



KRouge leader Pol Pot 'not a Cambodian patriot'

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The former Khmer Rouge prison chief told Cambodia's UN-backed war crimes trial on Tuesday that the regime leader Pol Pot "had blood on his hands" as he pitted his country against neighbouring Vietnam.

"I did not think of Pol Pot as a patriot. He had blood on his hands. Pol Pot used the slogan that if we wanted to defeat the Vietnamese we had to be clean in our ranks and clean in ourselves," Duch told the court.

Duch is accused of overseeing the torture and extermination of some 15,000 people who passed through the notorious Tuol Sleng prison, also known as S-21, during the late 1970s regime.

"In that conflict Pol Pot was a murderer, and more than one million people were killed under the hand of Pol Pot. At S-21, my hand is stained with the blood of people killed there," said Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav.

Duch was responding to testimony by Nayan Chanda, former editor of the Hong Kong-based Far Eastern Economic Review, who spoke of how the Khmer Rouge's 1975 communist revolution descended into a bloody territorial conflict with Vietnam.

Duch said that Chanda had mis-named his book about infighting between Asia's communists, "Brother Enemy," because Cambodia regarded Vietnam as a rival.

"The title of your book is 'Brother Enemy'. If you talked about Korea, then I would support it. They have a joint history, they have a joint territory and they have a joint language," Duch said.

"As for us and Vietnam, we never had any joint territory."

Duch, who faces life in jail for alleged crimes against humanity, apologised at the start of his trial in late March for his role in the regime, but maintains he never personally executed anyone.

Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot died in 1998, and many believe the tribunal is the last chance to find justice for victims of the regime, which killed up to two million people.

The tribunal was formed in 2006 after nearly a decade of wrangling between the United Nations and the Cambodian government, and is scheduled to try four other senior Khmer Rouge leaders.