



Court Shows Khmer Rouge Had Clear Structure

Kong Sothnarith

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Prosecution at the UN-backed tribunal on Monday sought to demonstrate the Khmer Rouge had a clear administrative structure in place even before they came into power, diminishing defense arguments that leaders on trial had no knowledge of atrocities as they took place.

Three top leaders—Nuon Chea, Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary—are facing charges that include genocide for their leadership of the Khmer Rouge, in the court's second case to date.

Unlike its first trial, in which torture chief Duch admitted responsibility and asked for the forgiveness of the family members of victims, the three leaders currently before the court have consistently denied they knew of the atrocities.

French deputy prosecutor Vincent de Wilde D'Estmael presented a Pol Pot speech prior to the Khmer Rouge rise to power to demonstrate the party had a hierarchical structure with lower echelons and higher levels of leadership.

Under Khmer Rouge leadership, individuals had to respect the collective, and private citizens had to respect the "Angkar," or Organization, he said.

Cambodian deputy prosecutor Veng Huot said Khieu Samphan had attained the movement's highest rank, head of state, through two decades of resistance.

"He knew broadly the situation before being in power," Veng Huot said. "He knew of acts in liberate zones and of the atrocities."