



Victims unit official says justice will come

Sok Khemara

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Despite recent public concern over whether the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal will fulfill its mandate, an official within the court's Victims Support Unit says he is confident that trials of regime leaders will help bring about some national reconciliation.

Im Sophea, who coordinates the unit's public outreach, told "Hello VOA" Thursday the court would record the stories of victims for the historical record and would provide "acceptable justice" to the millions of Cambodians traumatized by the regime.

However, he said, the court also needs participation by other partners across society to help the healing, including psychological counseling, and some kind of compensation for victims.

Khmer Rouge victims and tribunal monitors have expressed concern over the amount of participation allowed to so-called civil parties, which represent a third party in the courtroom aside from the prosecution and defense.

Im Sophea said the victims unit has undertaken nine different educational forums around the country in an effort to help victims speak out and ask questions. The next forum will be held in Takeo province in the near future, he said.

The overarching questions in those forums, he said, are: Why were there the "killing fields," and who was behind them?