

# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF CAMBODIA

Genocide Education in Cambodia

The Teaching of "A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)"

## Genocide Education for National Police Officers

Organized by

Documentation Center of Cambodia in Collaboration with  
the Police Academy of Cambodia (PAC) of the Ministry of the Interior

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### Introduction

Teaching the history of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) has been an integral component to the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)'s Genocide Education Project, which aims to build peace, national reconciliation, and a culture of democracy in Cambodia. History draws upon memory, however fragmented, as its source for answering questions on



Three hundred police officers at the opening ceremony

the past as well as offering solutions for the problems of the future. All relevant stakeholders, both state and non-state actors must participate in these discussions on the past, both for reconstructing Cambodia memory as well as generating an accurate and candid accounting of what happened and why. Police officers are a critical stakeholder for this overall effort because they are the guardians of social order and the first-line mediators between the Cambodian government and its people. They are not only critical to Cambodian stability but also the establishment of a rule of law culture—all critical factors to a thriving democracy.

On 3 November 2011, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaboration with the Police Academy of Cambodia (PAC) of the Ministry of Interior conducted the first ever training workshop for 300 police officers from around the country. The training was conducted for only one day, with six experts on Cambodian history and law.

The presenters included Professor Ros Chantrabot, from Royal Academy of Cambodia; Mr. Andrew Cayley, ECCC's International Co-Prosecutor; Dr. Kar

Sunbaunat, Cambodian leading psychiatrist; and Mr. Khamboly Dy, author of *A History of Democratic Kampuchea*). The training also included two KR S-21 survivors: Norng Chanphal (S-21's Child survivor) and Him Huy (former prison guard at S-21). Four documentary films were screened for the participants. These films included: *Vietnamese Delegation to DK in 1975*; *Gunnar Bergstrom's film, Tuol Sleng Prison in 1979*; and *Cambodian Children*. We also invited Professor Siv Tuon from Royal University of Phnom Penh to explain the definition of genocide in the context of Khmer literature.

The purpose of this training was both to teach the history of Democratic Kampuchea as well as engage Cambodian police in the Genocide Education Project. As students, the police were given information about the history of Democratic Kampuchea, as well as a range of associated subjects, such as international law and Khmer literature and culture (as it relates to genocide education). As participants, the police were engaged in the process of relating the history and associated materials to their responsibilities as citizens and peacekeepers. Altogether, the training aimed to generate a discussion on issues such as right from wrong, humanity from inhumanity, and the responsibilities of police in a peaceful, democratic society governed by the rule of law.

### **The Opening Ceremony**



Conference room looking from the back

The opening ceremony was presided over by H.E. Poly Da, Vice President of the Police Academy of Cambodia (PAC). PAC provided training to all police officers from all provinces across the country. There are about three thousand police officers currently studying in the school. The school provides three levels of training (lower,

medium, and higher education), and the training ranges from three months to two years. Other delegations included Mr. Andrew Cayley (International Co-Prosecutor of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia-ECCC), Mr. Youk Chhang (DC-Cam's Director) and other high-ranking police officers from the PAC.

Mr. Ly Sok-Kheang was the coordinator of the workshop. He welcomed all the distinguished guests, and introduced the members of the delegation to the participants. Mr. Ly said that the training was about the history of the Khmer Rouge 1975-1979. Then he invited Professor Kim Sovannavuth to give a speech to welcome all the guests and the participants.

Prof. Khim welcomed all the delegations, and thanked them for taking the time to participate in the training. He also explained that DK history was approved by the Cambodian government and the Ministry of Education as a required curriculum in the foundation year of all institutions of higher education.

The approval to teach this history in schools has carried over to the PAC. PAC collaborated with DC-Cam to introduce this history into the PAC during the period in which the Khmer Rouge Tribunal would be bringing senior leaders of the KR to justice.

Prof. Khim's speech then turned to the reasons for the KR regime's rise to power. He pointed to the Cold War as one critical factor, as well as the coup to depose Prince Norodom Sihanouk. With assistance from the U.S., Field Marshal Lon Nol's coup resulted in wider public support for the Khmer Rouge. After the coup, Cambodia became a battle field between the two Cambodian political groups: one led by the Khmer Republic and the other, the revolutionary forces of the Prince Sihanouk. The KR's triumph created great suffering for the Cambodian people. Schools and pagodas were closed, and a new system of communal living was imposed. The KR used the word comrade to define all members of society and the necessity of sharing everything equally among the people. The KR crimes were the most tragic event in Cambodian history. The genocidal regime ended only when the defecting Cambodian units, in cooperation with the Vietnamese army, defeated the KR on January 7, 1979. Peace and stability remained wishful thinking as a new round of civil war entered the national stage. Cambodia and its people faced tremendous hardship because of sanctions by the international community. The KR continued to occupy the Cambodian seat in the UN General Assembly. Professor Khim stressed that the training aims at allowing police officers to understand both KR history as well as the accountability process at the ECCC. He expressed his wish that DC-Cam continue to collaborate with PAC for future police training.

