



PRESS RELEASE  
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## **ASRIC SURVIVORS RESPOND Final Verdict in Case Against Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea**

On August 7, 2014, the Trial Chamber of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) announced that its judgment in Case 002/01 against Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea. As high ranking Khmer Rouge leaders, both were found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to life imprisonment.

This case involving Samphan and Chea originally began in November 2011; closing statements for the case took place in October 2013. At stake in this case is a consideration of charges that involve the following: crimes against humanity (specifically with regard to the April 1975 forced relocation of those living in Phnom Penh and later forced removals from other regions) and the execution of Khmer Republic soldiers at Tuol Po Chrey (Pursat Province). Between 2011 and 2013, the court heard evidence about the historical background and establishment of Democratic Kampuchea (as a government). It also considered evidence related to the specific roles held by the defendants. This evidence, according to the ECCC, will provide a subsequent case involving the accused (Case 002/02). This is scheduled to take place soon after the August Ruling. The remaining charges against these defendants – including forced labor, forced marriage, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide – will be heard in the next trial, slated to begin in the fall of 2014.

Applied Social Research Institute of Cambodia (ASRIC) submitted the largest collection of victim applications for members of the Cambodian diaspora living in the United States, and works with the legal organization, Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA), to provide outreach to victims residing in the U.S. diaspora on matters before the ECCC. **Responding to the verdict, Executive director Dr. Leakhena Nou echoes criticisms of the court held by survivors in the diaspora. According to Nou, tribunal delays, allegations of corruption, and reports of mismanagement have contributed to an overriding sense that justice has not fully been served; as she notes, “survivors have understandably become impatient. While encouraging and symbolic, to quantify the verdict as an absolute success for Cambodians ignores the fact that senses of justice vary greatly among survivors.”** As ASRIC civil party Mr. Somrith Som reminds, “delays allowed the accused to live free for a long time without punishment”; similarly, Mrs. Bay, who is the only US Cambodian from the

US diaspora who testified in this case, stressed that she and others “waited a long time for the verdict – as such, it is not complete justice.” Another survivor, Sophal Ear, restated this disappointment, stressing that “I am basically writing off the tribunal in my mind.” Last, but certainly not least, Mrs. Sarem Neou both reiterated and expanded what others have noted is a failure of the tribunal; highlighting that the ruling is significant, Mrs. Neou averred that this “represents one form of justice that does not take into account the amount of time we have waited for it.”

For more information, please contact Dr. Leakhena Nou.

**About ASRIC:**

Founded by medical sociologist Dr. Leakhena Nou, the Applied Social Research Institute of Cambodia (ASRIC) is the only not-for-profit organization of its kind devoted to restoring, distributing, and implementing procedural justice for Cambodian American victims and survivors of the Khmer Rouge. An entirely volunteer-drive enterprise, the organization has grown considerably since it began under the auspices of New York University’s Asian/Pacific/American Institute. It remains the leading independent organization dedicated to giving voice to Cambodian genocide survivors.