

Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)
Witnessing Justice 30 Years Later:
Building Democracy in Cambodia through Legal Education

Confronting the Past through the Lens of Justice

Report by Ly Sok-Kheang
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Introduction

In the face of financial shortfalls and a relatively low level of public interest in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), forty-four local leaders, villagers and complainants embarked upon their initial trip to observe the court proceedings. Having previously followed the court’s progress through the media, most of the leaders were pleased to have the opportunity to visit the courtroom and observe the actual trial.



Villagers visiting Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in the afternoon of December 4, 2012 after attending ECCC's court hearing.

Exercising their right to participate in the justice-seeking process is a leap forward for them, as they witness firsthand the adjudication of the crimes and the extent to which the truth is revealed. Throughout the discussion, the informants appealed nearly unanimously to every generation of Cambodians to avoid violations of human rights, as were committed during the Khmer Rouge (KR) rule (1975-1979), and

instead allow the rule of law prevail to serve the people and the nation.

This trip was particularly designed to provide the participants with knowledge about the proceedings of the court which they can share with their neighbors upon their return home. A follow-up strategy enables the participants to debate the current trial against the three surviving KR leaders—Khieu Samphan, Nuon Chea and Ieng Sary—and to denounce every kind of injustice.

Highlights of the Court Visit

In an effort to fully prepare the participants before the trip, the DC-Cam team organized a variety of events to ensure a basic understanding of the next day's observance of the trial. Thus, upon arrival, a pre-hearing meeting was held to introduce the participants to DC-Cam and the ECCC, at which a film entitled "Mass Graves near the Pagoda" was screened. A subsequent discussion also touched upon their personal feelings regarding the meaning of justice as well as the process of forgiveness.

Inside DC-Cam's Public Information Room, the DC-Cam team extended hospitality and a warm welcome to the forty-four villagers and complainants who had traveled from far and near. Afterward, they were briefed about the structure and nature of decision-making at the ECCC, the temporal jurisdiction (between April 17, 1975 and January 6, 1979), and the identity of the three KR leaders being tried in Case 002. The accused are being charged under both international and domestic laws. Thorough investigation and research has revealed the extent of the defendants' involvement in the KR revolution, the hierarchical organization of the regime, the policies for creating cooperatives, the evacuation of people from the cities, and the subsequent evacuations of people from one place to another. The charges against the defendants take into consideration the involvement of the accused in the implementation of the revolution.



Screening the DC-Cam-produced film "Mass Graves near the Pagoda"

The film "Mass Graves near the Pagoda" was screened, depicting a touching case of a victim's family getting to know a former KR cadre. Lieb and Vaing lost their father and uncle, respectively, at the hands of Kin, "a willing executioner who killed to preserve his own life." Two female participants

commented on the film by saying that Kin

seemed to take pleasure in the execution of people. When the participants were asked about their personal reaction to low-level KR cadres, such as Kin, some said they would take deadly vengeance on him. However, another participant pointed out that acts of vengeance would not bring their lost relatives back to life. This led the participants to discuss the possibility of forgiveness. Two participants from Preah Vihear Province commented that forgiveness is possible only if justice is achieved.

Hearing the Court Proceeding

The commencement of the court proceeding on December 4, 2012 focused on two major issues: Ieng Sary's health status and the testimonies of two civil parties, Ms. Toeng Sokha and Ms. Pech Srei Phal. First, the presiding Judge Nil Non declared his permission for

leng Sary to follow the court proceedings through an audio-visual link from his holding cell. The judge rejected a request from leng Sary's lawyer, Mr. Michael Kanavas, who wished to have a discussion with the medical doctor regarding the state of leng Sary's health. Mr. Bill Smith, the international co-prosecutor, supported the idea of having leng Sary follow the proceedings through an audio-visual link. Mr. Smith stated that this was the only way for leng Sary to meaningfully participate and he preferred to respect the doctor's recommendation for leng Sary to remain in his holding cell. Furthermore, the co-prosecutor wondered why leng Sary wished to appear in the actual courtroom, since medical experts and the court had already decided to have him follow the proceedings through an audio-visual link from his holding cell.

Mr. Kanavas responded to Mr. Smith by saying that leng Sary suffers from a deteriorating health condition and requires a daily health evaluation. Mr. Kanavas wished to have leng Sary participate in an effective way, not in absentia. His intent was to determine whether leng Sary has the ability to take part in the proceedings for an entire day. Nuon Chea's lawyer supported Mr. Kanavas's request to allow the accused to participate directly and noted that this request should apply to all the accused. Judge Nil Non decided to recess the court for 30 minutes to discuss the issue.

After the recess, Judge Cartright decided that, with regard to leng Sary's ability to participate, the trial chamber's decision would be based on the testimony and evaluation of the experts. The chamber acknowledged that Sary's health condition might worsen. The medical doctor also understands that Sary cannot participate in the court room. The trial chamber expects to be kept informed by medical experts about any possible changes to his health condition. Mr. Kanavas insisted that leng Sary should be videotaped from his holding cell in order to demonstrate his inability to participate. Mr. Smith left the matter to the discretion of the court.

Testimony of the Civil Parties

Without reaching a conclusion regarding the status of leng Sary, the chamber subsequently moved to call on two civil parties. As expected, both women were asked about the first and second evacuation plan carried out by the KR regime, as well as the crimes committed against their family members and the people they encountered during the evacuations. Below are summaries from the hearing.

