



On the Record: Civil Society and the Tribunal in Cambodia

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Cambodian Civil Society Organizations

The final issue of the series profiles some of the key organizations that are working on justice and reconciliation in Cambodia and that served as key counterparts for Laura's study.

Since 1991 when the Paris Peace Agreements created a settlement in Cambodia, followed by UN-sponsored elections, Cambodian civil society has blossomed. Below is a listing of some of the organizations who have either been involved in the issues of truth, justice, and reconciliation after the Khmer Rouge, or who could be contacted for related information. The NGO Forum and the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) (listed below) both serve as central contact points for Cambodian and international NGOs. A short summary is included about some key organizations.

It is hoped that through connections made via the Internet, Cambodians will be able to contact others who can provide legal advice, experience with trials or truth commissions in other countries, and ideas and information. Much experience has been gained from other countries undergoing transitions to justice, such as Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Chile, Guatemala, and South Africa. These connections can vastly multiply the impact of this study, and we hope that anyone with ideas or information contact the Cambodian organizations directly. A discussion list is being organized and if you wish to participate, send an email to lamcgrew@igc.org.

From the AP Editorial Desk

Key Organizations Cooperating with the Study on Truth, Justice and Reconciliation for the Khmer Rouge (see descriptions below)

- The Center for Social Development
- The Cambodian Defenders Project
- The Cambodian Human Rights Task Force
- The Cambodian Documentation Center

Organizations in Cambodia who have been Active on the Issues of Justice and Reconciliation

For more information about the organizations below, contact them directly, look them up on the website for the NGO Forum, or request information from CCC.

Organizations who have Organized Events Directly Related to Justice/Reconciliation and the Khmer Rouge:

- The Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace
- The Cambodian Centre for Conflict Resolution
- The NGO Forum
- The Khmer Institute for Democracy
- Cambodian Institute for Human Rights

Human Rights Organizations:

- The International Human Rights Law Group Field Office
- LICADHO
- ADHOC
- Outreach (Human Rights and Community Outreach Project)Vigilance
- Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The Cambodian Health and Human Rights Alliance

Legal Organizations:

- The Cambodian Defenders Project:
- The Cambodian Bar Association (fax: 855-23-723-984)
- Legal Aid of Cambodia

Development and Other Organizations:

- Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)
- Buddhists for Development (fax: 855-53-370-041)
- Fondation Bouddhique Khmère (tel/fax: 855-23-721-001)
- The Khmer Women's Voice Center
- The Cambodian Women's Crisis Center
- KhmeraYouth Resource Development Program
- Khmer Youth Association
- The Asia Foundation
- Forumsyd
- Project Against Domestic Violence
- SILAKAJesuit Refugee Services
- Women for Prosperity
- CNAC (Coalition of local development NGOs, meets monthly at CCC)

Organizations in Mental Health Services:

- Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
- RCG School of Medicine, Dept of Psychiatry
- Social Services of Cambodia

Development Organizations Working in Former Khmer Rouge Areas (Partial List):

- UNDP Carere
- Medecins Sans Frontieres
- United Cambodian Community
- Redd/Radda Barna * Save the Children
- [UNICEF](#)
- [World Food Programme](#)

Organizations who have Been Actively Doing Peace Work in Cambodia

- American Friends Service Committee
- Mennonite Central Committee
- Dhammayietra Center
- Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation (CPR)
- CIDSE
- OXFAM (Great Britain)
- The Cooperation to Reduce Violence for Peace (CRVP) [CRVP is coalition of the above organizations plus others]

Media

English, French, or bi-lingual/Khmer

- [The Phnom Penh Post](#)
- The Cambodia Daily
- Cambodge Soir
- Radio Free Asia
- Associated Press
- ReutersAgence France-Presse
- Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)
- Voice of America
- Khmer Language Rasmei Kampuchea (fax 855-23-362-472)
- National Radio of Cambodia (fax 855-23-427-319)
- FM 105, ASombok Khmom

Organizations Outside of Cambodia Involved in Monitoring the KR Tribunal Issue

- [Human Rights Watch](#) (New York/Washington)
- [Amnesty International](#) (London)
- [International Human Rights Law Group](#)
- [Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights](#)
- [Asian Human Rights Commission](#) (Hong Kong)
- The Asia Pacific Center for Peace and Justice (Washington, DC)
- The Fund for Reconciliation and Development (New York)
- Non-Violence International Bangkok

