

# EXTRAORDINARY CHAMBERS IN THE COURTS OF CAMBODIA

## About

The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) was established in 2001 in response to the allegations of atrocity crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979. The Cambodian government sought the assistance of the United Nations to bring perpetrators to justice, thus forming a hybrid tribunal that utilized both domestic and international law. The tribunal operates in Cambodia, though independently of both the Cambodian government and the United Nations. A domestic court with Cambodian legal proceedings, the ECCC is comprised of both Cambodian and international lawyers and judges who work to enforce domestic and international laws.

The ECCC's jurisdiction is limited to Cambodian atrocity crimes committed between April 17, 1975 and January 6, 1979. The court agreed to try senior leaders of the Democratic Kampuchea and "those believed to be most responsible for grave violations of national and international law." Under Cambodian law, the ECCC jurisdiction includes cases of murder, torture, and religious persecution. Jurisdiction under international law extends to crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva conventions, destruction of cultural property, and crimes against internationally-protected persons.

## Cases



The first investigation began in 2007 and five individuals have been accused:

The first case completed at the ECCC was that of **Kaing Guek Eav**, known as "Comrade Duch" during his administration of the infamous Tuol Sleng prison and the Santebal, a special branch of internal security for the Khmer Rouge. He was indicted in July 2007 and went to trial in September 2009. The indictment contained multiple counts of violations of Cambodian law, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Kaing Guek Eav was convicted on all counts in July 2010 and sentenced to thirty-five years in prison.

**Nuon Chea** was Deputy Secretary to Pol Pot, and in charge of Phnom Penh's S-21 torture and interrogation center. He is the highest-ranking official of the Khmer Rouge to be tried and is alleged to have played a crucial role in the genocide during his tenure. He was indicted in September 2010 on multiple counts of violation of Cambodian law, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. Hearings began in June 2011.



Also indicted in September 2010 was **Ieng Sary**, the Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs for the Khmer Rouge. Ieng is alleged to have been involved with planning and executing the extermination plans of the government and is charged with multiple counts of violations of Cambodian law, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. The proceedings against Ieng Sary were terminated on March 14, 2013, following his death the same day.



**Khieu Samphan's** trial began in June 2011. Samphan was a high-ranking official and eventually succeeded Pol Pot as leader of the Khmer Rouge in 1987. Samphan was indicted in September 2010 on multiple counts of violation of Cambodian law, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. His trial continues today.



**Ieng Thirith**, the highest-ranking woman in the Khmer Rouge, was the Minister of Social Affairs. The wife of Ieng Sary and sister-in-law of Pol Pot, Ieng was indicted in 2010 on multiple counts of violation of Cambodian law, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. Ieng Thirith was found unfit to stand trial based on expert testimony that she suffers from dementia, likely Alzheimer's disease. She was released from detention on September 16, 2012. Victims' groups have protested the decision to release Ieng.

