooperatives. Alleging that he and the other CPK senior leaders had no knowledge of the starving people, he stated that “the skinny people” were hidden from him, and that he was only shown “the healthy ones.” When the leaders came to visit the cooperatives, he stated, “We were well entertained and provided with food.” He claimed that his lack of knowledge was due to “trickery employed in some of the cooperatives.”

After Nuon Chea had completed his statement about the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Judge Cartwright ended her questioning and informed the court that she wished to place a number of documents before the chamber after the morning break.

Taking this cue, President Nonn adjourned the court for the morning recess.

Judge Lavergne Questions Nuon Chea

After the break, President Nonn turned the floor over once again to Judge Cartwright to place a number of documents before the chamber. Judge Cartwright then gave the court the document identification numbers of the three issues of *Revolutionary Flag* to which she had referred to during today's questioning, stating that these were now placed before the court. She also offered the CPK Statute that Nuon Chea had identified earlier.

With Judge Cartwright's examination of the accused completed, President Nonn then inquired whether any of the other judges wished to ask any questions of the accused. Having identified his intention to examine Mr. Chea, Judge Lavergne began his questioning, only to be stopped quickly due to issues with the English interpretation. A short break was taken to resolve this issue.

Judge Lavergne then restarted his questioning, asking Nuon Chea if the place to which he had referred as Preah Nakor is the same place now known as Ho Chi Minh City. Mr. Chea stated that this was correct, and that, when it was part of the Khmer territory, the city had been known as Preah Nakor. He stated that he had no "hidden agenda" in using this name for the city, rather than its current name.

Reminding Nuon Chea that he had previously stated that he had compassion for the people who were being mistreated by the French during the time of colonialism, Judge Lavergne asked whether the word "compassion" also held a religious connotation for him. Nuon Chea replied that this is correct and that Buddhist tenets moved him and other Cambodians to have compassion for others. When asked whether these tenets included the adherence to non-violence, Mr. Chea responded that, in the situation of revolution, when attacked with arms, even Buddhists are allowed to respond with force. "The two approaches could co-exist in my view," he asserted.

Judge Lavergne then inquired whether this compassion should also extend to victims of forced labor, slavery and other forms of oppression. Nuon Chea responded that, in his view, revolution requires both physical and mental labor to build the country, whereas religion relies on compassion and sympathy. "Without the labor, you do not get the revolutionary result," he stated, noting that, just as with religion, there are practices that need to be followed.

Going further, Nuon Chea asserted, "Communism only eliminates those people who destroy the country and cannot be rehabilitated," noting that the Party gave these people three chances. "If they cannot be reformed [or] refashioned, then they will be sacked from the party," he stated. The Party did not have the authority to "smash" anyone, he said, rather, non-compliant members were demoted or "sacked" and sent to the local authority "to engage in labor."

“CPK is not 100 percent pure, because it is not established in heaven but in a corrupt society,” Mr. Chea explained. But “[t]he allegation that people were killed or that genocide was committed is not true.”

Before Mr. Chea could continue his monologue regarding the “war of aggression” that was being waged by the U.S. and Vietnam, Judge Lavergne interrupted and admonished him to answer only the questions that are asked. He then inquired when the Party had developed the political line of “eliminating the bad elements.”

Despite being told to answer only the question that was put to him, Nuon Chea’s response did not include a straight answer. Instead, he only repeated, “The revolution is to build the forces, not to smash the forces, except in those situations where these people could not be reeducated or reformed. These were the cruel people who could not be reeducated.” Confirming his assertion that all of the “bad elements” who were eliminated were spies or could not be reeducated, he explained, “We needed to keep human resources in order to defend the country; it was much better than killing the people.”

After the judge repeated his question one more time, Nuon Chea finally answered that the political line developed at some point when the “war of Vietnam became widespread” and when the Americans began to drop bombs on Cambodia. “So the damage and the anger of the people pushed the birth of the nationalist spirit,” he explained. “How could we remain silent when our enemy attacked us?”

Judge Lavergne then inquired as to the difference between “political conflict” and revolutionary armed conflict and whether, in political conflict, any form of violence is used. Mr. Chea responded that he never denied that an armed struggle took place, but that the “armed struggle is not the base principle that we adopted.” This political conflict was comprised of demonstrations, riots, and protests and also involved collective work and “helping hands” among farmers. While armed struggle was “very important,” he said, becoming more animated and forceful in his statements, “We could not abandon the political struggle... because the people were more satisfied with the political struggle... If you lose in a battle, it is usual for war, but if you lose in the struggle, that is the problem.”

