



**Ieng Thirith's mental health unfit for trial: expert
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A medical expert at the Khmer Rouge tribunal said Tuesday that jailed former leader Ieng Thirith is suffering from “serious” mental health issues that prevent her from fully taking part in an atrocity crimes trial.

The court is holding three days of hearings to determine the fitness of three former leaders later this year or into the next.

John Campbell, a health expert who examined Ieng Thirith, 79, the former social affairs minister of the regime, told the court she suffered from Alzheimer's disease and that she would not be able to fully participate in a trial. Pre-trial detention had worsened her condition, he said.

Judges in the Trial Chamber will have to determine whether she can fully participate in the trial. They will also assess the physical condition of Nuon Chea, the regime's chief ideologue, and Ieng Sary, its foreign minister. Khieu Samphan, the nominal head of the movement, has said he remains fit for trial.

Campbell told the court Ieng Thirith could not recall what she had done during the period the regime was in power, from 1975 to 1979, and that she does not understand the charges against her—for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and other crimes. She would also be unlikely to participate via video link.

Defense has argued that she be released from detention and held under house arrest. Tribunal spokesman Dim Sovannarom said judges have the right to determine whether she should be released from detention and remain under court supervision.

Tuesday's hearing followed that of Noun Chea, 85, who said Monday his physical health would not allow him to fully participate in a trial.

He told judges he could only “sit, read and understand” the hearing for about an hour or an hour and a half. “After that, my eyes are affected and it will make me dizzy,” he said.

“It will affect my brain, and my heart will beat faster, and then there will be high blood pressure, which makes my waist hurt and I cannot sit.”

Campbell told the court Monday that he did not note any loss of concentration when he performed an assessment of Nuon Chea earlier this year.

The court will hear arguments from Ieng Sary on Wednesday.