

FATHER FRANÇOIS PONCHAUD

No. 57 Street 101

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Phnom Penh, 4 December 2009

Your Honour,

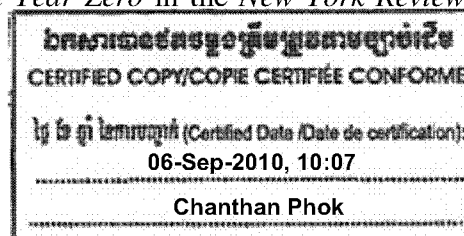
Subject: Documents mentioned in our interview of 13 February 2009

Please find herewith the documents I promised to send to you during our 13 February 2009 interview at the Extraordinary Chambers, and an article that is likely to be of interest to you:

- a. Copy of the article published in *Le Monde* on three days from 16 to 18 February 1976;
- b. Letter dated 9 June 1978 addressed to Robert Silvers, relating to the controversy between Steve Heder, Noam Chomsky and myself on the interpretation of Khmer Rouge vocabulary;
- c. French translation or summary of 94 written testimonies totaling more than 300 pages of manuscripts (folder 1);
- d. French translation or summary of about a hundred interviews of refugees conducted in Paris or in Thailand (folder 2);
- e. Article dated 25 January 1979, titled “*Kampuchéa, une économie révolutionnaire*” [Kampuchea: A Revolutionary Economy] by François Ponchaud.

Regarding the 9 June 1978 letter addressed to Robert Silvers (b), the latter had published a laudable review of the book *Cambodia Year Zero* in the *New York Review of Books*.

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That review was vehemently challenged by Noam Chomsky. The purpose of my letter was to give Mr Silvers arguments to enable him to respond to Chomsky.

I wish to make some clarifications on how I obtained the testimonies (c) and interviews (d):

### **The 94 testimonies (c)**

Some of the testimonies were given orally to me in France or in refugee camps in Thailand between 1975 and 1976. Others were given in writing after Father Venet, who was present in the camps, asked some refugees to write down their experiences in Democratic Kampuchea. I translated those writings and then went to the camps to crosscheck the testimonies in July 1976. A large majority of those testimonies were given in Khmer, except for some that were given in French. The sole objective of taking the testimonies was to better acquaint myself with the situation in Democratic Kampuchea, so as to acquaint the French public with them through the publications of *Echanges France-Asie* (*Services de Documentation des Missions Etrangères*) [France-Asia Dialogue (Documentation Services of Foreign Missions)]. The testimonies can therefore be considered as the fruit of serious but non-scientific research. The documents were some of the sources of *Cambodia Year Zero*. In this regard, I refer you to footnote number 2 in *Cambodia Year Zero* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Kailash): “I have made use of the accounts of ninety-four Khmer refugees, seventy-seven in Thailand and seventeen in Vietnam [sent by the Sisters of Providence, several of whom are Vietnamese nuns who went to Vietnam in June 1975]. Thirty-two wrote their stories in Khmer. The authors of this body of testimony were five women and eighty-nine men, including ten students, eight officers, seven ordinary soldiers, five civil servants, four primary school teachers, four Khmer Rouges, three bonzes, three pharmacists, three non-commissioned officers, two doctors, two fishermen, two secondary school teachers, two office employees, two mechanics, one policeman, one customs officer, one provincial guard, one court clerk, one prince, one truck-driver, one warehouseman, one shopkeeper, etc.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ECCC Translator’s Note: This quotation is Footnote 3 in Nancy Amphour’s English translation, whereas in the original French, it is indeed Footnote 2, as the author rightly points out.

**The other interviews of refugees (d)**

The same method was used and the objective was the same for the interviews of refugees conducted after the publication of *Cambodia Year Zero*.

In both cases, that is (c) and (d), the recordings that had been done were destroyed. I am, unfortunately, not in a position to give you the original Khmer versions before the end of next year. I have to search for them in the archives I left at the *Missions Etrangères de Paris* [Paris Foreign Missions].

I understand that those documents are likely to be placed on the court record and, therefore, to be used for judicial purposes. Please kindly return the originals to me as soon as you shall have made a copy of them.

Best regards,

[signed]

François Ponchaud