Short Summaries of Key Organizations

The Cambodian Documentation Center

The Cambodian Genocide Program (CGP) of Yale University was created after an act of the U.S. Congress, which called for more information on the Khmer Rouge. In January 1995 the **Documentation Center of Cambodia** (DC-Cam) was established as a field office for the CGP. CGP and DC-Cam have had three main objectives: documentation, historiographical research, and legal training. The DC-Cam aims:

- 1) to serve as a permanent resource to provide the public with a better understanding of the Pol Pot regime, and to Cambodians or others who may wish to pursue legal redress for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity which may have been perpetrated under the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime between 1975 and 1979; and
- 2) to prevent the return of the 'killing fields' to Cambodia through legal and peaceful means.

The Cambodian Genocide Program and the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) announce an updated release of the **Cambodian Genocide Data Bases (CGDB)**.

This latest release features new biographical data in addition to major enhancements to the interactive maps of Cambodia's 'killing fields'. Researchers at the DC-Cam mapped 40 new genocide sites in 12 provinces in 1999, bringing the number of sites recorded to a total of 520. Each site is now being linked to photos, textual summaries, and information on alleged human rights violations. In addition, users will be able to search the genocide sites more easily using the new site database.

The CGDB also includes updated biographical information on eight senior Khmer Rouge leaders, including Ieng Sary, Nuon Chea, and Kang Kek Iev (Duch).

The CGDB was first posted on the Internet in January 1997, and now includes 10,800 biographical records, 3,000 bibliographic records, and over 6,000 photographs and images, as well as information on the 520 mass graves, prisons, and memorials.

- Documentation Centre of Cambodia: Contact Mr. Youk Chhang at dccam@bigpond.com.kh or Dr. Helen Jarvis at h.jarvis@unsw.edu.au
- Cambodian Genocide Program: Contact Dr. Susan Cook at cgp@yale.edu

Center for Social Development

The **Center for Social Development** (CSD), a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization, envisions a prosperous, peaceful, and harmonious Cambodia and seeks to promote democratic

values and improve the quality of life for the Cambodian people. Objectives include: advocating for good governance, advancing social equity and justice, building citizens' participation in the democratic process, acting as a neutral forum for open and candid debates and discussions on issues of concern to society. In 2000, CSD has organized three public fora on the Khmer Rouge and Reconciliation in Battambang (January), Phnom Penh (February), and Sihanoukville (March). As part of the public forum, they administered a questionnaire, which will be distributed with the April edition (4,000 copies) throughout the country. Reports of the forums are available from CSD.

- Contact Ms. Chea Vannath at sd@bigpond.com.kh

Cambodian Defenders Project

A project of the International Human Rights Law Group, the **Cambodian Defenders Project's** (CDP) strategic objective is to promote and protect human rights, thereby strengthening the legal system, rule of law, and democracy. CDP lawyers represent the poor, the vulnerable, and victims of human rights abuses in legal proceedings, give legal advice and information, raise legal awareness in the community, and advocate for sound legislation. CDP provided critical analysis of the pending Khmer Rouge tribunal law to the government and the international community, including highlighting the need for international participation at all stages of the investigation and trial.

- Contact Mr. Sok Sam Oeun at cdp@worldmail.com.kh

The Cambodian Human Rights Task Force

The Cambodian Human Rights Task Force (CHRTF) was created in Cambodia originally as the Human Rights Task Force on Cambodia in 1993, under the auspices of the International Human Rights Law Group. It was one of the first locally based NGOs providing human rights monitoring, investigation, and training of human rights educators. It became a local NGO in 1998, changing its name to the Cambodian Human Rights Task Force.

The CHRTF works with other local NGOs to provide training on human rights monitoring, investigation, and other skills of capacity building especially Training of Trainer (ToT) for the human rights and development NGOs. CHRTF is also trying to integrate the concept of holistic human rights framework into the development programs for its development partner NGOs.

Mr. In Vuthy, the executive director of CHRTF, has been monitoring the issue of the tribunal for the Khmer Rouge and has produced an issue of the CHRTF newsletter on the topic. With the support of the International Human Rights Law Group, Mr. In Vuthy participated in two advocacy training sessions at the UN Human Rights Commission on 1998 and 1999 in Geneva, Switzerland. During these visits, he raised the issues of impunity and the Khmer Rouge as he

lobbied with different government delegations around the world.

