

Nearly 1,500 Khmer Rouge Prison Photographs Donated to Documentation Center August 24, 2012

WASHINGTON DC - More than a 1,400 photographs from a notorious Khmer Rouge prison were anonymously donated two weeks ago to the Documentation Center of Cambodia, bolstering its treasury of documents from an era of brutality whose records were once largely unaccounted for.

The donation was provided earlier this month by an unnamed woman who worked for the People's Republic of Kampuchea, which took over when the Khmer Rouge were ousted from power in 1979. The collection consists of 1,427 images of prisoners held at the Tuol Sleng prison from 1975 to 1979.

The back of each photograph contains handwritten information on each specific prisoner, often written by the prisoner themselves, Chhang Youk, Director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, told VOA Khmer. It is the largest single donation of photographs to the center's archives, he said.

“It will prove extremely important in helping living family members identify and locate their lost relatives,” he said. “After all these years, the Cambodians are looking for the peace of memories left behind by their loved ones in the grip of the Khmer Rouge—handwriting, names, photographs—so that they can move on with their lives.”