Case 002 civil party **Toeng Sokha**, born in 1947, testified on 04 December 2012 regarding her forced evacuation experience on 17 April 1975.

In 1975, Sokha was living in a house near Tuol Tum Pong. Answering questions from her lawyer, Sokha said that on 16 April 1975, there was bombing and shelling everywhere and her family had taken refuge in a trench which had been dug beside her house. Some of her relatives had also taken refuge at her house. At around noon on 17 April 1975, Sokha and her family were told to vacate the city for a period of a few days and return after "enemies had been eliminated." She and her family – her husband, in-laws, and two children – began to evacuate the city at around 5:00 in the evening. Sokha traveled aimlessly on foot along with the crowd. On one occasion, Sokha slept in the dark next to a corpse without realizing that it was a dead body. Along the way, the belongings which Sokha had brought with her were confiscated by the self-described Angkar. After 11 consecutive days of walking, Sokha finally arrived at Thnal Dach Village, Kraing Leav Commune, Bati District, Takeo Province. At

Thnal Dach, the Khmer Rouge recorded everyone's personal history. Sokha told them she was a teacher. She remained there for a period of about five months, doing all kinds of field labor.

Sokha was relocated at least three times in and around the village in which she had settled before eventually being evacuated to Battambang Province. Life was very miserable for Sokha, who had been assigned to live in the middle of the jungle. Food was almost non-existent and no tools or agricultural equipment were provided. At that time, anything which was edible became food for Sokha. By 1976, Sokha had lost a child, her father and two younger siblings. Sokha almost lost her husband in 1977. He had been so fearful of being arrested and executed that he was severely traumatized. Sokha returned home one day to find that her husband had hanged himself. She desperately tried to help him. For a period of about one hour, she did her best to revive his heart. Finally, she gave up her efforts. She then cleaned his unconscious body as Khmer tradition demands before a corpse is either cremated or buried. With the application of that water, her husband regained his consciousness and his life was saved.

In her concluding remarks, Sokha metaphorically compared the evacuation of Phnom Penh to a bomb which broke apart her family as well as the families of others. In her own recounting, "The evacuation was like a bomb dropped from the air which broke Phnom Penh into pieces." According to Sokha, life under the Khmer Rouge was so unbearable that she lost her motivation to live. It was her husband who encouraged her to persevere and give up her suicidal intent. "I want the younger generation to remember and I hope that the ECCC provides justice for me and all the other victims," Sokha told the judges at the end of her remarks. *(Summary by Chy Terith, Team Leader of VPA/CLR and SRI Coordinator)*

Case 002 civil party **Pich Srey Phal**, born in 1952, is currently living in Kraol Krabei Village, Trapeang Chorn Commune, Bakan District, Pursat Province. Below is her testimony given on 05 December 2012 at the ECCC.

Srey Phal, now 60 years old, was living with her husband in Tuol Kork in Phnom Penh in 1975. Her husband was a military doctor and her father was a spy for the Lon Nol government. As armed conflict intensified in 1975, Phal's family moved in with her uncle, near Klaing Romsev Market. Her siblings no longer attended school for fear of separation. "War refugees flooded into the city, prices skyrocketed, and there was shelling everywhere. I saw many wounded. Deum Kor Market had burned down and there was looting and starvation," Phal recounted. On the morning of 17 April 1975, Phal was standing in the street, welcoming the approaching Khmer Rouge soldiers. "Some residents waved pieces of white garments, while others waved their white shirts," Phal recalled. Suddenly, the KR announced that people must leave their homes for a period of three days so that Phnom Penh could be reorganized because the United States planned to bomb the city. Convinced this story was true, Phal panicked. Her closest relatives were nowhere near her at the time. Her husband was working at his hospital; her sister and her husband were living in Tuol Kork, while her father was at his base at DN (Defense National). Phal decided that she had to fetch her sister's family in Tuol Kork, so she took a bicycle and pedaled to their neighborhood. Unfortunately, the road was blocked.

It was almost 3:00 in the afternoon and the relatives for whom she had been waiting were nowhere to be found. Phal, her siblings, mother and relatives – 13 people altogether – had to leave. She left a note for the remaining family members, saying that she and the others were leaving Phnom Penh via Stung Mean Chey. People flooded the streets and it was difficult to move. According to Phal, the Khmer Rouge were everywhere. Along the route, they set up road blocks, recording people's names with the promise that they would be reinstated to their original positions. According to Phal, crowds of people lined up for registration. Phal reunited with her father and husband at Chamkar Daung. After only a few days, Phal's five-month-old child died along the way due to lack of food. "Who should be blamed?" asked Phal. "I was forced to leave and my child died." Similar to the experience of Toeng Sokha, the items in her possession were confiscated during the journey. Upon arrival at Prey Trab Village, a meeting was held to again register the personal histories of the 17-April people, with the promise that everyone would be reinstated to their original positions before the end of April 1975. After three days of registration, according to Phal, 60 people had registered and they were told to wait for trucks, which would soon arrive to pick them up.