CHRTF is actively participating with the Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee, the coalition of 16 Cambodian human rights NGOs in following up the process of developing the law of Khmer Rouge tribunal.

- Contact Mr. In Vuthy, Executive Director CHRTF, at chrtf@forum.org.kh

Khmer Institute for Democracy

The **Khmer Institute for Democracy (KID)** was founded in October 1992. KID's mission is the acculturation of democratic values into Cambodian society. It upholds and consolidates Cambodia's pluralistic liberal democratic order as determined by the Paris Peace Agreements of 1991 to end the Cambodia conflict, and all international human rights instruments adhered to by Cambodia, and by Cambodians' own Constitution of 1993. KID's activities include: televised programs (Public Opinion, Problems and Solutions, Future Vision, Leadership); televised quiz on the Constitution; radio program (Grassroots Democracy and Awareness of Child Trafficking); training in civic education, democracy, rule of law, human rights, market economy; proto-Ombudsman system; publication of quarterly journal; library services; advocacy on national issues; workshops on the rule of law and due process.

- Contact Dr. Lao Mong Hay at kid@camnet.com.kh

Cambodian Centre for Conflict Resolution

The Cambodian Centre for Conflict Resolution is an independent centre working under the auspices of the Cambodian Development Resource Institute. Starting from the belief that peace is vital to the future social and economic development of Cambodia, one of the main aims of the centre is to enhance the capacity of Cambodians and Cambodian institutions to peacefully resolve, manage, and prevent conflict. The Cambodian Centre for Conflict Resolution has been focusing on four broad areas: creating a neutral environment; core training in conflict resolution; mindful mediation; and assisting the electoral process.

- Contact Mr. Ok Serei Sopheak at cdri@camnet.com.kh

NGO Forum on Cambodia

The **NGO Forum on Cambodia** is made up of over 60 NGOs grounded in their experience of humanitarian and development assistance to Cambodia. The forum exists to advocate on issues of concern to the Cambodian people. This partnership of local and international NGOs is working to enhance: economic and social justice; respect for human rights and democracy; peace

and non-violence; sustainable use of resources; respect for cultural diversity; and development with equity. The NGO Forum hosted a meeting on justice for the Khmer Rouge in March 1999 and has a section on the tribunal on their website as well as a mailing list. An interest section on civil society is a sub-group of NGOs organized by the NGO Forum that meets monthly.

- Contact **Bill Herod**, Coordinator, at bill@camnet.com.kh Cambodia Information Project on how to contact other NGOs in Cambodia.
- Contact **Mr. Yeng Virak**, Deputy Representative, at virak@ngo.forum.org.kh for information about the meeting on the Khmer Rouge or for information about the civil society meeting.

Cambodian Institute for Peace and Cooperation

The **Cambodian Institute for Peace and Cooperation (CICP)** is an independent, neutral, and non-partisan research institute based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. CICP promotes both domestic and regional dialogue among government officials, national and international organizations, scholars, and the private sector on issues of peace, democracy, civil society, security, foreign policy, conflict resolution, economics, and national development. CICP pursues goals within five target areas: enhance the ability of government officials and the public to make informed decisions about public policy; participate in and to promote regional and international cooperation; advocate human rights and advance democracy within civil society in Cambodia; promote peace and cooperation among Cambodians, as well as between Cambodians and others on a regional and international basis; and conduct research on development issues that concern Cambodia, as well as disseminate the resulting research findings.

- Contact Dr. Kao Kim Hourn at cicp@camnet.com.kh

Buddhism for Development (BFD)

BFD is directed by Heng Monychenda, a former Buddhist monk. In 1992 he founded this nonprofit organization that focuses on integrated development rooted in social values. BFD conducts training for monks and encourages them to set up their own education and tree-planting programs. BFD also has a summer retreat program in which 120 boys and girls learn the basics of Buddhism while receiving an introduction to community development and social work.

- Contact: Mr. Heng Monychenda, Director, Buddhism for Development, Battambang.
Tel/Fax: 855-53-370-041

Cambodian Institute of Human Rights

The Cambodian Institute of Human Rights (CIHR) was created in 1993. From the time of the elections under UNTAC, CIHR has been focusing on human rights education for government officials, teachers, police and armed forces, students, and community leaders. CIHR was instrumental in developing curricula and learner-centered teaching methodology for primary and secondary schools for teachers to teach children about human rights and democracy. CIHR was the first organization to organize such training in the former Khmer Rouge areas of Pailin, Kampot, and Malai, and now has continuing education projects there and throughout the country.

