

**ECCC Call for Contribution of Ideas for Victim-Related Initiatives—Memorial in Phnom Penh with Names of Victims Deceased from the Khmer Rouge Genocide**

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1. **Idea:** a memorial—e.g. monolith, wall (but maybe not a religious structure<sup>1</sup>)—with the names of victims<sup>2</sup> who passed away from the Khmer Rouge Genocide
  
2. **Rationale/Meaningfulness:**
  - a. Khmer Rouge victims already suffered greatly before perishing. Being forgotten from history—or only being remembered as a statistic (i.e. the total number of people who died)—is a further indignity that can be avoided.
  - b. Khmer Rouge ideology was that everyone should be the same—classless in society but all equally poor and uneducated. They valued human life so little that it was not difficult for them to murder anyone, including babies and children. All of this led to the loss of victims’ individual uniqueness. This memorial is a way to preserve these victims in history and at least restore their individuality through one of the most basic identifying characteristics—their names.
  - c. Many of my Khmer wife’s younger relatives—our nephews/nieces and even some younger cousins—do not even know that some of their own ancestors were victims of the Khmer Rouge. Memories and knowledge about such victims will probably die with the generations born before and shortly after the genocide.
  - d. A free, public memorial is the best way to present victims’ names since the average person is not likely to seek this information on their own.
  
3. **Victims to be Included:**
  - a. **When Passed Away:**
    - i. From Khmer Rouge actions during Apr. 17/75 to Jan. 7/79
    - ii. Shortly after Khmer Rouge rule as a direct result of conditions during such rule (e.g. injuries, overwork, malnutrition)
  - b. **Where Passed Away:** only where the ECCC has conclusively determined that such crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, etc. occurred. Since the ECCC is implementing these victim-related initiatives, this memorial should respect the rule of law by being consistent with the Court’s judgments.
    - i. For example, in Case 002/01, the Supreme Court Chamber only went so far as to say that the crime against humanity of murder had *likely* been committed against 250+ LON Nol soldiers and officials at Tuol Po Chrey at the end of April 1975, so these soldiers/officials murdered at this location would not be considered “victims” for purposes of this memorial.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/7days/memorial-plan-prompts-debate-about-victims-and-perpetrators-genocide>.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. <https://www.vvmf.org/About-The-Wall/>; <https://www.911memorial.org/visit/memorial/names-911-memorial/>; <https://rivcoda.org/victim-services/victims-memorial-wall>.

#### 4. **Possible Sources of Victims' Names:**

- a. Khmer Rouge records e.g. Tuol Sleng (S-21), the Santebal collection<sup>3</sup>
- b. ECCC records
- c. Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)
- d. General public (the most important):
  - i. Disseminate a call for names however possible e.g. posts on Facebook and government websites, TV and radio ads, announcements by Cambodian embassies, local visits by commune/sangkat/village/etc. authorities.
  - ii. Give a period of up to 6 months for the general public to submit names of relatives who were victims.
  - iii. Create a website and a staffed call center for receiving names.
  - iv. One big issue will be verifying the authenticity of submitted victim information. Quality control measures could include:
    1. Requiring multiple submitters for each victim name for more corroboration.
    2. Requiring submitters to provide personal information e.g. Khmer ID card number.
    3. Setting and informing submitters of a penalty for submitting false information.

#### 5. **Construction of the Memorial:**

- a. **Builder:** Commissioning appropriately-skilled genocide survivors—or living descendants of victims—would also help honor the victims.
- b. **Location:** Phnom Penh—but not at Tuol Sleng (S-21), Choeung Ek (Killing Fields), or other specific genocide sites since this memorial is for genocide victims across all of Cambodia.
- c. If victims' names are arranged alphabetically (Khmer alphabet), they will be easier to locate.
- d. To make it easier to update the memorial later with more names, each name can be engraved on its own movable piece so all the names can be rearranged easily (though this may be impractical due to the large number of victims). The pieces can be affixed semi-permanently—e.g. by detachable screws/pegs/etc. from behind or covered with a transparent layer of plastic/glass/etc. in the front.
- e. It may be difficult to get/know and add victims' identifying personal information other than name—e.g. place of birth/death, age—but maybe a small space can be left beside each name for a photo if available (e.g. Tuol Sleng victims).
- f. Victims' names can be grouped if enough information is known about their place of death. Group labelling could also help with more controversial groups e.g. Khmer Rouge cadres killed during internal purges.<sup>4</sup>
- g. Since it is impossible to know the names of all of the victims, there should be one prominent space for “The Unknown Victim”—similar to memorials to “The Unknown Soldier”.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://gsp.yale.edu/read-instructions-tuol-sleng-image-database>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/7days/memorial-plan-prompts-debate-about-victims-and-perpetrators-genocide>.