Mr. Vanthan Peou Dara, DC-Cam's Deputy Director: Mr. Vanthan welcomed the participants and, on behalf of DC-Cam, he thanked them for their participation in the workshop. He said that the training was held in accordance with the endorsement of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Ministry of Education, and the goal of the training is to teach the police officers about how the KR came to power, its ideology and policies, and the implications of this history on Cambodian people for the future. This understanding will help police officers contribute to genocide

prevention, national reconciliation and peace. He gave some background of the genocide education project's successful training of over three thousand teachers nationwide. DC-Cam has distributed 500,000 thousand copies of the textbook to students nationwide, and the project will be expanding the training to not only the police but also other institutions, such as the armed forces. In the end, Mr. Vanthan thanked the Ministry of Interior for its eager collaboration which allowed DC-Cam to collect million of pages of documents and interview thousands of KR survivors. These document collections and interviews were critical to the establishment of the ECCC. He hopes that the Ministry of Interior will continue to collaborate with DC-Cam for the sake of Cambodia.

H.E. Poly Da, Vice President of the Police Academy of Cambodia: Mr. Da stated that it was a great honor that DC-Cam and the Ministry of Education came to facilitate the training of the police officers of the PAC. On behalf of the President, Mr. Da expressed his sincere gratitude to DC-Cam and his fervent support for DC-Cam in teaching DK history to Cambodia's younger generation. He invited all guests and participants to stand up and take a moment of silence to pay respect to those who died during the liberation of Cambodia by KR and Vietnamese volunteer forces, and for those Cambodians who died during the genocide. He said that he had lived through the entire period of the KR regime. He was evacuated to Region 21 of the Eastern zone and he saw great suffering. He admitted that, despite his experience, his understanding was low compared to researchers who had devoted their lives to uncovering the truth of the period. He stressed that history is very important as it is a mirror to reflect upon for the past and a useful guide for one's own identity and relationship to country and the world. This is the reason why the constituent assembly included two Cambodian great historians on the constitution. The purpose of this training is to facilitate the use of history as a guide to understanding one's identity and a light on strategies for a prosperous future.

The first prominent history was the great Angkorian period, and, unfortunately, the other was the dark history of the KR. He invited all participants to be patient and listen attentively to the presenters, both for learning all aspects of the KR history as well as finding effective ways to prevent genocide in the future. In his conclusion, he announced the formal opening of the training.

### **Training Activities**

Mr. Ly Sok-Kheang introduced the objectives of the training. He explained DC-Cam's teacher trainings since 2009, and how DC-Cam, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, trained 24 national teachers, 186 provincial teachers, and over three thousand commune teachers nationwide. The purpose of the training at PAC is to teach police officers to understand KR history and find ways to prevent genocide in the future. The training also aimed to strengthen tolerance amongst all Cambodian

people for the purpose of establishing peace and forgiveness. Concluding his remarks, Mr. Ly introduced the program of the day. ECCC International Prosecutor will be the first guest speaker followed by Professor Ros Chantrabot, Dr. Kar Sunbaunat, and Mr. Khamboly Dy. The participants will also have the chance to meet with the S-21 prison guard, Him Huy, and child survivor, Norng Chanphal. The participants will also watch four documentary films related to the KR.

## Guest Speakers

### Mr. Andrew Cayley: ECCC International Co-Prosecutor of ECCC

Mr. Cayley greeted the police officers and thanked the PAC for inviting him to speak in the police training. He stated that he would be brief and allow time for questions. Mr. Cayley would address three topics: his work background and how he came to Cambodia, his work in Yugoslavia with regards to the war in the 1990s, and the role of police in the investigation of crimes and the progress of the court.

Mr. Cayley is a lawyer from England, and he joined the army in 1991 working as a military adviser until 1995, when he was sent to work with the Yugoslavia Tribunal. The Yugoslavia Tribunal was set up by the United Nations in 1993 to investigate and prosecute the crimes committed during the civil war in the former Yugoslavia,



International Co-Prosecutor Andrew Cayley presents at the Training for Police Officers

and there is a good link between the crimes perpetrated in Yugoslavia and that of the KR. He said that Pol Pot used to work on the road construction in Yugoslavia. He said that while 200,000 people died during the civil war in Yugoslavia, this is a low number in comparison to the Cambodian Genocide. Mr. Cayley showed some photos and a map of Europe to the participants. He showed the killing fields in Yugoslavia and their work with respect to the investigations around the world. He emphasized that the photo he showed was the investigative work of police. He also showed the millions of refugees and the evacuations of people from one place to another in former Yugoslavia. The photos showed the burning of personal belongings—property that was owned by genocide victims. One photo showed the gathering of a

number of people who were executed en-mass. Another photo showed the mass grave which included men and children, some of whom were blindfolded. It took the investigators three years to collect all the evidence. The photos were taken from planes, and they formed concrete evidence for the tribunal.



