



អង្គជំនុំជម្រះវិសាមញ្ញក្នុងតុលាការកម្ពុជា
 Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
 Chambres extraordinaires au sein des tribunaux cambodgiens

ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ

Kingdom of Cambodia
 Nation Religion King
 Royaume du Cambodge
 Nation Religion Roi

17 February 2009

Press Release

First ECCC Trial On Crimes of 1970s Khmer Rouge Regime Officially Opens

Court begins hearing in relation to security centre chief Kaing Geuk Eav alias “Duch”

Phnom Penh (ECCC) – Efforts at bringing justice and accountability for crimes committed during the Khmer Rouge regime of 1975-1979 took a major step forward today, with the start of the initial hearing in the first case of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

The ECCC – a United Nations-backed, independent hybrid tribunal – today began proceedings in the trial of Kaing Guek Eav, also known by the alias “Duch.” Kaing Guek Eav faces charges of crimes against humanity and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, in addition to the offences of homicide and torture under Cambodian criminal law.

Following judicial investigations, on 8 August last year, the ECCC’s Office of the Co-Investigating Judges issued an indictment against the accused in relation to alleged offences committed in S-21, a security centre also known as Toul Sleng, between 1975 and 1979. Following resolution of an appeal against the indictment, the ECCC’s Pre-Trial Chamber remitted the case for trial on 5 December 2008.

“The Cambodian people have waited 30 years for this day, to find justice for the suffering in which over a third of the population perished,” said His Excellency, Mr. Tony Kranh, the ECCC’s acting Director of Administration.

“This is an historic moment and an important step towards bringing about accountability for crimes and providing justice for the accused and victims of atrocities committed during the Democratic Kampuchea regime in the late 70s,” said Mr. Knut Rosandhaug, the Deputy Director of the ECCC, and Coordinator of the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials (UNAKRT), the UN body with the mandate of supporting the ECCC.

The initial hearing signals the formal commencement of Kaing Guek Eav’s trial, which will be followed – at a date yet to be fixed – by a hearing on the substance of the allegations made against him. The initial hearing will continue on any days required following Tuesday’s start.

At today’s hearing, the court considered applications for the admission of civil parties and protective measures sought by these parties, as well as preliminary legal and procedural issues that might have an impact on the conduct of the trial on the substance of the allegations.

It also finalized the scheduling of witnesses and experts to be heard at the trial. Neither the accused nor any witnesses, experts and civil parties spoke at the initial hearing on any matters of substance. On the basis of information received at the initial hearing, the court’s President, in consultation with the other members of the Trial Chamber, will shortly fix the date of the commencement of the substantive hearing. This is expected to occur soon.

The substantive hearing will consider the evidence contained in the case file. The accused, witnesses, experts and the civil parties may testify or make statements orally during this part of the trial.

Under a 2003 agreement between the United Nations and Cambodia, the ECCC was set up as an independent court. It is staffed by a mixture of Cambodian and international staff and judges and is mandated to try senior leaders and those deemed most responsible for serious violations of Cambodian and international law committed during the Khmer Rouge rule from 17 April 1975 to 6 January 1979.

For more information online: www.eccc.gov.kh and www.unakrt-online.org

For further information, please contact:

Dr Helen Jarvis
Chief of Public Affairs, ECCC
Mobile: +855-12 488 134
Fax: +855-23 219 841
Email: helen.jarvis@eccc.gov.kh

Reach Sambath
Public Affairs Officer, ECCC
Mobile: +855-12 488 156
Fax: +855-23 219 841
Email: reach.sambath@eccc.gov.kh

Ari Gaitanis
Public Information Officer, UNAKRT
Mobile: +855-12 488 421
Email: gaitanis@un.org