



គំរោងយុត្តិធម៌នៃកម្ពុជា
Cambodia Justice Initiative

**NGOs Joint Press Release
On the Initial Hearing of Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch**

Phnom Penh, 17 February 2009

The people of Cambodia have been waiting 30 years for justice for the crimes committed in their country between 17th April 1975 and 6th January 1979. Today’s initial hearing in the case against Kaing Guek Eav, alias Duch, opens the way for the first historic trial of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

The beginning of this long awaited trial carries the possibility that the ECCC can finally demonstrate to the Cambodian public elements of a transparent and fair judicial process that meets international standards of justice and the needs of the Cambodian people.

The undersigned members of civil society working to support the work of the ECCC in outreach, victims’ participation, and legal aid to civil parties, welcome this historic first step. We commit to continue our work to support the victims of the Khmer Rouge regime and the goals of the ECCC, and take this opportunity to make the following appeal to the judges and leadership the ECCC, and its relevant stakeholders:

1. We appeal to the judges of the Trial Chamber to take a progressive approach to the release of information relating to Duch’s trial in order to ensure that the people of Cambodia can fully engage and understand the proceedings, and gain a greater insight into the history of the Democratic Kampuchea, and the role of S-21 during the regime.
2. We appeal to the judges of the Trial Chamber to give full consideration to the needs and important role of the civil parties to the trial, and to allow them the opportunity to fully participate in the proceedings.
3. We appeal to the ECCC to work harder to support victim and civil party participation in the trials by providing meaningful assistance that allows them to access the court, legal advice and representation.
4. We appeal to the co-investigating judges to accelerate the investigation of case 002 to help ensure that the aging of witnesses and the accused does not prevent a trial from going forward. We also appeal to the co-investigating judges to provide the public with more substantial information on progress and developments in the

investigation so as to enhance public understanding and confidence in the process.

5. We appeal to the Pre-Trial Chamber to prioritize the resolution of the disagreement between the co-prosecutors over the investigation of additional suspects given that a primary goal of the chamber is to act as a mechanism to resolve disputes, and prevent delays in the progress of the court. We urge the chamber to reach its decision independently and without heed to external political pressure.
6. We appeal to national and international partners of the ECCC, the donors and the judges to put an end to the unresolved taint of corruption at the ECCC by establishing a credible and independent system to effectively address current complaints and prevent and resolve future allegations of wrongdoing.
7. We appeal to donors to provide adequate and secure funding to the ECCC which is accompanied by strong management and administrative conditions that ensure higher standards of integrity and efficiency of operations.

Civil society leaders will attend the Initial Hearing on 17 February and will be available for comments during the lunch break at ECCC Premise.

N°	Name	Position/Organization	Mobile
1	Mr. SOK Sam Oeun	Executive Director of the Cambodian Defenders Project (CDP) and Chairman of the Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC)	012 901 199
2	Mr. THUN Saray	President of the Cambodian Human Rights & Development Association (ADHOC)	016 880 509
3	Mr. HANG Chhaya	Executive Director of the Khmer Institute of Democracy (KID)	012 865 910
4	Ms. SENG Theary	Executive Director of the Center for Social Development (CSD)	012 222 552
5	Mr. LONG Panhavuth	Program Coordinator of the Cambodia Justice Initiative (CJI)	012 843 647
6	Mrs. PEUNG Yok Hiep	Executive Director of the Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC)	012 823 745