

Reparations on case 002 agenda Bridget Di Certo October 5, 2011

Civil party lawyers are preparing for an initial hearing at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal on potential reparation deals for victims associated with the court's second case.

However, a significant proportion of victims who have been granted civil party status may be ineligible to receive reparations in the first trial of Case 002, which has been split into smaller pieces in an attempt to speed up proceedings.

The first trial in Case 002 is set to concern crimes associated with the forced movement of the population during the early years of the Democratic Kampuchea regime – a decision the Co-Prosecutors have requested the Trial Chamber reconsider.

"A large number of civil parties are excluded from the first trial in Case 002, including those who were victims of forced marriage and religious persecution," Civil Party Lead Co-Lawyer Silke Studinsky said yesterday, ahead of the hearing slated for October 19.

"Nobody has any idea if another trial will take place after the first one," Studinsky said, referring to the advanced age of the four accused in Case 002. Under the reparations framework of the tribunal, it is possible access to reparations end with the death of the accused.

The tribunal is the first internationalised court with a clear mandate to provide justice to victims through "moral and collective" reparations, which could come in the form of projects to provide victim support.

Clair Duffy from the Open Society Justice Initiative said there remain many "interesting questions" for the court on the subject of reparations.

"The trial chamber in Case 001 construed its power to award reparations narrowly," Duffy said by email yesterday.

"This court is facing some of its most serious challenges yet, including how to set as accurate an historical record as possible.

"The discussions we're now seeing could highlight a way of proceeding with a part of the indictment that gets to the heart of the crimes in a more representative way," she added.

The tribunal's Legal Affairs Officer Lars Olsen said yesterday that a group of

international reparations experts would be visiting the tribunal next week for a "sharing experience workshop" with judges and lawyers.