Phal's father, who was a spy, did not give up his walkie-talkie and radio. He often secretly listened to news. "Perhaps, this was known to the Khmer Rouge," said Phal, "because the Khmer Rouge told my family to get into our Lambretta and follow the trucks." The Khmer Rouge gave her family some gasoline, but the car ran out of fuel en route to their destination, which was unknown to them. The Khmer Rouge told her family to wait for them to come and pick them up. Fortunately, while waiting, a person passed by and told them to escape because the people in the trucks were being executed. Phal's family ran for their lives until they reached a lake. Phal, who could not swim, had to wait while elders helped the young children cross the lake. Suddenly, some torch lights appeared and the family came under gunfire. Phal's grandmother died from fright, while Phal herself lost consciousness. Her husband then hid the unconscious Phal and the dead body of her grandmother in some bushes. According to Phal, it was around 2:00 a.m. when her husband returned to tell her that the remaining members of the family were safe.

Phal and her husband reversed their schedule by walking at night and hiding themselves during the day. They headed toward her husband's home village, where his family was residing, in Kampong Speu Province. Just five days after they arrived in the village, the Khmer Rouge were again seeking out the 17-April people. Her father-in-law hid her inside a mosquito net in the house. After a while, her father-in-law, fearful that her absence might cause trouble for the entire family, asked her to reveal herself. Phal and about 50 other 17-April people were sent to a mountain named Sngok. The Khmer Rouge left them there to fend for themselves. They had to construct their own shelters and scavenge for their own food. People became emaciated. Only about 20 people from her original group survived on that mountain, while the others, according to Phal, died due to starvation, illness, and attacks by wild pigs.

As she and the other 17-April survivors descended the mountain, two trucks were waiting to transport them to the train station in Phnom Penh. Altogether, there were about 60 people. They then continued their journey by train to Kampong Chhnang. Phal and her husband stayed in Kampong Chhnang for a while before being transported further to Pursat. In Pursat, Phal was assigned to do agricultural work. Because food was so scarce, one day Phal

decided to steal some rice. She was caught. As punishment, she was ordered to carry earth and thresh rice to an unbearable extent. Phal fainted because the work was too arduous. The Khmer Rouge threw water onto her face to revive her so she could continue to work. Finally, she was taken away to be executed. A gentleman saved her life by pleading with the Khmer Rouge to spare her. Aside from her personal experience, Phal also witnessed other horrible crimes. In Pursat, Phal saw groups of people from the Eastern Zone being taken away to be executed. In addition, Phal witnessed the gruesome killing of a couple alleged to have committed a moral offense. According to her, the man's body was sliced open, while the girl was tied up and stripped naked. They killed her by cutting her throat.

In her concluding remarks, Phal pleaded with the judges to render justice for all the victims and to award collective reparations to the civil parties. Finally, Phal requested that the judges punish the Khmer Rouge leaders severely for their crimes. **(Summary by Chy Terith, Team Leader of VPA/CLR and SRI Coordinator)**

Stories of Forced Transfer Resonate among the Victims

For nearly four years under KR rule, the Cambodian people endured the most unforgettable nightmare of forced transfer. Like the experiences of Ms. Toeng Sokha and



Ms. Yim Lorn, a complainant

Ms. Pech Srei Phal, their initial sense of joy in applauding the KR's victorious forces was replaced with a feeling of extreme fear. People were forced to evacuate their homes. Some died en route or were shot dead if they dared to resist the orders. During the evacuation, no one was allowed to search for family members who lived in different corners of the city, as was related in the stories of the civil parties.

Ms. Ek Chanthy, a 53-year-old complainant from Pursat Province, concurred with the claims of the civil parties. When the evacuation took place, she was also separated from her parents. She ended up working for a KR mobile unit and was assigned to perform

extremely hard work. Eventually, she lost her family members. In a similar vein, Ms. Khieu Sarem, 64, of Pursat Province, nodded in complete agreement with the civil parties. The bitterness of the KR atrocities is still fresh in her heart. She lost her father, two children and other relatives at Khnar Torting in Pursat Province, where her father was accused of being Khmer Kampuchea Krom. However, Nuon Chea, Brother No. 2, has claimed that he had no

knowledge of the evacuation plans and shifted the blame to zone and region secretaries.¹ To many survivors, his comment is just a flagrant and cowardly refusal to take responsibility.

The forty-four participants reacted to the court hearing by saying that they would prefer if the accused were as bold in confronting the past as they had been in administering their policies during their rule (1975-1979). The participants stressed the serious consequences which resulted from the policies and ideologies of the KR, who transformed the entire nation into a slave state, culminating in mass killings. Mr. Sovann Dan, the first deputy chief of Koas Kralah Commune, expected to hear some version of the truth, considering that the KR regime cost innumerable lives of Cambodian people, as well as the dignity of the country. Mr. Dan said the KR regime diminished the country's reputation in the international arena. Mr. Chhan believes the trial will produce some degree of truth which will serve to condemn the crimes of the KR. He feels it is important for the younger generation to learn about those facts. Both remain uncertain of who bears responsibility for the severe living conditions inflicted upon the population during those years. For example, the insufficient food rations and overwork were undeniable experiences of all survivors. Mass executions actually took place. This led Mr. Moeng Roath, the first deputy chief of Chamroeun Commune, Preah Vihear Province, to express concern about who should bear the guilt. He said he wished to hear a definitive statement from the court stating who is responsible for the deaths of so many people, because until now, no one has taken responsibility. The flagrant refusals of responsibility among the KR leaders have saddened him greatly. To him, resolution of this issue remains a distant hope, because the accountability process has taken a longer time than expected. The expense of the ECCC has already been exorbitant and the court is now facing financial shortages. Consequently, people feel uncertain about the possibility of bringing Cases 003 and 004 to justice.

