



## **Second Khmer Rouge victim talks**

**June 30, 2009**

*The second of three living survivors from the Tuol Sleng detention centre run by the Khmer Rouge has told a Cambodia tribunal how he was tortured.*

Former mechanic Chum Mey, 63, told the United Nations-backed war crimes court that his toenails were torn out and he was subjected to electric shocks.

He said he was tortured repeatedly for 12 days and nights. His testimony follows that of another survivor, the painter Van Nath, in the trial of prison director Comrade Duch.

Chum Mey told the tribunal he had been working at a sewing machine factory in 1978 when he was brought to Tuol Sleng to be tortured on suspicion of espionage.

"While I was walking inside I said (to a guard), 'Brother, please look after my family.' Then the person kicked me on to the ground," he said, adding the man swore at him and told him he would be "smashed".

Chum Mey told judges he was photographed, stripped and handcuffed before being taken to his interrogators.

"They asked me to tell them the truth - how many of us joined the KGB and CIA," Chum Mey said, referring to the Soviet and United States intelligence agencies.

"I told them I did not know any CIA or KGB. Truly, I did not know those terms."

"I kept responding that I didn't know anything about the CIA and KGB, but they used a pliers and twisted off my toenail," he said.

"I confessed that I had joined the CIA and KGB but it was a lie. I said it because I was so badly beaten."

Chum Mey's torture stopped once his captors realised he was able to fix cars - and they put him to work mending machinery.

### **Van Nath**

On Monday, fellow survivor Van Nath described how hunger had driven him to eat insects, and said he had also eaten the food beside corpses of starved fellow prisoners.

About 15,000 people were detained at Tuol Sleng in the late 1970s, but only seven are thought to have survived - three of whom are still alive today.

The tribunal has already heard plenty from Comrade Duch himself - as well as a number of expert witnesses.

"The conditions were so inhumane and the food was so little," Van Nath told the tribunal, as he broke down in tears. "I even thought eating human flesh would be a good meal."

Comrade Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav, is accused of overseeing the torture and extermination of prisoners at the jail.

Earlier in his trial, the 66-year-old admitted responsibility for his role as governor of the jail, and begged forgiveness from his victims.

But he also insisted that he did not hold a senior role in the regime, and that he had had little choice but to work there.

Four other former Khmer Rouge leaders are currently in detention at the court, and are expected to face trial in 2010.