Leaving the question of armed struggle, Judge Lavergne then inquired about the links between the “clandestine communist movement” of which Nuon Chea was supposedly a part and the group of progressive intellectuals, which had included Khieu Samphan. Mr. Chea’s response did not address the question directly at first, stating that he had been told by Pol Pot not to have contact with those people because he himself was not an intellectual. When asked again, Nuon Chea stated that, while he did not know of any connections personally, those who had studied in France, such as Pol Pot and Ieng Sary, could have been in communication with the intellectuals.

For his final question before the lunch recess, Judge Lavergne then asked Mr. Chea when he had met the other two accused. Mr. Chea responded that he had not met Khieu Samphan until after the liberation of Phnom Penh. Even after the liberation, he claimed that he rarely met with Mr. Samphan and that they never talked to each other. As for Ieng Sary, they had met some time after

the Geneva Accord, granting Cambodia's independence, and that they did meet together at times because they were both members of the Standing Committee of the CPK.

Before taking the lunch break, President Nonn then asked Nuon Chea if he would be able to continue answering questions in the afternoon. Mr. Chea responded that he would try to continue even though he is getting tired, but he again requested that the questions be kept simple and short.

Nuon Chea's counsel, Michiel Pestman, then requested that the court allow the medical personnel to examine his client over lunch, so that the decision could be made more appropriately at the beginning of the next session. President Nonn requested that the doctor complete medical exams of all of the accused and then adjourned the court for the lunch recess.

Ieng Sary Invokes Right to Remain Silent

As the students who had filled the public gallery in the morning had left for their tour of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the public gallery was nearly empty after the lunch break, with only five of the center rows filled with villagers. The reduced audience made for a quiet afternoon, with little to no reaction from those gathered to any statements made from the courtroom.

President Nonn called the court to order again shortly after 1:30 p.m. and informed the parties that the court doctor had examined Nuon Chea's health and, finding no change in his condition, had determined that Mr. Chea should be able to continue with his testimony. In response, Mr. Chea declared that he was exhausted and requested that he be allowed to continue tomorrow morning instead. After the judges conferred, his request was granted, and the court called Ieng Sary to the witness dock.

As Mr. Sary had made clear his intentions to invoke his right to remain silent a number of times in the past, some observers seemed surprised that his counsel did not object to Mr. Sary being wheeled in his chair to the witness dock. Mr. Sary then amicably answered the biographical questions posed to him by President Nonn, stating his name and aliases, birth date and family details with no objection. When the judge asked about his educational details, however, Mr. Sary's lawyer, Michael Karnavas, interrupted before his client could respond. Reminding the court of Mr. Sary's court filing on 24 October 2011 on this matter, Mr. Karnavas reiterated his client's decision not to answer questions posed by any party or the court. He informed the court that Mr. Sary was prepared to read a statement on this issue "because we expected that the Trial Chamber would still attempt to question him," despite the fact that he had made his intention clear.

Maintaining that the question regarding educational background was only a general one, "not related to confessions," President Nonn nevertheless did not repeat the inquiry, and instead read Ieng Sary his rights as the accused. Specifically, Ieng Sary has the right to be defended by a lawyer of his choice at every stage; President Nonn noted that he was now defended by one international lawyer and one Cambodian lawyer and had also been represented during the investigation and pre-trial stage. He also has the right to remain silent, the right to be protected from self-incrimination, and the right to be notified of the charges against him.

When asked if he had been informed of the charges against him, Ieng Sary, unlike Nuon Chea, firmly stated yes, so President Nonn did not read the specific charges to him.

President Nonn then inquired whether Mr. Sary would like to exercise his right to remain silent. In response, Mr. Sary read his prepared statement, which notified the court again that he does not plan to respond to any questioning during the trial. Judge Lavergne requested clarification on this matter, asking whether this declaration also meant that he “refuses” to provide any explanation or comment related to the paragraphs of the Closing Order that are being covered in this phase of the trial.

Objecting to the judge’s use of the word “refuse” (or, at least, the interpreter’s use of that word in the translation from French), Mr. Karnavas emphasized that his client did not refuse to answer questions, but rather he was choosing “to exercise his full Constitutional right not to answer any questions during this trial or any other trial.” Stressing that he was not contesting the accused’s right to remain silent, Judge Lavergne explained that he wanted to make clear at this juncture whether Mr. Sary would be providing any comment to the court. Mr. Sary responded again that he has no intention to answer any questions or made any statements at this time.

