

Document Centre Takes Stand at KRT

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A senior representative from the Documentation Centre of Cambodia testified at the Khmer Rouge tribunal yesterday about the organisation's gathering of documents related to the Democratic Kampuchea regime, thousands of which have been provided to parties for use in the court's second case.

Under questioning from Trial Chamber Judge Jean-Marc Lavergne, DC-Cam deputy director Vanthan Dara Poeu said the organisation had received requests for documents from the Office of the Co-Prosecutors, Office of the Co-Investigating Judges, Defence Support Section and civil-party lawyers.

"If necessary, I can also tell the court the exact number of documents DC-Cam has provided to the Defence Support Section," he said.

"We are open to all parties concerned; in particular, we [are] open to the DSS."

Senior assistant co-prosecutor Tarik Abdulhak later asked the witness to respond to allegations of bias in DC-Cam's work levelled by defence teams in court last week.

"The important point for DC-Cam is that we do not analyse the documents we have collected," Vanthan Dara Poeu said.

"We keep the documents as they are, and it is up to those who would use the documents to analyse and to evaluate [them]."

Judge Lavergne also asked the witness to view a scan of a confession from S-21 prison, which Vanthan Dara Poeu said DC-Cam had the original version of, and which had been at the Defence Ministry of the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

Vanthan Dara Poeu read annotations in Khmer language inscribed in red ink on the document that he said were written by former regime defence minister Son Sen.

Judge Lavergne questioned Vanthan Dara Poeu about whether DC-Cam had received documentation from official sources, including the archives of the Cambodian People's Party, to which the witness responded that DC-Cam had official permission to conduct research "with all institutions in Cambodia".

Vanthan Dara Poeu also stated in court that the organisation had received documents

directly from government officials.

According to DC-Cam, the organisation has provided about 500,000 documents to parties at the ECCC.

Defence teams requested last week that DC-Cam director Youk Chhang testify in court.