These informants have appealed to the ECCC to hand down severe punishment to the defendants in order to prevent such despicable crimes from happening in the future. Such justice would help ease the tense feelings associated with the loss of 1.7 million fellow Cambodians.

Reconnecting the People with Historical Sites



Villagers inside the Public Information Room

As laypersons, most of the participants questioned why the legal process is taking so long to sentence the KR leaders, whose crimes are evident throughout Cambodia. One participant stood up during a pre-hearing meeting and claimed that the evidence of crimes is abundant, and there are plenty of survivors who could

¹ http://www.dccam.org/Projects/Living_Doc/pdf/Justice_A_Foundation_for_Reconciliation.pdf

provide explicit accounts of particular crimes which were committed against themselves and their family members. Tuol Sleng Prison and the killing fields at Cheung Ek are well-known as sites of the most horrific torture and execution, which claimed nearly 14,000 lives. Many people who believed that the former torture center of Tuol Sleng was the place where their family members lost their lives felt that DC-Cam's organized visit of the prison would provide a unique opportunity to uncover the truth. Ms. Mean Che, 53 years old, of Sangkum Thmei District, Preah Vihear Province, was visiting Tuol Sleng Prison for the first time. It had taken her more than thirty years to determine whether her father had been sent to this notorious prison. She walked from room to room to view the photos of executed prisoners, in the hope that she might find his picture and confirm his fate. Her first sentiment was to express her sadness and grief for those who died at the prison. They reminded her of the disappearance of her father.

Similarly, Ms. Ek Chanthy, a complainant, expected to locate records of her relatives at Tuol Sleng during her visit to the prison, which was her first. Actually, she found none of them, although she was informed that they had been sent there. On the afternoon of December 5, 2012, she joined the forty-four participants in visiting the Cheung Ek killing fields. Ms. Chanthy could do nothing but light incense and pray for her dead relatives. She said, "If my friends and relatives were transported here, may their souls rest in peace."

Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch, the former head of Tuol Sleng Prison (S-21), was sentenced to life in prison in Case 001 at the ECCC. In Case 002 thus far, the senior KR leaders have struggled to prove that they had any knowledge of any heinous crimes or evacuation plans. To the Cambodian people, the crime sites of Tuol Sleng Prison and the killing fields of Cheung Ek provide irrefutable evidence of the culpability of the accused Khmer Rouge leaders in Case 002.

Conclusion

The opportunity to witness the court proceedings firsthand provided the participants with a sense of satisfaction as they listened to the stories of Ms. Sokha and Ms. Srei Phal, both civil parties to Case 002, and resonated with their testimony. It is apparent that this legal process will take time before a final verdict can be issued. However, since the provisional release of Ieng Thirith due to her medical unfitness to stand trial, and considering the advanced ages of the three KR leaders – Nuon Chea, Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan – grave concern is frequently voiced over the possible death of one or all of the accused before the conclusion of the trial. According to interviews with more than a dozen participants by DC-Cam staff members, there is a consensus for "a speedier trial," while Mr. Moeng Roath of Preah Vihear Province further urged donor countries to provide additional financial support for the sake of justice. The participants can now share their court experience with their neighbors in order to inform them of the status of the legal process and to generate debate regarding the issues.

Appendix: List of Participants

Compiled by Men Pechet

No	Name	Sex	Province	Story
1.	Hap Yep	M	Battambang	When the KR started evacuating people from Phnom Penh in 1975, my family and I were evacuated to Boeng Kak Village, Kampong Tralach District, Kampong Chhnang Province. At Boeng Kak Village, my mother-in-law was assigned to plant vegetables, while my wife, Meu Phors, was assigned to thresh rice. I was assigned to work in a mobile unit, doing farming, digging a canal, and building a dike at Tang Krasang, Rolea Pha-ea District, Kampong Chhnang Province. Kol was in charge of the youth workers and thus assigned our tasks. There were ten people in my group, including Man, Chuo, and others whom I didn't know by name. Tich was my group leader. We worked from dawn until dark and were allowed to rest only during lunchtime, when we were provided watery rice gruel as our meal. There were two meals per day. By providing such a meager food ration, I think the KR wanted to starve their own people to death. However, I do not know the true motivation behind this ill-treatment.
2.	Khuonh Khuon	M	Banteay Meanchey	During the rainy season in 1978, my aunt Nguon was killed by the Khmer Rouge at Tmar Puok High School in Kum Rau Village, Kum Rau Sub-district, Tmar Puok District, Banteay Meanchey Province. An unknown KR cadre ordered me to do farming at Ba Rang field, a place unknown to me. I don't know the exact reason why my aunt was killed, but I know that she used to steal from Angkar's collective food supply because she was starving. Kok, male, was the cooperative chief. At that time, the Khmer Rouge evacuated my aunt to Ta Lai Village, Kok Ramiek Sub-district, Tmar Puok District, Banteay Meanchey Province. She was ordered to work in a mobile unit in Kum Rau Village, Kum Rau Sub-district, Tmar Puok District, Banteay Meanchey Province.
3.	Ek Chun	M	Banteay Meanchey	When the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh in 1975, I was evacuated from Peam Chor Village, Kraing Ta Yang Sub-district, Nam Chor District, Prey Veng Province, to Ba Phnom District, and then eventually to Kampong Trobek District, Prey