Khieu Samphan Responds to the Closing Order

As Mr. Sary had expressly waived his right to answer questions, President Nonn instructed the security guards to return the accused to his seat behind his lawyers. As Mr. Sary was wheeled back to his position, Khieu Samphan’s international lawyer took the opportunity presented by the lull in the proceedings to inform the court of his client’s intention on answering questions from the court and the parties. Stating that Mr. Samphan plans also not to respond to questions posed by the court or the parties, the counsel said that his client would instead read a statement reacting to and commenting on the Closing Order paragraphs at play in this part of the trial.

After his lawyer had completed these comments, Khieu Samphan was taken to the witness dock. After responding to the usual biographical questions from President Nonn, Mr. Samphan balked at first when asked whether he can discuss his educational background. When posed the question a second time, the accused decided to answer the question, despite what appeared to be a small hint of visual discouragement from his lawyers. Mr. Samphan explained that, after attending primary and junior high school in his home province, he moved to Phnom Penh to complete high school, graduating in 1951. From 1951-1953, he worked as a teacher in order to support his family, while also attending a law course. Finally, in 1953, he traveled to France, where he pursued his law degree; he graduated in 1958 and returned to Cambodia.

After reading the rights of the accused and confirming that Mr. Samphan had been notified of the charges against him, President Nonn then asked whether Mr. Samphan also wished to exercise his right to remain silent. The accused responded that, while he would like to comment on the paragraphs of the Closing Order, he would not answer questions at this time. Noting that the prosecution has the burden of proving its case beyond a reasonable doubt, he said he would decide whether to respond to questions only after the prosecution has completed their presentation of evidence.

The court then allowed Mr. Samphan to read his prepared statement in response to the specific paragraphs of the Closing Order. The accused's statement comprehensively covered the period of 1951 to 1975, commenting on many of the activities and actions in which Mr. Samphan has been accused of participating in the Closing Order. It was clear that Mr. Samphan had studied the paragraphs involved in this phase of the trial very closely and was prepared to answer every detail.

Starting with his time in France, Khieu Samphan repeated that he had left Cambodia for Paris in 1953. As Pol Pot had already left France by this time, Mr. Samphan did not meet him there, but he did meet Ieng Sary. During his first two or three months in France, a friend asked him a number of times to join the "Circle of Marxists." Mr. Samphan finally agreed to attend a meeting because he "did not want him to see me as a coward." Before he became closely involved with the Circle, however, he soon moved to Montpellier in the south of France, where he pursued his education in law and business. He returned to Paris over summer break, Mr. Samphan explained, and it was then that he learned more about the Circle of Marxists during a beach camping excursion. Three years later, Mr. Samphan returned to Paris to complete his economics dissertation, and at that time he began attending meetings of the Circle regularly.

At this time, the "historical context changed swiftly," Mr. Samphan explained, and soon Cambodia was granted independence from France. Ieng Sary decided to return to Cambodia and handed over the leadership of their group to Khieu Samphan because there was "no better choice for him," as a number of the active members had already returned to Cambodia or, as with one particular candidate, "had many girlfriends and enjoyed French dancing."

Regarding his ideological development while in France, Mr. Samphan then explained that his economics dissertation had led him to the decision that Cambodia needed to take control of its foreign trade, as the industrial structures from France were squeezing out the traditional handicrafts and small businesses of the Cambodians. Mr. Samphan later explained how this conclusion affected his actions when Minister of Commerce in Cambodia, though this was a number of years after he returned from France.

Regarding his return to Cambodia in 1958, Mr. Samphan stated that he had no communication at that time with the CPK. He stated it was "too risky" for him to attempt to make contact as he was constantly monitored by King Sihanouk's government. Upon returning, instead, he founded the French language newspaper, *L'Observateur*. The purpose of the paper, he explained, was to emphasize the need for democratic measures and reform in order to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. His target, he claimed, was the leaders of Cambodia who chose not to read Khmer papers at that time. Khieu Samphan rejected the allegation in the Closing Order that the paper was funded solely by Communist activists, stating, rather, that much of his funding came from Assembly representatives. He then claimed that the accusation that his paper was the "red" or communist newspaper stemmed from King Sihanouk's fear of the "notion of independence" Mr. Samphan was advocating in the paper. This fear led to his being questioned by police, beaten and stripped naked on the street, and detained for more than one month without charges, and finally, the paper being closed down.

At this point, President Nonn interrupted Mr. Samphan's statement and broke off court for the afternoon recess.

