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Prosecution Defends Documents At Court

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Prosecutors at the Khmer Rouge tribunal yesterday refuted suggestions of bias levelled by defence teams at the Documentation Centre of Cambodia, which has provided thousands of documents used by parties at the court.

International deputy co-prosecutor William Smith said in court that simply because one of DC-Cam's goals was to "search for the truth" during the Democratic Kampuchea period, that did not mean that the organisation was "biased".

"The question of admissibility relates to the documents but not to the organisation itself," he said.

Smith said that a DC-Cam representative who had worked at the organisation for 15 years had been called to provide further information about the documents.

Defence teams on Monday requested that Youk Chhang appear in court regarding documents to be put before the chamber that were obtained through DC-Cam – an independent NGO that has collected documentation relating to the Khmer Rouge period since 1997.

Lawyers for former Khmer Rouge Brother Number Two Nuon Chea said in court on Monday that the DC-Cam director was a "partisan researcher", a claim Youk Chhang described to the Post as "pitiful".

Nuon Chea's lawyers yesterday reiterated their request that Youk Chhang appear in court.

Meanwhile, following defence objections to certain "statements" from the accused included in the prosecution's document list, international senior assistant co-prosecutor Dale Lysak said that it was "legally incorrect" and "not necessary" for original authors of certain documents to appear in court.

"We have ... statements that were made at press conferences and interviews by Ieng Sary, for example, as the representative of the Democratic Kampuchea government where he made the same statements over and over again to reporters," he said.

“We can look at multiple reports to see the consistency of the statements.”

Co-accused Nuon Chea and former Khmer Rouge foreign affairs minister Ieng Sary are observing the week’s proceedings from the court’s holding cells.