



More Public Tribunal Information Needed: Expert Sok Khemara December 11, 2009

The Khmer Rouge tribunal must ensure it is giving clear information to the public, to avoid upsetting Cambodians who have waited years for justice, an official from the Documentation Center of Cambodia said Thursday.

“People have been waiting for the court to happen for 30 years, so when people hear unclear or inadequate information, it makes them irritated,” said Vathan Poeu Dara, deputy chief of the Documentation Center, which has spent years collecting evidence of Khmer Rouge atrocities. “So the court should give clear information to all the people.”

The public remains confused over the UN-backed court’s first trial, for Kaing Kek Iev, the prison chief better known as Duch, and other proceedings, he said. Prosecutors have asked the court to sentence him to 40 years in prison, while in final arguments in November, defense lawyers were at odds, with international lawyers asking for a reduced sentence but Cambodian lawyers asking some charges against Duch be dropped.

The final week of the case might have caused some confusion, Vathan Poeu Dara said, even though judges have yet to make a ruling. The Documentation Center, for its part, has provided many documents to court officials, while helping thousands of victims of the regime file complaints in the tribunal against Khmer Rouge leaders, he said.