

The Khmer Rouge trials and assistance from the Government of Japan

March 14th, 2013

Embassy of Japan in Cambodia

1. Khmer Rouge trials

The Khmer Rouge regime committed massacres presumably of one million to two million people during its ruling in the latter part of 1970s, which is considered to be one of the most serious crimes against humanity in the 20th Century. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) were established in cooperation with the United Nations in order to judge senior leaders of the KR regime and those who were the most responsible for crimes by KR regime in violation of Cambodian penal code, the Convention on the prevention and punishment of the Crime of Genocide and humanity and so on.

2. Progress of judicial process

- 1) ECCC officially launched the judicial work in July 2006. As the first case, the Trial Chamber of the ECCC conducted trial hearing of Kaing Guek Eav (alias Duch), former Chairman of Phnom Penh's security prison S-21, Tuol Sleng interrogation center, in 2009, and sentenced him to 35 years in prison on 26 July, 2010. On February 3rd, 2012, the Supreme Court Chamber issued its final judgment, upholding Duch's conviction and sentencing him to life imprisonment.



(Duch sentenced to life imprisonment
Source: ECCC)

- 2) The second case that commenced in June 2011 judges the top leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime, namely Nuon Chea (former Deputy Secretary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and chairman of the Democratic Kampuchea People's Assembly), Khieu Samphan (former Head of State), Ieng Sary (former Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs, deceased on March 14th) and Ieng Thirith, former Minister of Social Affairs (later found unfit to stand trial due to dementia).



(Opening of Case 002
Source: ECCC)

The Case 002, that is considered to be the most important case, continues to date.

- 3) It is important to proceed with the tribunal in a fair, efficient, and expeditious manner, given the advanced age and frail health of the persons charged and the long overdue justice for the people of Cambodia.

3. Japan's Contribution

- 1) The Government of Japan attaches importance to the Khmer Rouge Tribunal from three viewpoints. Firstly, the Khmer Rouge trials are the completing stage of the Cambodian peace process in order to prevent the recurrence of atrocities committed during the Khmer Rouge regime. Secondly, the Tribunal will help deliver justice to the victims of the Khmer Rouge. Thirdly, the Tribunal will contribute to the strengthening of the rule of law in Cambodia.
- 2) The Government of Japan has been assisting the ECCC since the very beginning. Japan contributed to establishment of the ECCC by sponsoring 2(two) United Nations General Assembly resolutions regarding the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in December 2002 and May 2003. Japan attaches importance to contribution of human resources and there have been four Japanese judicial and administrative staff at the ECCC, namely Mr. Motoo Noguchi, international judge of the Supreme Court Chamber (retired in July 2012), Mr. Hiroto Fujiwara, Team Leader of Analysts Unit of the office of Co-Investigating Judges, Ms. Yuko Maeda, Public Affairs Officer, and Ms. Hiroko Fujii, Associate Information Management Officer. As financial assistance, Japan has provided about US\$79.13 million dollars (as of January, 2013), approximately 44% of total amount of international assistance. Moreover Japan, along with France, has actively followed the proceedings of the ECCC as co-chair of the Friends of the ECCC.

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