



## **Cambodia's genocide court wraps up Khmer Rouge investigation January 14, 2010**

CAMBODIA'S UN-backed genocide court announced today it had completed investigations against surviving senior leaders of the 1970s Khmer Rouge regime.

The five leaders of the hardline communist regime charged in case 002 are currently being held at the court while the tribunal prepares to give a verdict in its first trial of one of the detainees, former prison chief Duch.

"The notification of the conclusion of the investigation today is clearly a milestone in the judicial process in case 002," tribunal spokesman Lars Olsen said.

Lawyers now have 30 days to request further investigations and judges hope to issue an indictment in the case by September. The earliest a second trial could start is the end of this year, he said.

Former Khmer Rouge follower Nuon Chea, head of state Khieu Samphan, foreign minister Ieng Sary, and his wife, minister of social affairs Ieng Thirith are all being held for genocide and other charges in the case, alongside Duch.

Duch, real name Kaing Guek Eav, was already tried for his role as head of the regime's Phnom Penh-based torture centre S-21. Final arguments were heard in November.

Investigative judges would decide in their indictment whether all five suspects would be tried, Mr Olsen said.

After several years of haggling between Cambodia and the UN, the tribunal was created in 2006 to try former Khmer Rouge leaders.

Up to two million people were executed or died of starvation or overwork during the regime's 1975-1979 rule, which emptied Cambodia's cities and forced the population to work on collective farms in its bid to forge a communist utopia.