				<p>Veng Province. My final destination was Ou Reang Ov Village, Ou Reang Ov Sub-district, Ou Reang Ov District, Kampong Cham Province, where I was ordered to build a dike and dig a canal by working tirelessly, with unlimited working hours. Only when the work requirements were accomplished was I permitted to eat rice. We were allowed only two meals per day, each limited to rice soup. Even though the food ration was inadequate, we never complained out of fear of being sent for re-education (execution) by Angkar. Wives and husbands were forced to live separately because they were mobilized to work in different places. I had never known Me Kang, with whom I worked. My platoon consisted of 30 people, and my squad consisted of 10 people. I did not know why the Khmer Rouge deprived us of adequate food rations and forced us to work so hard.</p>
4.	Pres Chhaut	M	Banteay Meanchey	<p>In 1975, I was a child assigned to the mobile unit in Kok Ramiek Village, Kok Ramiek Sub-district, Tmar Puok District. On July 18, 1977, I was evacuated from Kok Ramiek Village to Tmar Puok Village in Tmar Puok Sub-district, Tmar Pouk District. In the mobile unit there, I was assigned to carry two cubic meters of earth per day. The food ration was insufficient, and I was forced to live separately from my parents and siblings.</p>
5.	Peak Chhoeuy	M	Banteay Meanchey	<p>I would like to report on information related to crimes of the accused. In 1979, Khmer Rouge cadres arrested and executed my father, Van Pok, who was accused of being an agent of Lon Nol. He was taken to Banteay Thma Puok to be executed. Most of the people who were killed by Khmer Rouge cadres were former soldiers. Peak Thoeuy witnessed this crime at Banteay Chhmar Cheung Village, Banteay Chhmar Sub-district, Thma Puok District, Battambang Province. Peak Thoeuy was male, 54 years old, and a relative of Plong Hang, male, 56 years old, and of Im Ploeuy, male, 57 years old. In addition to committing genocide, the Khmer Rouge made people work tirelessly building a dam, without providing adequate food rations. They provided only porridge and forced people to work day and night without rest. If someone complained about illness, the KR would accuse them of a mental disorder. If someone did not work hard, they</p>

				would kill them, saying that those people were just too useless to be allowed to survive. They usually killed people using a Sangke tree.
6.	Rim Mo Sae	M	Preah Sihanouk	In June 1977, my father, Mean Rim, died of exhaustion. He had been working at Trapaing Sa-uy Village, Angdung Thmar District. He was forced to do farming and tend cows. His exhaustion was caused by a combination of overwork and inadequate food rations. My mother witnessed his death because she was living with him at the time. Her name is Tae AngNas, and she is currently living at Kampong Kes Village, Trapaing Sangke Sub-district, Kampot Province. Ta Pim, whose existence is currently unknown, was in charge of that region. My father died in his house at Trapaing Sa-uy Village, Angdung Thma Sub-district. Ta Ngok, whose existence is currently unknown, was Ta Pim's superior. I believe that Ta Ngok is responsible for the death of my father. I think all the harvested rice, which we worked to exhaustion to produce, must have been sent to another location, because none of us had enough food to eat. Thus we were forced to endure starvation. Many people felt they deserved to have enough food to eat because they had put all of their effort into producing the rice. Instead, they were all starved. During that time, my sister, who is now deceased, ran to me and told me our father had died. I asked the KR for permission to see my father for the last time, but they refused, so I discreetly went to see him. Hence, I was lectured after I returned.
7.	Youp Mat Naut	M	Preah Sihanouk	In late 1977, my father, Doung Youb, was arrested by the Khmer Rouge, who accused him of being a traitor. I was very young at that time, so I cannot remember exactly how many Khmer Rouge cadres came to arrest him. However, I realized that he must have been taken away to be executed at Koh Kchong Prison. The cadre responsible for arresting him or ordering his arrest is unknown. At that time, I was living at Ao Chrao Village, Ao Chrao Sub-district. Though I was living with him, I did not witness his arrest. However, my mother witnessed the entire incident. Anyone who was arrested at that time was killed. Hence, we realized immediately that my father would be executed right after his

				<p>arrest, and no one dared to inquire as to his fate because all of us were also afraid of being arrested.</p>
8.	<p>Khieu Saroeun <i>aka</i> Phan</p>	M	Pursat	<p>At 4:00 one evening at the end of 1978, as a member of a children’s unit, I was ordered by a cadre (teacher) to collect palm juice in Ta Maok Village, (Khna Torteng) Sub-district, Bakan District, Pursat Province. As I climbed the palm tree, I witnessed six cadres, including Mei from my cooperative, fighting with people in front of an excavated pit. Many of the people were tied to each other in a line as they walked toward the pit. There were people from Kampuchea Krom (Puok 18) and Svay Reang, as well as 17 April people from Phnom Penh. I saw the first person being killed by being struck on the back of the neck with a branch and then being kicked into the pit. Finally, his neck was slit with a knife. There were around 100 people tied up there. Having witnessed that scene, I descended the tree immediately, fearful of being spotted by the cadres. I think those people being killed were accused of being enemies because some of them were unable to complete the arduous work tasks assigned to them, while those who were from Kampuchea Krom were considered hidden enemies. I don’t know how the Khmer Rouge made decisions about who was their enemy. I was told that those people were being transferred a different work site, but they already knew that they were being taken away to be killed, and thus they each shared final words with their family to urge them to take care each other.</p>
9.	<p>Set Kim Seng</p>	M	Pursat	<p>My four biological siblings were killed by the Khmer Rouge. The first was Set Sim, female, who disappeared during the evacuation from Phnom Penh when the Khmer Rouge first came to power. The second was Set Seoun, male, who was executed by the Khmer Rouge in 1977. He was arrested in Pralay Rumdeng Village and killed at Tuol Ses Nhoung. I don’t know the name of the militiaman who arrested him because we were not living together at that time. I learned this information from people who were living near my siblings. They told me that the Khmer Rouge would accuse Khmer Krom of being Vietnamese and thus they were considered the</p>

