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Court points to Duch verdict lessons **Thomas Miller** **October 22, 2010**

Khmer Rouge tribunal officials yesterday told a standing-room-only auditorium of roughly 350 students at the Royal University of Law and Economics in Phnom Penh that they should learn from July's verdict in the case of Tuol Sleng prison chief Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch, as they work to strengthen Cambodia's judicial system.

"What is important for you to remember – and this is probably my most important lesson for you today – you are the judicial reform," said Knut Rosandhaug, deputy director of administration at the tribunal. "If you don't do it, nobody will."

On July 26, the Trial Chamber found Duch guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced him to 30 years in prison, a sum that took into consideration his unlawful pretrial detention.

Rosandhaug recommended that students study the verdict in order to learn how to recognise accepted legal arguments, how to test the relevance and weight of such arguments, and how to structure a case.

Prosecutors submitted their appeal of the verdict last week, seeking 45 years for Duch on the grounds that the 30-year sentence was "plainly unjust". Defence lawyers have said they also plan to appeal.

Students can also learn from the appeal process, Rosandhaug said.

"It's absolutely permitted – it's allowed to disagree with a judicial decision, but you have to do it in a legally accepted manner," Rosandhaug said. "If you get that message, which is not easy to get, you will be able to do the legal reform this country needs."

Third-year student Ngeth Puthearoth said after the presentation that he viewed the Duch verdict favourably because, he said, it affirmed the moral basis for universal human rights. "This case can make people know they have the right to live, to study – all over the world", he said. "The case refers

to morals. Before doing something, people should think about morals. That's why we create law."

Tony Kranh, acting director of administration at the tribunal, said in his remarks that "more than 50,000 Cambodians" attended proceedings in the Duch case.