Participants pose questions to Mr. Andrew Cayley

Mr. Cayley showed the work he has accomplished with the KR tribunal. He talked about case 001 involving Duch. He is now awaiting the final decision of the Supreme Court on Duch's sentence. Duch was sentenced to 19 years in prison, but he appealed to the Supreme Court. The second important case currently turns on the fitness to prosecution of Ieng Therith, who appears to have a limited capacity to stand trial. Ieng Therith has a kind of disease which affects her brain and her ability to stand trial. A number of medical experts have offered their diagnoses with respect to Ieng Therith's ability to stand trial. If Ieng Therith is adjudged unfit for trial, case 002 will only have three accused who are fit for trial. Mr. Cayley is waiting for the decision from the judges, but he perceives that the judges are trying to chop case 002 into the smallest case possible. In this regard, the judges decided to divide case 002 into four small cases, as the accused become elderly. He talked about the resignation of the International Co-Investigating Judge and he noted that the court is waiting for the arrival of a new judge. He affirmed to a number of media sources that his ultimate responsibility is to ensure the respect for the rule of law. He could not afford to involve himself in politics and his utmost regard was to adhere to the law and ensure that the evidence was sufficient to justify the prosecution's case. Although the case may be dropped, he is comforted by the fact that he did all he could to accomplish a proper investigation. He urged the police to properly follow the law in their work, and he thanked all participants for their participation in the project.

Question 1: In Yugoslavia, when the communist regime collapsed, civil war resulted. About 20,000 people were killed, although 80,000 Muslims were killed. Mr. Cayley was asked to clarify this point.

Mr. Cayley: The communist regime stopped functioning in 1990. However, the communist regime had successfully prevented civil war since then. General Tito was

the leader of Yugoslavia, but he died in 1980. Following his death, civil war erupted. Several peace agreements were created to stop the fighting; but, ultimately, 20,000 people were killed and there were over two million refugees.

Question 2: Cambodia was a member of the UN since 1955, and the UN has the responsibility to protect the world. Why did the UN know nothing about the killing in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979? Did the UN know about the Pol Pot regime? What did the UN do at that time? He was from Kampot and he himself dug up the mass graves after 1979 to find gold in exchange for rice. Secondly, Cambodian people tried very hard after 1979 to survive. Why did the UN continue to recognize the KR? There were a lot of killings after 1979; why didn't the UN intervene? Why did the UN wait until now to prosecute the KR leaders?

Mr. Cayley: These are excellent questions which need to be addressed. Cambodia has the right to receive protection from the UN, and he believed that the UN should apologize to Cambodia because they failed to intervene in stopping the crimes. He said that international politics had a strong influence on what the UN could do. He gave the example of the UN's failure to prevent the killing in Yugoslavia even with UN troops on the ground. The UN Secretary apologized to the people in Bosnia. Cayley agreed that the UN failed to prevent the crimes of the KR. However, it was a good lesson for the UN which has done a better job in the subsequent crimes that were perpetrated in Kosovo and Libya. The UN relied on the European forces to stop the killing in Libya. What happened in Cambodia is a dark spot in UN history, and the UN should learn from this lesson. With regards to the second question as to why the UN and some states continued to recognize the KR: This was a second mistake that resulted from the international politics at the time. At that time, the world did not support the presence of the Vietnamese troops in Cambodia. This should be addressed through the KR tribunal. A lot of mistakes were made and the Cambodian people suffered from these crimes.



A participant poses a question to Mr. Andrew Cayley

Question 3: Mr. Chum Bunla, Deputy Head of the Department of the Foundation Year, He continues from the previous questions. He suffered so much during the KR. He talked very loudly to show his suffering during that time. He was a Lon Nol soldier and was seriously wounded at the time the DK regime took power. He pretended to be crazy and made himself naked to prove to the KR cadre that he was insane. He said that nothing could describe his

suffering. He requested that the trial end with case 002, and no effort should be made to proceed to case 003. If the court continues to case 003, many former KR cadres may run into the forest and create another civil war.

Mr. Cayley: He acknowledged the suffering of Mr. Bunla, and he stressed the importance of DC-Cam's Genocide Education Project. With regards to case 003, he understands the position of the Cambodian government; however, his responsibility is to follow the law. The court is independent of the government. The decision to continue or not lies with the judges, not him. The law does not give the rights to the prosecutor to decide on this issue. The real problem is that the trial is not being accomplished in a manner that is proper for case 003 and 004. If laws and rules are not followed, there will be a problem in case 002. The defense lawyers sued the government officials in the Phnom Penh Court. This is the reason why case 003 and 004 have to be done properly, regardless of whether they are continued or not. Mr. Cayley stated that he did not want to see civil war happening again in Cambodia; however, he reemphasized that, as an officer of the court, he has a duty to respect the law.

