



## **Court hears submission on reparations for Khmer Rouge victims June 29, 2011**

Phnom Penh - Lawyers for victims of the Khmer Rouge told a UN-backed tribunal Wednesday they planned to seek a combination of memorials, psychological support and educational initiatives as reparations.

The tribunal has charged four surviving leaders of the ultra-Maoist movement with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Any awards are contingent on the court handing down a guilty verdict against the accused, and on sufficient funding being found to pay for them.

Victims had also suggested an annual remembrance day and a museum, said Pich Ang, co-lead lawyer for the civil parties.

'And civil parties will request the preservation of killing sites,' he said. 'We need to study in detail which sites were those where a large number of people were executed.'

Earlier the tribunal heard legal arguments surrounding Cambodia's 10-year statute of limitations, which was extended by 30 years in order to permit the court to bring charges against the accused under the national law in force in 1975 when the Khmer Rouge took control.

Among those alleged crimes are homicide, torture and suppression of religion. Defence lawyers said the extension amounted to a breach of their clients' rights since it meant applying the law retroactively.

'It is also problematic because (the extension) applies only at the tribunal,' said defence lawyer Ang Udom. 'This means that Ieng Sary (the Khmer Rouge's former foreign minister) could be charged with a crime that a similarly situated accused in any other court in Cambodia could not. This violates his right to equality before the law.'

All four defendants appeared in court on the third day of preliminary hearings. However Nuon Chea, who was deputy to the late Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot, left early.

He was followed soon after by Ieng Sary, who cited ill health. The other two defendants are former head of state Khieu Samphan and Ieng Thirith, the former minister for social affairs.

The four deny the array of crimes allegedly committed during their government's rule from 1975 to 1979.

This week's preliminary hearing concerns arguments over witness lists and procedural elements ahead of the likely start of the trial proper in September.

In its first case the court last year sentenced the regime's security chief, Comrade Duch, to 30 years in prison after finding him guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Duch has appealed his conviction.

The tribunal estimated that 1.7 million to 2.2 million people died in less than four years of rule by the Khmer Rouge, which emptied Cambodia's cities as it advocated a rural, agrarian society. It said 800,000 of those deaths were violent with the rest attributed to overwork, starvation and illness.