				<p>enemy. The third was Set Saren, male, who was also executed by the Khmer Rouge. His arrest took place at Pralay Rumdeng Village, and he was killed at Ses Nhoung in 1977. I learned this information from my surviving siblings. Although he was arrested by a militiaman, I do not know the identity of that person because Angkar said that the Vietnamese were responsible for his arrest. The fourth was Set Siphon, female, who disappeared during the evacuation from Phnom Penh in 1975, when the Khmer Rouge first came to power. I learned Set Siphon's story after I returned to my native village at the end of the regime.</p>
10.	Chen Siem	F	Pursat	<p>After 1975 when the Khmer Rouge arrived in my village, the villagers were forced to work. However, during 1977-1978, the division chief, whose name was unknown, evacuated people from Ouchrouv to Battambang and sent them to different work sites. As for me and my four siblings, we were transferred to Tuol Kpuos. We were forced to build a canal, a dike, and do farming from dawn to dusk. We were allowed to rest only during lunch time. There were no exceptions to these rules, even for those who were injured or sick. I never knew why they forced people to work so hard.</p>
11.	Kim Huoy	F	Pursat	<p>In July 1974, the villagers of Rum Lech were evacuated so that the Khmer Rouge could use the area as a military base. After I left the village, I lived at Stok Khla Village for two months, until I was relocated to National Road 5 by the Lon Nol army. Anyone who opposed those orders was killed. In 1975, my parents and five siblings returned to the village, but were not allowed to own their property, which was all declared to be collective. As for me, I was evacuated to Khnach Rameas Village, Khla Romeas Sub-district, Bavi District, Battambang Province, the native village of my husband, Ky Heng. When we arrived there, I was assigned by the cooperative chief, Tavid, to raise pigs, and my husband was assigned to make plowshares. Tavid assigned the female medics and pantry staff (a total of seven people) to collect my property (including 375 grams, a motor, and clothing) and store them at the warehouse. Those who collected my property said, "Angkar wants to collect all the property</p>

				<p>because it belongs to capitalists and no one is allowed to have such possessions.” After collecting my property, the person handed me white clothing in return and said, “You have to dye this black.” They provided three sets of white clothing each year. I was very upset when they first collected my property, but I had no choice in the matter or I would have been killed. I did not want to raise pigs because it was very hard work. When the pigs I raised became skinny, Tavid would blame me and say, “Work properly, or you will be smashed (killed).” In 1977, due to the difficulty of raising pigs, I asked Tavid if I could be transferred to do farming at Doun Av Village, Khnach Rameas. At that time, while my husband was making plowshares at Leang Cheang, he contracted malaria and died. I was working in the mobile work brigade back then, and one of my coworkers told me about the death of my husband. I then asked Tavid if I could see my (deceased) husband, but he refused.</p>
12.	Ek Chanthy	F	Pursat	<p>After 1975, I had to leave my family and move to Say Saman Village, Battambang Province, where I was ordered to build a dike in the rice field. The KR said that if we could build a dike five meters long, we would be recruited into the second special unit. In this unit, we would be required to follow all orders, including those regarding crying or laughing. However, if we could build a dike ten to fifteen meters long, we would be recruited into the first special unit, which was the unit with the best workers, and there we would be treated as adults. We were also ordered to transplant rice seedlings – 160 seedlings in the morning and 160 seedlings in the afternoon. During work hours, if we dared to stand up, the guards, Meoun and Met, would beat us. Meoun and Met kept exhorting us to work hard to help Angkar and, under their supervision, five or six people were required to harvest an entire hectare of rice. Later, we were ordered to construct a canal and dike at Prahass Village in Battambang. Each of us had to build four to five kilometers. After finishing that task, we had to complete our farming chores as usual. In addition, we also had to plant potatoes in Prahass and many other places.</p>