Question 4: What evidence is used to prosecute? What crimes can the court prosecute? What kinds of laws (Cambodian laws or international laws) will be used for the prosecution?

Mr. Cayley: The KRT is a special court; it is a Cambodian domestic court with an international dimension because it applies both Cambodian and international laws. There have been a lot of debate and discussion on this issue. Usually when the domestic court deals with these international crimes, they seek assistance from the international laws. In this regard, the KRT uses both Cambodian and international laws according to the agreement. He usually shows Cambodian laws to the court during the hearing. He has an English version of Cambodian laws and Cambodian lawyers assist him with the interpretation of the laws. In terms of evidence, he relies strongly on the witnesses, and the court has to move quickly as many witnesses have passed away. The court also uses documentary evidence from S-21. Experts such as researchers and historians on KR history are invited to assist the court. The court uses a great amount of evidence. For the last point, the court prosecutes both Cambodian and international crimes. Most crimes to be prosecuted are international crimes as these crimes describe effectively what happened in Cambodia, although, Cambodia has included a number of international elements into Cambodian criminal law. These crimes include the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.



## **Prof. Ros Chantrabot: Cambodian historian and adviser to the Royal Academy of Cambodia**

He thanked the PAC and DC-Cam for inviting him to participate in the training. He wanted to show the roots of the KR movement. He framed his presentations around three themes. He started his presentation with the discussion on the international politics and then discussed the regional politics—both of which had a strong influence on the creation of the KR



Prof. Ros Chantrabot gives his presentation

movement. He began his presentation with the Second World War because it still has implications on the world today. There are in total about fifty million people who died during the Second World War. Towards the end of the war, the super powers (namely the US, UK, USSR, France and China) divided the world into several blocs. This division led to the emergence of the Cold War. The Cold War was the struggle between the free world led by the US and the communist world led by the USSR. The war led to the division of Berlin into two parts. Later in 1948, the USSR began spreading its ideology to the former Yugoslavia. The Korean War happened between 1950 and 1953, and the war ended with the death of Stalin. In 1949, Mao declared the existence of China as an independent state. The Soviet Union wanted to use Chinese forces to fight against the US, which wanted to the spread communism spread throughout the world. At the same time, the communist world also wanted to prevent the spread of the free world ideology. The US used a strategy to surround the communist world in order to limit the spread of communism in Asia. The US believed that if one country in Southeast Asia fell, the other countries would fall do so also. The Cold War led to the war in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Cambodia became one element of the Cold War. The regime of Prince Norodom Sihanouk tried to navigate Cambodia between the two big blocs through his neutral policy. The US wanted Cambodia to join its military forces in Southeast Asia, but Cambodia refused. From that point forward, relations with the US and the liberal world deteriorated. Cambodia was persecuted by Thailand and South Vietnam, which were American allies. The US and South Vietnam accused Cambodia of catering to the communist Vietnamese with the provision of sanctuary inside Cambodian. The destruction of the US Embassy in Phnom Penh made relations with the US much worse. Cambodia grew weaker as it lost the support of the free world, and the communist bloc did not provide any substantive support to ease the economic hardship. There were a lot of

persecutions in Prince Sihanouk's regime. Therefore, many people turned to the KR leaders such as Khieu Samphan, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim as the great leaders who could bring happiness. The KR movement gained in power. The rebellion and persecution in Samlot in Battambang Province allowed the KR to seize greater influence over the people and mobilize more forces. He argued that the March 1970 coup was the result of what he called suicidal policies of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. According to his research, the Lon Nol's group was not prepared to establish a republic in Cambodia. He further argued that the KR did not have strong military forces to support their power. The KR forces were strengthened by the appeal from Prince Sihanouk. In his opinion, the two million deaths during the KR regime came as a result of conflicts among the royal family members.

### **Dr. Ka Sunbaunat: Cambodian leading psychiatrist**



Dr. Kar Sunbaunat talks to participants

Dr. Ka talked about the mental effect of the KR regime on Cambodian people. He believes mental problems have a great impact on the development of Cambodia. A number of both natural and man-made disasters can strongly affect a human being. For example, the death of a family member, can have immense impact on one's feelings, and this trauma can seriously affect one's mental health. Trauma is a great calamity which can be beyond the ability of any human being to control. Many people incurred traumatic mental

and physical injuries as a result of the crimes committed during the KR period. The scenes of killing, shooting, torture, arrest and other persecutions are still in the minds of survivors, who sometimes dream about their experiences. Those who suffered trauma can become easily afraid of similar events or experiences which remind them of their past. Sometimes, they cry or have no confidence in themselves. Many people lost everything during the KR:— dear family members, property, and even their own identity. The situation, quite expectedly, leads to continued trauma and great depression. The trauma as it developed under the KR regime has negative implications on Cambodia up to today. Some people who used to be gentle, have developed bad tempers and a sense of revenge. After 1979, people could kill each other easily with little reasoning. People will likely spend many years in healing and finding a way to conform to society after the KR regime. People who have trauma or depression, as one would expect, can become violently angry with minor things. This

attitude is a great cause for domestic violence within families. Trauma and depression can also be transmitted to the children. According to his research, negative attitudes and violence among youth can be partly attributed to the KR regime. To deal with this problem, people must learn to temper their violent attitudes.

