

UA 93/99

Fear for**CAMBODIAKang Kek Ieu, aka Ta Pin, aka Duch**

Former Khmer Rouge official Kang Kek Ieu has admitted to involvement in torture, murder and crimes against humanity during the period of the Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge) government in Cambodia (1975 - 1979) in an interview in the Far Eastern Economic Review published on 29 April 1999. Amnesty International fears he may be killed to stop him testifying against others involved in crimes against humanity under the Khmer Rouge.

There is substantial documentary evidence against Kang Kek Ieu, but the Cambodian authorities have made no attempt to arrest him, though they are believed to have known his whereabouts for some time. He would be a key witness in any judicial proceedings against other Khmer Rouge officials, and Amnesty International fears that he may be killed to silence him, which would be a grave setback to moves to ensure accountability and an end to impunity for Khmer Rouge leaders.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Kang Kek Ieu, known at the time as Duch, was in charge of S-21, a former school in Phnom Penh, which was used as a detention centre by the Khmer Rouge. Prisoners at S-21 were mainly members of the Communist Party, who were accused of being traitors and enemy agents. People were forced to confess and implicate others and then killed. More than 12,000 people were detained there; only seven survived. Duch's signature and handwritten instruction appear on numerous orders to torture and kill stored at S-21, which is now a museum.

Duch's former superior Ta Mok, a senior member of the Khmer Rouge, was arrested on 6 March 1999 and is now detained in Phnom Penh, awaiting trial. Amnesty International believes that his trial is likely to fall far short of minimum international standards for fairness, and will not reveal the truth about the grave violations of human rights that occurred in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979. Other senior members of the Khmer Rouge, including Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea, defected to the government and were welcomed to Phnom Penh by Prime Minister Hun Sen in December 1998. No moves have been made to bring them to justice.

In February 1999, a UN Group of Experts recommended the establishment of an ad hoc international tribunal, outside Cambodia, to bring to justice those believed responsible for the crimes against humanity during the Democratic Kampuchea period. Amnesty International believes that an international trial is essential in the interests of truth and justice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or French or your own language:

- urging the Cambodian authorities to ensure the safety of Kang Kek Ieu;
- asking that, pending the establishment of an international court to bring Kang Kek Ieu and others to justice, all necessary steps be taken to arrest and detain those believed responsible for the crimes against humanity committed in Cambodia during the Democratic Kampuchea period;
- urging the Cambodian authorities to cooperate with the United Nations to bring to justice Kang Kek Ieu and others implicated in the grave violations of human rights during the Democratic Kampuchea period, following the recommendations of a UN Group of Experts in their report of February 1999.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister Hun Sen
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh
Cambodia
Fax: +855 23 360666 (if voice, ask for fax)
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Sar Kheng
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior and National Security
Phnom Penh
Cambodia
Fax: +855 23 212708 (if voice, ask for fax)
Salutation: Dear Minister

Tea Banh
Minister of National Defence
Ministry of National Defence
Phnom Penh
Cambodia
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Cambodia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 June 1999.