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## **Duch testifies about motives**

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*Ex-S-21 commander cites a broken heart, suffering under the Lon Nol regime and faith that 'joining the revolution could help the people and save the nation'.*

Tuol Sleng prison chief Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch, said Thursday that factors ranging from a broken heart to disenchantment with the Lon Nol regime influenced his decision to join the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK).

Under questioning from the Trial Chamber at Cambodia's war crimes court, Duch also explained the origins of his nom de guerre. "I wanted a name in Khmer, not a kind of Chinese one," Duch said.

He also chose the revolutionary name because it was one used by a good student in a book he studied when he was young. "So Duch is a good one and has Khmer character. That's why I used Duch," said the former maths teacher.

In the period before he decided to join the CPK, he recalled, he tried to persuade a girl he was in love with to become a maths teacher like him.

Her decision not to "disappointed" him greatly, he said. He also said he had grown angry with the government of Lon Nol, which he said had arrested many of his friends.

This emotional turmoil aside, his main reason for joining the party was his faith in CPK teachings and policies, he said. "At that time, I thought that joining the revolution could help the people and save the nation," he said.

Thursday marked the beginning of a new phase of the trial in which witnesses and the accused himself will discuss Duch's character.

A large part of Thursday's proceedings was consumed by a debate over whether civil party lawyers would be able to put questions to witnesses during the new phase, which will resume Monday.

Civil party lawyer Ty Srinna argued that the character of the accused was central to the established facts of the case and that civil parties had every right to ask questions about it.

Kar Savuth, Duch's Cambodian co-lawyer, said civil party lawyers would bring little to the proceedings.

"We can see that there are two prosecutors representing the victims, and they have the obligation to ask questions about the character of the accused in order to meet the burden of proof," he said.

The Trial Chamber ultimately ruled that civil party lawyers would not be able to ask questions. Judge Jean-Marc Lavergne dissented from that decision.