Question 1: You mentioned that the KR regime was the result of conflict among the royal families. Why did they kill their own people?

Prof. Ros Chantrabot: This is a good question. I also have had doubts on this myself. I believe that the conflict between members of the royal families is one reason. The second reason is the personal ideas of the KR leaders. The third reason is politics. The KR leaders were politically against the policies of Prince Sihanouk. However, they did not have legal authority or enough forces to oppose the Prince. Therefore, they sought assistance from the communist movement in Vietnam. As they entered into a relationship with the communist groups in Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union, they began to assume the ideology into their leadership. When they succeeded and took over the country, they did not have enough forces to lead the country. Therefore, they evacuated all people to the countryside and began the policy of killing.

Question 2: If the KR was created by Prince Sihanouk, how did they gain power?

Prof. Ros Chantrabot: The KR movement came from the Viet Minh, which created regional forces in each country in the Indochinese Federation. Later, the KR mobilized more forces throughout the country. However, their forces were eradicated by Sihanouk's regime. In or around 1967 and 1968, the Prince ceased supporting communist Vietnam and turned toward the US. After the coup, the KR forces gained in power with the support from the United Front with Prince Sihanouk as Head. But the KR converted the front forces into their communist forces. They became stronger and could defeat the Khmer Republic. In summary, history shows that a large portion of the KR's power came from the Prince.

### **Afternoon Session**

Most police officers had a collective lunch in the PAC's cafeteria and returned to the conference room on time. While some stayed outside to have a chat with friends, others entered the room and listened to various Khmer Rouge song collections such as the national anthem of Democratic Kampuchea (DK). Then, Mr. Ly proceeded to brief the trainees about the Teacher's Guidebook, after each received a copy. The guidebook, with dozens of teaching methods, is used by teachers and university lecturers as a foundation to teach students about the DK history.

The last half-day session of the workshop started with Mr. Ly summarizing the three guest speakers' presentation and analysis in the morning session. Afterwards, Mr. Ly began introducing the afternoon session with discussion on a variety of topics on DK history, film screenings, and survivors' accounts.

Mr. Dy Khamboly made short remarks before leading to his presentation. He reemphasized the questions that were discussed in the morning about the root causes of the KR movement. He acknowledged they are common questions. The KR movement originated from Issarak (free Khmer). The leaders were Son Ngoc Minh and a few others. However, after the independence, Son Ngoc Minh fled to Vietnam, and the new generation of the movement included Pol Pot, Nuon Chea, Khieu samphan, Ieng Sary, Son Sen. They were more favorable toward China than Vietnam. The term "Khmer Rouge" ["KR"] emerged in late 1962; however, these leaders never called themselves "KR". The KR exploited them Prince Norodom Sihanouk's popularity to gain support from the Cambodian people. They believed that the popular support added more strength to the KR movement, which was contrary to the people's desire to bring back the prince to govern Cambodia. Nevertheless, the KR claimed that the April 17, 1975 victory came from their own forces, rather than as a result of assistance they received from others. They were proud of their victory because they believed they could defeat the US.



A participant is reading DK History Textbook

Mr. Dy went ahead with his slide presentation by concentrating on the KR ideology. He raised two questions to alert attendees' attention: First, why did the KR kill Cambodian people? And second, what did they want to achieve? He stated that these questions required various interpretations and sources, and there are no clear answers. We should not place blame on anybody or any country. The leaders themselves committed the killings. In an interview with Pol Pot before he passed away,

Pol Pot claimed that he was a nationalist and wanted to eliminate corruption, feudalism, and capitalism. In order to liberate people from this exploitation and oppression, they needed to follow socialism. However, Mr. Dy believes that their ideology was radical and utopian. He compared the KR ideology with China's, especially with regard to the Four-Year Plan. China adopted a five-year plan to build their socialism; however, KR implemented what they termed to be their four-year

plan. The KR were obsessed with the slogan “super great leap forward.” They wanted peasants and farmers to be the masters of their destiny. However, could achieve it, and was this plan enough to build socialist country? Given the population and human resources, it was just wishful thinking that caused numerous human lives to be lost in a very tragic manner.

