

## **Tribunal charges 3rd ex-Khmer Rouge with genocide**

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PHNOM PENH, Cambodia — A tribunal charged the Khmer Rouge's 78-year-old former head of state with genocide Friday, adding new momentum to long-delayed trials against the brutal regime that ruled Cambodia 30 years ago.

Khieu Samphan was brought before investigating judges of the U.N.-assisted tribunal, who issued the charges, making him the third former Khmer Rouge leader this week to be charged with genocide, tribunal spokesman Lars Olsen said.

On Wednesday, the tribunal charged two other defendants with genocide for the first time: the group's top ideologist, Nuon Chea, and the former foreign minister, Ieng Sary.

All three faced charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as homicide and torture. They are being held in the tribunal's jail with two other defendants and are expected to be tried next year.

The tribunal is seeking justice for an estimated 1.7 million people who died from execution, overwork, disease and malnutrition as a result of the communist group's policies during its 1975-79 rule.

Olsen said they were charged with involvement in the deaths of members of the country's ethnic Cham and Vietnamese communities.

Some Chams, who are mostly Muslims, were among the few Cambodians to actively resist Khmer Rouge rule. The Khmer Rouge brutally suppressed the rebellions in several villages.

The tribunal tried its first defendant, prison chief Kaing Guek Eav, this year on charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes, murder and torture. A verdict is expected early next year.

Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Duch, commanded S-21 prison in Phnom Penh, where up to 16,000 people were tortured and taken away to be killed. A verdict is expected next year, and he faces a maximum penalty of life imprisonment if found guilty. Cambodia has no death penalty.

Olsen said it would be determined later whether one of the other Khmer Rouge leaders in custody — former Social Affairs Minister Ieng Thirith, the wife of Ieng Sary — would also be charged with genocide.

