



SENATOR THE HON MARISE PAYNE
Minister for Foreign Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE
GUILTY VERDICT IN KHMER ROUGE TRIALS

Australia welcomes the judgment handed down today in Phnom Penh by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

In this judgment, the ECCC found Khieu Samphan, former head of state of Democratic Kampuchea, and Nuon Chea, former Deputy Secretary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity, including murder, extermination, enslavement, forced marriages and rape within the context of forced marriage.

This judgment represents the first time an international tribunal has ruled on charges of genocide in relation to the Khmer Rouge regime. Approximately 83,000 Cambodians attended hearings during this trial.

Today's judgment follows Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan's earlier convictions for crimes against humanity related to the forced movement of people and execution of soldiers, and the conviction of Kaing Guek Eav (known as Duch) for crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Established in 2003, the ECCC's mandate is to hold to account those responsible for serious crimes committed during the Khmer Rouge era (1975-1979). Over 1.6 million Cambodians died during the period of Khmer Rouge rule.

The Court also plays an important role in promoting national reconciliation in Cambodia, including by creating a detailed record of the Khmer Rouge's crimes and through mechanisms to acknowledge the regime's victims.

Australia is proud to provide substantial and longstanding support to the ECCC's important mandate. Australia has contributed over AUD40 million to the Court since 2005, making it the third largest international donor.

Australia's support for the ECCC reflects our strong commitment to international criminal justice and the protection of human rights.

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