Mr. Dy argued that the KR adopted Marxist-Leninist ideology. In Russia, this ideology relied on workers, not peasants, because it was an industrialized country. However in China, since the majority of population was peasant, Mao modified the ideology to fit their context. Thus, the KR sided with China, which also allowed them to lessen the influence from the Vietnamese camp. At that time, Cambodia-Vietnamese relations deteriorated, and KR leaders even saw Vietnam and other foreign elements as their enemy. The KR leaders felt that Vietnamese, CIA, and KGB agents were everywhere in the country. As a result, purges were conducted in a systematic way. Those who fell prey to the policies included Nay Saran (a.k.a, Ya, Chan Chakrey) of Division 170 and Secretary of Eastern Zone, who was the second in command. The purges affected everybody across the country. The KR accused many people of having a Vietnamese brain within a Khmer body. In the Northwest Zone, Ros Nhim, Secretary of Northwest Zone, and his followers were also purged. Mr. Dy ended his presentation, opening for questions. For example, a participant asked about the opinion that: “Pol Pot was not bad. He had a higher education and saw injustice in society. He did not want foreigners to occupy the country.” The participant continued, “What do you think? If he wanted to build a socialist country, why did he kill people?” In his reply, Mr. Dy said many people frequently posed this question on whether the KR committed only bad things. What about canal or dams across the country? However, these infrastructures were the result of victims’ effort and labor, so was it acceptable for you all? The KR followed a communist ideology, but they did not know how to govern the country in the right direction. The regime was relatively young, inexperienced, and incapable. They were too soon to leap to socialism and did not acknowledge formal education. Mr. Dy’s presentation was followed by the film screenings.

## **Film Screening**

Four documentary films were carefully selected to show the participants about visual scenarios of the KR revolution, government, and its legacy. Before screening the films, DC-Cam Director Youk Chhang provided an introduction which detailed the background of the films. The first set of films was created by four Swedish delegates, who staunchly supported the KR regime. He said it was filmed in August 1978—only five months before the KR regime collapsed. These delegates were against US bombardment, thus the KR invited them to film. One of the delegates still believed that the KR regime was the solution to re-build the country, and another, a Swedish woman (Magarita), even married a KR cadre. Although he was later killed at S-21, her



Police officers and DC-Cam team in front of the conference room

son, age 29, still believes that the KR was the future of Cambodia, however, Magarita did not want to talk about the regime anymore. Only one of the diplomats, Gunnar Bergstrom, age 28 (at the time he visited the KR regime), travelled throughout Cambodia to seek apologies from the Cambodian people.

The second film was produced by the Vietnamese in 1975. Vietnam was the first delegation to collaborate with the KR after the KR's victory on April 17, 1975. They negotiated with the KR, as well as fought with them. Le Yun, first secretary of Vietnamese Communist Party, led a Vietnamese delegation to Cambodia on July 27, 1975. The Cambodian people and combatants warmly greeted the delegates. At that time, both countries emerged from French occupation, and they were proud of their victory over the US. Over seven million people addressed the problem themselves. They were close to each other like "tongue" and "teeth." They exchanged gifts, and the delegates were entertained with traditional dances. A Vietnamese song was sung and presented by the Cambodian singers and dancers.

The third and fourth films depicted the prison of Tuol Sleng and the severity of crimes committed within the prison walls. DC-Cam Director Youk Chhang told the participants about how the prison was found. On 10 January 1979, Vietnamese journalists located S-21 by following the odor decaying human bodies which emanated from the prison. This film reveals that Son Sen and Duch were the leaders and most responsible for this prison. Three minutes later, a film about "Cambodian Children" was shown, depicting how their lives suffered under the regime and in the post-conflict period just after the regime's fall. It drew a comparison between the luxurious life in Western counties with the famine, disease, and poverty of Cambodian children.

The participants attentively watched the film and enjoyed it, although this reminded them of this period. They talked to each other and recalled their personal experiences. Some felt skeptical about the film's images. In one of the films, the people appeared to be happy and enjoy themselves; however, it appeared that these were either very old people or KR cadre. For example, Gunnar Bergstrom also talked to a few people who were evacuated from Phnom Penh—one of them was an old man wearing sunglasses. They communicated in French with the visiting Swedish delegation. It was hard for the delegation to believe that the KR regime was brutal given the numerous demonstrations of societal harmony and achievement. Achievements such as the building of dams, irrigation systems, and the favorable atmosphere seen during the collective meals and labor periods convinced the Swedish delegation that this was an ideal system of government. The Swedish films showed people who smiled and worked hard amidst attractive natural scenery and peaceful living. Unsurprisingly, there was much speculation about the KR regime.



