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CAMBODIAN DEFENDERS PROJECT

Promoting Human Rights by Strengthening Rule of Law, Legal System and Liberal Democracy

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

Press Release

Cambodian Defenders Project Hosting the First Women's Hearing on Sexual Violence under the Khmer Rouge Regime

On the 7th and 8th of December, the Cambodian Defenders Project (CDP) will host the first Women's Hearing in Cambodia called "True Voices of Women under the Khmer Rouge Regime on Sexual Violence".

The regime of Democratic Kampuchea, known as Khmer Rouge, ruled the country from 1975 to 1979 which resulted in the death of around 1.7 million people. Thirty years later, survivors are still waiting to tell their stories. The belief that gender-based crimes did not happen in that period is widespread. However, studies show that various forms of sexual violence, such as sexual assault, rape, forced marriage, sexual mutilation and sexual torture occurred. Being confronted with ostracism and blame, survivors of such crimes face higher obstacles to speak out and reconcile with their past. CDP strives to include them in the transitional justice process.

Sexual crimes may not be raised at the trials before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), the international war crimes tribunal, given that rape is not charged in the Closing Order. The Women's Hearing aims to complement the truth-seeking efforts of the ECCC on this point by providing a platform for accounts of sexual violence during the Khmer Rouge regime and the opportunity to acknowledge the suffering of victims.

During the Women's Hearing survivors and witnesses of sexual violence during the Khmer Rouge regime will courageously speak out against the culture of silence and impunity that surrounds sexual violence and testify to their experiences before a panel of internationals and national human rights activists.

The program will also include testimonies of experts on the history of the Khmer Rouge, violence against women and access to justice for survivors. After hearing the evidence the Panel will make a public statement with findings and recommendations for Government, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, NGOs and the public.

The Women's Hearing will be open to the public including the press. Please register your participation with the contact persons below.

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