



DC-Cam wanted on stand
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Defence teams at the Khmer Rouge tribunal requested yesterday that the director of the Documentation Centre of Cambodia appear in court to testify about documents obtained through the organisation that were put before the Trial Chamber in the court's second case.

During a hearing addressing the admissibility of documents supporting the indictment, co-defence counsel for former Brother Number Two Nuon Chea, Jasper Pauw, said in court that it was "imperative" the court hear the testimony of DC-Cam director Youk Chhang.

"If Youk Chhang is not heard by your Trial Chamber, then our position is that all evidence stemming from DC-Cam cannot be considered to be authentic and reliable, and must therefore be called inadmissible," he said.

The DC-Cam has been collecting documents and information relating to the Democratic Kampuchea period since its establishment as an independent NGO in 1997, 500,000 of which have been provided to parties to the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

Pauw said that while another representative had been called to testify on issues relating to the authenticity of documents provided by DC-Cam, Youk Chhang was the "most informed" person respecting the organisation's activities, adding that the defence was not criticising Youk Chhang's approach.

"Youk Chhang is not a neutral observer in the search for the truth, he is a partisan researcher that has been working with a goal of having, among others, Nuon Chea prosecuted," Pauw said in court.

In response to questions concerning allegations of bias, Youk Chhang said in an email yesterday that "it is pitiful" and, in response to a question about the appearance of a DC-Cam representative in court, said that "we have to listen to the judge".

He added that DC-Cam had provided 500,000 documents to the ECCC, and that the

documentation was available to defence teams at the tribunal.

Deputy international co-prosecutor William Smith said that it was not especially necessary for the representative of DC-Cam appearing in court to be Youk Chhang.

“We disagree with the defence position in that, although part of DC-Cam’s role is to search for the truth of ... the Democratic Kampuchea period, we’re of the view that the organisation doesn’t demonstrate any significant bias in the work they do,” he said.

“The fact that DC-Cam are looking at crimes...that occurred during the Democratic Kampuchea period doesn’t ... make them an unreliable or a biased organisation,” he added.

Defence teams for co-accused former Khmer Rouge foreign minister Ieng Sary and former nominal head of state Khieu Samphan echoed the request for Youk Chhang to appear in court.