Mr. Ly Sok-Kheang introduces Mr. Him Huy (right) and Mr. Norng Chan Phal (middle) to the participants

Mr. Him Huy, a former KR cadre at S-21, narrated his experience since he joined the revolution in early 1973. At that time he was 17 years old, and he was sent to work with division 703. After his unit fought their way into Phnom Penh, he was assigned to work in many different areas. Some combatants of Division 703 were sent to work at S-21, and Hor, deputy chief of S-21, dispatched

him to S-21. During his work, he said he remained vigilant against his arrest along with his

comrades. Later he was sent to work in the rice field at Prey Sa prison. When the Cambodian and Vietnamese forces arrived, he joined the KR columns. However, he and other comrades decided to defect to the retreating KR forces. He safely returned to his home village only to find that one of his brothers was killed.

Mr. Norng Chan Phal, who was a child at S-21, briefed his experience and background. His father was a cadre working in a workshop. He does not remember the year when his father was sent to S-21. He just remembers that after he received a letter, he came along with the KR cadres. His family traveled on road number 4 from Kampong Speu province to Tuol Sleng prison or Office S-21. In that prison, he recalled that he heard a female voice ordering his mother to get out of the car and walk toward the prison. He was separated from his mother; however, he saw her

standing and watching at a window. He missed her constantly, and he always ran to the place where he could view her. Mr. Chan Phal said her presence at the window made him relieved. Nevertheless, he was only able to see her two or three times. While weeping openly, Mr. Chan Phal said he kept looking at the window in case he could see her again, but always he was unsuccessful. When the KR cadres at the prison fled the prison, in anticipation of the Vietnamese forces, he ran to the window, and looked for her in Building C and three other buildings. He was one of the other four children who survived S-21 soon after January 1979.

Prof. Siv Thuon stressed that it was important for the participants to have a good understanding on the term "genocide" and a few other related terms. In doing so, they will be able to grasp the context and history of DK better. He started with the term KR because he felt that people use the word often but rarely understand what it means or its origins. The term was coined by the then Prince Sihanouk and was used in the 1960s. Then, he explained the term "genocide" through Khmer literature. Most participants listened attentively to his explanation and took notes.

## Conclusion

It is clear that training national police officers about genocide education is as important as training history teachers given their role as survivors and protectors. The training ended with fruitful results and the trainees lively interacted with guest speakers and trainers. They posed some questions related to the ECCC and Democratic Kampuchea history. The trainees, especially Prof. Khim Sovannavuth, verbally requested that the DK history training be organized for history teachers at PAC once a year. It is expected to strengthen police officers' capacity in history and legal backgrounds. These are inextricably linked.



A participant is looking at book on Case 002

Despite its success, some areas should be improved for next training. Speakers with investigation background should be invited to share knowledge with trainees and stronger means of evaluation should be conducted to make it more productive.



## **Expectation from the Training**

It is expected that the three hundred police officers at the Police Academy of Cambodia will be able to increase their knowledge and gain new insights into the DK history along with a review of different ideas for questioning facts and evidence, as presented by national and international guest speakers. For example, International Co-Prosecutor Andrew Cayley of ECCC shared his personal experience with the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He recalled how he was dispatched to investigate crimes of mass atrocities in several countries such as the former Yugoslavia, Sudan, and Bosnia. He showed how he relies on a repertoire of tools, ranging from imagery, physical, and documentary evidence, to charge the perpetrators of mass atrocities. He stressed the significant role of police officers in constructing legal cases, and he stressed the fact that most evidence from the mass graves came as a result of police work, which included photos and in-depth investigations. He believed that the police could derive some important lessons from the process of investigating international crimes for their own work in bringing criminals to justice and helping victims..

One day prior to the training, three-star general H.E. Poly Da, Deputy Director of the Police Academy of Cambodia, expressed his warm welcome to Mr. Ly Sok-Kheang and was thankful to DC-Cam for organizing such an important workshop for national police officers and students. After hearing that only Prof. Khim Sovannavuth, Head of Foundation Year Department of PAC, had the chance to participate in the first university lecturer training, which was held on July 25-27, 2011, H.E. Poly Da asked Mr. Ly whether DC-Cam planned to hold additional training. He stated that he would like more PAC's officers to be invited to this university training, for the purpose of expanding their knowledge on DK history. In addition, in the middle of the training, Prof. Khim expressed his satisfaction with the well-organized and constructive progress of the Genocide Education Project in relation to training PAC officers. He proposed that PAC's lecturers should also receive training on this history. He stated that this training would have a long-term impact on the education of all police officers as they move through the ranks and their education at the PAC.

## **Challenges and Solutions**

One of the challenging tasks for the one-day workshop was related to time management. The number of guest speakers and film screenings posed a considerable challenge to maintaining the schedule. Each guest speaker had to reduce their allotted time in order to make room for others' respective time on the agenda.

The morning session seemed to go smoothly, and it was successful in capturing the participants' attention, however, only a few questions were allowed by the participants in light of time. The afternoon session presented the most difficulty as

there were four guest speakers and four film screenings. Thus, the schedule appeared rushed.