13.	Rang Ya	F	Pursat	<p>During 1978, the Khmer Rouge severely restricted the villagers' food ration. I was evacuated to work in the children's unit at Stok Khla Cooperative in Rum Lech Sub-district, Bakan District. There were hundreds of children in that unit, divided into small groups of thirty each. We worked from dawn to dusk, and were only allowed to rest at 11:00 a.m., when we were given very thin porridge which had almost no rice. Immediately after the midday meal, we had to resume working. At night, I slept at the children's unit in Stok Khla. None of us had blankets; all we had was one set of clothing, so we were not even able to change our clothes. All the kids slept in a row and were guarded by teachers. One teacher was in charge of 100 kids. Unit chiefs had control over the teachers, and the chief of teachers supervised the unit chiefs. The teacher in charge of my group was Bang Vim, female, and the unit chief was Ban Yan, female. I did not sleep well at night because there were mosquitos, and it was very cold without a blanket. I always felt that I could die at any time back then. Sometimes, I became sick and collapsed under a banana tree, where I slept due to extreme hunger. If I was noticed, someone might bring me back and give me some food, so I could proceed with my work. Because I was so hungry, I ate almost anything, including rice bran for example. I never knew who made the decision to deprive the villagers of food. We produced a lot of food, but were given very little to eat. The KR only fed those loyal to the revolution.</p>
14.	Pheng Yin	M	Pursat	<p>After 1975, when the Khmer Rouge ruled the entire country for three years, eight months and twenty days, I lost most of my family members, including my father, Pheng Yos, who was 73 years old; Bang Pheng Yan and his wife, Lay En, and their three children (before 1975, he worked at the IRCC near Kampong Cham Province); my younger sibling Pheng Cheng, (whom we called Chek), and his wife and two children; and my younger sibling Pheng Chhoem. At that time I lived in Kampong Som, and my dad and siblings lived in our home province of Kampot, where my sibling worked. When I returned home, one of the villagers told me that my dad had died from</p>

				diarrhea. He had asked the villagers for food, but was not offered any until it was too late. I did not know who refused to give him food. Upon returning home, I was told that the Khmer Rouge had killed all of my siblings, but the dates of their deaths and the identity of their killers remains unknown.
15.	Nuon Channa	M	Pursat	During 1977-1978, my siblings were executed one after the other. First, the Khmer Rouge arrested my two brothers, whose names were Them and Thon, and executed them in Serei Rumlech Village (the village name during the Pol Pot era), Rumlech Sub-district, Bakan District, because they were accused of being Vietnamese. I do not remember the names of the Khmer Rouge cadres who killed my brothers. After three or four months, my sister, Tauch, and my brother, Ra, were taken away to be executed as well. Two younger siblings of mine suffered from edema due to extreme hunger, so the Khmer Rouge said they were taking them to the hospital, but in fact they took them away and killed them. I do not know where they were killed or the names of the Khmer Rouge who carried out the act. After that, they killed my mother.
16.	Vann Chauk	M	Pursat	My wife Hay Chiem, four sons, one daughter, father-in-law Hong Hay, mother-in-law Vouy, and I were all escorted like a herd of cows, with guards in front and behind us. There were three groups being escorted in this way, and my wife's family and I were in the second group. The chief cadre asked me if I was Khmer or Kampuchea Krom, and I replied that I was Khmer. He told me that foreigners had to be in the third group, and in fact the Khmer Rouge took the Kampuchea Krom in that group and killed them. There were thousands of people in each group. This incident took place in Khnar Torteng Village, Khnar Torteng Sub-district, Bakan District. I had been evacuated by Angkar from Rumlech Village in March of 1977. Shortly after arriving at Khnar Torteng Village, the Khmer Rouge took the Khmer Kampuchea Krom away to be executed at Prey Krabao and Ses Nhoung Village. The executions took place at 3:00 in the afternoon during July 1977. The arrests were made by the chief cadres, including Pech, A Sun, and A Ven,

				along with many others. The Kampuchea Krom were executed because they were considered to be Vietnamese and therefore enemies of the KR. If a Khmer spouse decided to join their Kampuchea Krom wife or husband, they would be killed as well.
17.	Aom Chorn	M	Siem Reap	<p>During three-year, eight-month, and twenty-day duration of the Democratic Kampuchea regime, the most tragic event for Chorn was the death of his daughter. On the morning of April 16, 1975, there was a heavy armed battle at Daem Kor Market, near Chorn's house. Worried about the safety of his family, Chorn took his wife and daughters to live with one of his best friends at Pet Chen, and then returned to his home near Daem Kor Market. At 7:30 the next morning, on April 17th, Chorn and the other residents of the area were forcibly evacuated along National Road 4, and thus he became separated from his family. After five days of traveling along National Road 4 with the other evacuees, he finally reached Kampong Kantuot, Kandal Province. He was missing his family unbearably, so he decided to ride his old bicycle directly to National Road 1, knowing his family would be there. Chorn reunited with them at Korki Thom in Kandal Province, however he was dismayed to discover that one of his daughters, Lut Liputhy, had gotten lost during the evacuation. Chorn tried his best to gather information about his daughter's disappearance, but he could learn nothing. He and his family then traveled on to Kampot, his wife's home province, in order to escape those who were aware of his identity as a fourth-level accountant during the Lon Nol regime. Unfortunately, he never reached his destination because he was detained at Krang Ah-Aut, Kampong Speu, where he was ordered to clear the forest and do farming. Chorn confessed, "The work was very hard, but what caused me the most suffering was the death of my daughter, who passed away of diarrhea without having any medical treatment." Nowadays, whenever he and his wife think about the Khmer Rouge years, they deeply miss their deceased daughter, and they maintain hope that one day they might reunite with their lost daughter.</p>

