



**UN-Backed Genocide Tribunal in Cambodia Releases over 1,700 Confidential Documents**  
**September 6, 2012**

The United Nations-backed genocide tribunal in Cambodia trying cases of mass murder and other crimes committed under the Khmer Rouge regime today ordered that more than 1,700 confidential documents, including victims' 'confessions' and witness statements, be made public.

The decision comes after the Supreme Court Chamber of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) reviewed more than 12,000 confidential and strictly confidential documents in the case file of Case 0001, in which the former head of a notorious detention camp, Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch, was the defendant.

The ECCC is a hybrid court set up after a 2003 agreement between the UN and the Cambodian Government with the aim of trying those accused of the worst crimes during the Khmer Rouge regime. As many as two million people are thought to have died during the rule of the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979, which was then followed by a protracted period of civil war in the South-East Asian country.

In a news release, the tribunal stated that the reclassification process had been conducted in accordance to previously specified guidelines and in broad consultation with ECCC offices, such as the Trial Chamber, the Office of the Co-Prosecutors and the Victims Support Section, amongst others.

“The Supreme Court Chamber sought to strike a reasonable balance between the demand for transparency deriving from the fundamental principles that govern the procedure before the ECCC and the needs for confidentiality dictated by the protection of privacy for victims and witnesses and the preservation of the integrity of on-going proceedings,” according to the news release.

“In this regard, it has considered that wide dissemination of material concerning the Court’s proceedings would support the ECCC’s mandate to contribute to national reconciliation and provide documentary support to the progressive quest for historical truth,” it added. “The Chamber hopes that wide access to documentation in the case file

for the general public, researchers and journalists will promote a genuine public discussion of Cambodia's tragic past based on firm evidence.”

In addition to victims' 'confessions' and witness statements, the 1,749 released documents include victims' biographies, transcripts of hearings and rogatory letters. The remaining documents will be reviewed for reclassification at the end of the proceedings to which they pertain, the tribunal said.

In February this year, the ECCC's appeals chamber sentenced Kaing Guek Eav to life in prison, upholding an earlier conviction and extending the existing jail term of 35 years. Mr. Kaing headed the S-21 security prison in the capital, Phnom Penh, where numerous Cambodians were unlawfully detained, subjected to inhumane conditions and forced labour, tortured and executed in the late 1970s.