- Contact Mr. Kassie Neou, Director, at cihr@forum.org.kh

Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

The United Nations originally created a human rights office during UNTAC, the Office of the Human Rights Component. After UNTAC phased out, the **Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (COHCHR)** was created in conjunction with the U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights.

The COHCHR's main office is in Phnom Penh with provincial offices in several provinces providing human rights monitoring, education, investigation, and support to local NGOs. The provincial offices also engage in human rights training of the police, gendarmerie, and the armed forces. Offices in some provinces also provide judicial mentors to advise the courts. The COHCHR has sub-offices in two former Khmer Rouge areas: Pailin and Malai, which are staffed with locally recruited activists who provide important human rights education to local populations.

- Contact COHCHR at cohchr@worldmail.com.kh

Social Services of Cambodia

The NGO Social Services of Cambodia (SSC) has social and mental health programs in several villages in Kampong Speu province. Although many people are suffering from mental health problems that have obviously arisen at least partially as a result of trauma people suffered at the hands of the Khmer Rouge, SSC emphasizes that their view is holistic and that people in Cambodia have suffered from many traumas including war both before and after the Khmer Rouge time.

Ellen Minotti of SSC stated: 'People under the Khmer Rouge experienced feelings of entrapment and lack of power. They lost sight of what they thought were truths in society. They had to live under this changed society for several years, and after it was over, the feelings of helplessness are persistent and long term. By talking to people who can listen to them, validate their feelings, and understand their pain, these people can feel better. They no longer feel they are 'crazy,' and they can understand that their headaches and nightmares are indeed normal behavior for people who have suffered such trauma. Talking to a sympathetic listener can help a person to relieve

tension and to decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness. By sharing problems, the other person shows that they understand, and this helps put the problem in context. Talking about problems can validate what happened, can give meaning to the experience, and thus makes it easier to cope with. Counseling can take away some of the terrible power that flashbacks can have on a person's psyche. We've had several people come to us to say that their meetings with our counselors have helped, that they no longer notice the symptoms for which they had to take medication. Talking therapy definitely helps some people.'

- Contact Ellen Minotti at SSC@bigpond.com.kh

Mental Health Sub-Committee, Ministry of Health, Cambodia

Dr. Ka Sunbaunat is the one of the ten trained psychiatrists in Cambodia. He studied at the Cambodian Faculty of Medicine from 1972 to 1975 then from 1980 to 1983. He started specializing in psychiatry in 1994 and traveled to Portland and Seattle in February 1991, for a one-month visit of a research program of Dr. William Sack at OHSU.

He was appointed as chairman of Mental Health Sub-Committee, Ministry of Health of Cambodia since March 1992. He initiated the re-establishment of the mental health structure for the country as studied in his thesis on the topic of 'Organization of Mental Health Services in Cambodia.' This is a new mental health structure, which attempts to avoid the mistakes made in the past.

He now operates a psychiatric clinic at Preah Bat Norodom Sihanouk Hospital, Phnom Penh, which is the training component for the Cambodian Mental Health Training Program (CMHTP) and Cambodian Mental Health Development Program (CMHDP) for psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses. He also continues teaching at the medical school and participates in training with NGOs. He, along with other organizations working on mental health issues in Cambodia -- CMHDP, SSC, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Médecine de l'Espoir du Cambodge (MEC), Dr. Roy Foundation, and the Harvard Trauma Program in Cambodia (HTPC) -- meet monthly with the Mental Health Sub-Committee at the Ministry of Health. They discuss issues related to mental health at both local and national levels.

Dr. Ka believes that a tribunal for former Khmer Rouge leaders will affect the Cambodian population, depending on the result of the trial. He feels that when people talk about the trial this reminds people about their trauma, and showing them the results of tribunal will give them a new impact of the Pol Pot regime. He feels that the results could make them feel released or could also make them worse. He feels that the most important issue for Cambodian people is to improve their daily lives, to keep them safer and more secure, as much as possible.

- Contact Dr. Ka Sunbaunat at ksbaunat@forum.org.kh