18.	Lok Vuto	M	Siem Reap	Vuto is the son of Mr. Chorn. This is his first trip to attend the ECCC proceedings. He learned about the history of the Khmer Rouge from his parents when he was young. Vuto hopes that he will learn more about Khmer Rouge history during this upcoming trip to the ECCC. He wants to observe the former Khmer Rouge leaders, who caused the deaths of millions of Cambodian people, in the courtroom.
19.	Sanh aka Yin Eng	M	Kampong Cham	Sanh was working as a soldier in 1973. In 1975, he escaped and returned home because he missed his parents. However, he had to return to the battlefield in Muk Kampoul District, Kandal Province. When the Khmer Rouge gained control of Phnom Penh, Sanh was injured. After being released from the hospital, he and his unit were transferred to Kampong Som. There, he had to carry provisions such as rice, cloth, and machinery to be loaded onto the ships. He spent 10 months there before returning to Phnom Penh, Chraing Chamres , where he worked carrying rice, salt, and cement to be used in trade with foreigners. Those items were the most important exports and were branded Democratic Kampuchea. After moving from Chraing Chamres, he stayed at the old stadium for a month before he was again moved to Tuol Tum Pong in early 1978. There he was assigned to peel kapok. Since they were not able to manufacture thread out of the kapok, they sold it to China and received cloth in return. In addition to selling kapok, they also sold lotus seeds and coffee. On two occasions, he witnessed Khieu Samphan visiting his workplace. Sanh even tasted the food that the chef cooked for the workers there. If it was not delicious, he would say, “How dare you eat this delicious food all alone.” When Kuy Thuon was condemned as a traitor, Sanh was assigned to study politics at the stadium with Nuon Chea. In 1977, Sanh married a cook who worked in the hospital and after that he no longer worked carrying provisions, but only peeled kapok in Tuol Tum Pong Pagoda until the Vietnamese invaded Phnom Penh. He then fled to his homeland of Battambang with his wife, and he still lives there today.

20.	Saom Mon aka Reng	F	Kampong Cham	<p>In 1973, Mon was sent to join the women's unit at Komareach Sub-district, which was comprised of 50 people. The workers were allowed to visit their homes once every 10 to 30 days. She worked there for one year, after which time she was transferred to the production unit at Prey Chhor District. She worked there along with 30 other people in the same sub-district, however it was called a district unit. Later she was assigned to join the military unit in Phnom Penh. Two years later, she was forced into an arranged marriage. However, because her husband was subsequently accused of being a traitor, she was considered a traitor as well, and together they were relocated to the area east of Prey Sa. When the Vietnamese invaded, the couple fled to Koh Kong and lived in the forest. Seven months later, they returned to their homeland. When she went to Phnom Penh, she was asked to evacuate people from their homes and had to check the houses to ensure that no Lon Nol soldiers were hiding inside. After that, she was assigned to work in the Ministry of City Commerce near the Central Market, where she had to clean up, organize the living area, and peel kapok. After working there for one year, she was transferred to the area east of Prey Sa, called K-12, and did farm work there until 10:00 p.m. every night without rest. The workers were rationed only a bowl of porridge and rice each day. When the Vietnamese invaded, she fled to Kampong Chhnang with Duch, who was the Chief of S-21 Security Office, and then went straight to Koh Kong.</p>
21.	Nhem Ny aka Phea	F	Kampong Cham	<p>Ny completed her education in 1973 at grade seven because of the disruption caused by political demonstrations. She decided to join the Khmer Rouge because her father, an educated person, was under investigation by the Khmer Rouge and because she also had relatives living in Phnom Penh. After she defected to the Khmer Rouge, they stopped investigating her father and no longer intended to kill him. At first, she was assigned to plant vegetables in Kor Village, where messages were exchanged, and then she spent two years as a courier for Buon, the chief of Prey Chhor District. After that, she went to Division 310 as a soldier and fought from</p>

Kampong Cham to Siem Reap Province and from there back to Phnom Penh. While working in that division, she had to deliver rice and cakes to the frontlines, and she had to stay at the TEO place. When the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh, Ny's division entered the city and she tried to locate her relatives, but had no success. Ny stayed in Ang Duong Hospital, where she learned about medical care from Phen, who was aware that Ny was literate. If a patient was suffering a serious condition during the night, Phen allowed Ny to treat them so that she could learn more about medicine. She was also being instructed in midwifery, but was disgusted by childbirth and thus did not learn that skill. Phen taught her for about one year. Then the Khmer Rouge declared that the hospital directors had betrayed the revolution and would be arrested. Only those who hid their identity managed to escape. Ny stayed at Ha Pagoda in Tuol Kok, and was arrested sometime in 1976. Her legs and hands were tied, she was blindfolded and forced to walk all night until she arrived at the prison. There she was untied. She was detained in Ang Duong Hospital. At 8:00 one evening, she was interrogated, tortured by electric shock, and asked when she had joined the CIA. She was then sent to Tuol Sleng, later transferred to Prey Sor, and ultimately managed to survive.

22.	Sum Sokhan aka Srien	M	Kampong Cham	Sokhan quit school after grade eight due to the instability caused by the coup d'état in 1970, in which Lon Nol overthrew former King Norodom Sihanouk. In the same year as the coup d'état, Sokhan joined the Khmer Rouge revolution as a soldier. In 1975, when the Khmer Rouge soldiers captured the capital of Phnom Penh, Sokhan was in Division 310. During the fighting in Phnom Penh, Sokhan was injured and hospitalized in P-1 Hospital. In 1977, Sokhan was sent to the Cambodian-Vietnamese border to fight against the Vietnamese. Soon afterward, Sokhan was re-assigned to work at the Kampong Chhnang airport construction site, where he continued to work until the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime.
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