Nevertheless, while time was a constant issue, the participants were absorbed in the film presentation by DC-Cam Director and they were very interested in the content of the films.

Two important guests—Mr. Him Huy and Mr. Norng Chan Phal—had a very limited time slot to narrate their personal stories during the KR regime. No questions were posed to them as a result. Instead, Mr. Ly asked Prof. Siv Thuon to make a very brief presentation.



Bunches of mango near the conference room

In the future, it is highly recommended that each guest speaker adhere to their allotted time and maintain an appropriate time for questions. Overall, despite the fact that the training was conducted in one day, the participants appeared to understand and appreciate the training.

In conclusion, Mr. Ly thanked the Police Academy of Cambodia and other relevant individuals for helping with this training. He encouraged all the trainees to do more research and use their

knowledge to apply in their law enforcement duties, especially with respect to their ability to protect the public and prevent violence. As guardians of the public, they hold a unique role in being able to prevent genocide in the future by upholding the rule of law and dignity and rights of all human beings. Prof. Khim Sotheavuth concluded the ceremony and thanked to DC-Cam for organizing this important training for the police officers.

### **Feedback from International Consultant (non-attendee)** ***Based on review of draft report***

It would be useful to have drawn a parallel between the role of teachers in Cambodian society and the role of police. They both have different roles that complement peace-building and reconciliation.

The introduction could have begun with an overview of what teachers do for Cambodia. Teachers are essential to the Genocide Education Project because they are ideally situated to encourage positive values and an enthusiasm for discussion and inquiry into not only the past but also possibilities for the future, all of which are

qualities of a culture of democracy. Police are essential to the Genocide Education Project because they are ideally situated to mediate community discord and build relations between the government and the people.

Ideally, the Genocide Education Project will facilitate a discussion on the role of police in society and how they are crucial actors in determining not only Cambodian peace but a stable society that is legitimate in the eyes of its people. All of these qualities can be drawn out in discussions when reviewing what it meant to be a 'Police State' or a society that lived in constant fear of security forces during the DK regime. DK history becomes a launching pad into discussions that would imply—if not directly dig into—perspectives on the role of police, the importance of the rule of law, and the relationship between police and the people.

Because the audience were police, the training should focus more specifically on the values and issues that directly impact their role as peacekeepers and mediators between the government and the people. Additionally, there should be devoted attention to the difference between a 'rule by law' and a 'rule of law,' and how a 'rule by law' was a precondition to (and quality of) the DK regime.

A positive observation and comment: Mr. Cayley's presentation appears to be excellent as it directly related to the role of police in a post-conflict society. It also allowed the police to relate to police in other countries. If time permitted, the police could have been asked to comment on more specific examples of legitimate and illegitimate police behavior. For instance, when is violence lawful? Should police commit violence that they know is wrong?

In the section titled, "Expectation of the Training," the report states,

It is expected that the three hundred police officers at the Police Academy of Cambodia will be able to increase their knowledge and gain new insights into the DK history along with a review of different ideas for questioning facts and evidence, as presented by national and international guest speakers.

This should be rephrased. The increase of knowledge is merely a stepping-stone to greater levels of engagement, which challenge the police to consider the future of Cambodia and their role in securing this future. The expectation should be to use history as a gateway to discussions on humanity from inhumanity, right from wrong, and the need for peace. By using historical narratives and victim/ perpetrator stories, the presenters will be able to lead the police toward more controversial discussions on the relationship between police and human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

The ultimate goal of these discussions is to challenge the police to consider their role in society and their relationship to the people. It would be extremely difficult to

solicit candid discussions on such controversial topics if this training was categorized under “human rights” or “rule-of-law” training. This is why teaching the history of DK is so valuable to national reconciliation, peace-building, and the development of a culture of democracy in Cambodia. It is launching pad to more candid inquiry into subjects that would be deemed controversial today.

Below are three specific suggestions for the next training:

This appeared to be excellent training and an outstanding opportunity. I wonder if mixing National/Regional trainers with the Police might have added to their 'training.' Perhaps, in the future, some teachers could be invited to participate in the training and mixed in with the Police during a discussion group session.

I am sure the information was extremely appreciated and valuable, but I think more time for discussion and questions is critical.

I would recommend more stories, and particularly stories that raise ethical problems that the Police would be required to discuss, and which they could relate to. One can couch controversial discussions on the difficult role of security forces in stories of victims and perpetrators who face ethical dilemmas. For example, should a police officer be held accountable for committing a crime he knows is wrong? What is the role of a police officer in his community that is torn by violence on all sides? Nazi Germany has many stories that would be appropriate and could generate discussion. It also would allow more candid discussions since they would be looking at a foreign police force.

Again, I think this was excellent training, and I think the Police are critical stakeholders to the Genocide Education Project.  
Christopher Dearing, Esq.

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