Before Khieu Samphan continued his statement, Ang Udom, Ieng Sary's lawyer, requested his client be allowed to participate remotely from the holding cell in the courthouse, as his back was causing him pain. After signing a written waiver, Ieng Sary was wheeled out of the courtroom.

Mr. Karnavas then requested that the air conditioning be adjusted as it "feels like I'm sitting in Alaska," a feeling which the reserve judge obviously shared as she vigorously nodded her head in agreement with the request.

While a court official adjusted the air conditioning, President Nonn informed the parties that the court would continue to hear the testimony of prosecution witness Long Norin, subject to his health. If he is unable to proceed, the accused Nuon Chea will again be called to continue his examination by the court.

Finally, with these procedural matters out of the way, Khieu Samphan resumed his statement, turning to the time after he was elected as a Parliamentary member and then appointed the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Commerce in 1962. Speculating that his appointment to the Commerce point was a ploy to "buy my heart" by King Sihanouk, Mr. Samphan stated that he took the opportunity to work for the interests of the country, focusing on his plan to create an independent base for Cambodia's economy. He consulted with senior advisors, specifically Son Sen, who was the director of the national bank at that time, to see if they would support his plan to take control of the foreign trade.

Son Sen supported this plan, Mr. Samphan said, and advised him to share it with King Sihanouk. The king was concerned at that time about Cambodia's reliance on American aid money, which was "like a knife put on the neck of Cambodians," and he accepted Mr. Samphan's plan. Before he could implement the plan, however, Mr. Samphan lost his Parliamentary seat and had to pass the reform process to Son Sen, who successfully put the plan in place for a couple years before it was "soured by corruption."

Mr. Samphan then explained his reasons for fleeing into the forest in 1967. He stated that he had no choice but to flee as his safety was threatened. He asserted that he was facing arrest and military court due to claims that he had incited a peasant rebellion in his newspaper, claims that he vigorously denied because the peasants could not even read the French language in which his newspaper was printed. He believed, instead, that he was targeted because Lon Nol had convinced King Sihanouk to attack the leftists to appease the Americans who surrounded Lon Nol and his "clique."

After Lon Nol's coup d'état against the king in 1970, Mr. Samphan claimed, he was dragged into the plans of Pol Pot and the Communist Party without his knowledge or consent. As Mr. Samphan and others, including Ta Mok, hid in the Ural Mountains, Pol Pot wrote a support letter for the resistance movement and signed the names of Khieu Samphan and others without their permission. He then appointed Mr. Samphan to the roles of deputy prime minister, minister of

defense, and military commander for the National United Front of Kampuchea, positions of which Mr. Samphan himself only learned after hearing them on a radio broadcast.

Within these roles, Khieu Samphan was “tasked to be a bridge” between the CPK and King Sihanouk – whose position as king represented the old feudalist ways – in order to pave the way for reconciliation between the forces in order to liberate the city. “Is [being a bridge] a crime?” Mr. Samphan implored, “Clearly it is not.”

Despite this task, however, he had no real power, Mr. Samphan claimed. He was the “deputy prime minister of nothing, the minister of defense of nothing, and the military commander of nothing!” Stating that he had no influence at all over the military, despite being named a commander, he asserted, “I did not even have the smallest unit of soldiers under my command.”

Finally, Mr. Samphan addressed his role within the Communist Party of Kampuchea. Stating that he joined the party in 1969 “due to my personal safety,” he insisted that he was not a full-fledged member because he did not meet the complete criteria for membership. Due to the fact that he was an intellectual and not of the poor peasant class, he did not have a “clean social status.” This stumbling block of intellectualism kept him from being fully accepted into the Party or by the Central Committee, he contended. Although he became a member of the Central Committee in 1971, he was allowed into the group only as a figurehead or “front person”; as the party needed him to liaise between the CPK and King Sihanouk, they had to provide Mr. Samphan with only the indicia, but not the reality, of power.

Acknowledging how it could seem from the outside that he held a senior position within the CPK, Mr. Samphan nevertheless maintained that he could not make any decisions. “The CPK saw me as an intellectual and not a member [of the Party]. This was the truth until 1975, and it remained so,” he concluded.

As the end of the day had arrived, President Nonn thanked Khieu Samphan for his “very comprehensive” statement and informed the parties and the public that the court expected to continue to hear testimony at least through Friday morning of this week. He then adjourned the court for the day.

Trial 002 will continue on Wednesday, 14 December, with the continuation of the testimony of prosecution witness Long Norin.