

ECCC brought no fairness to the people of Cambodia

Written by Jeffrey Serey Hola

Friday, 30 July 2010 15:00 - Last Updated Friday, 30 July 2010 15:00

Dear Editor,

The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia handed down a reduced sentence of 19 years for Kaing Guek Eav, known as “Comrade Duch”. It is a slap on the wrist for a man responsible for crimes against humanity, which include the murders of as many as 14,000 people, including innocent men, women and children.

Cambodians are still living with reminders of the brutal Pol Pot regime. For those who has lived through one of the most vicious mass murders in history, the sentence is outrageous and beyond comprehension.

The Cambodian Centre for Human Rights welcomed the reduction in Duch’s sentence, as the result of the violation of his rights. They should be ashamed.

Innocent men, women and children were brutally tortured and killed by Duch. Were their lives meaningless to CCHR? How can such comments and the sentence itself be understood by victims and those who lost their loved ones?

It is understandable that many wanted him to face the death penalty, even though capital punishment is illegal in Cambodia. The reduced sentence of 19 years for Duch is too lenient for such a vicious mass murder. Duch should at least serve a life sentence.

For those who have not experienced the utter violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I hope they and their loved ones will never be forced to. How could such rights apply to Duch, but not to the 14,000 men, women and children who died by his orders?

For those who have lived and experienced such horrors, how could this sentence ever be considered justice? For them, it is just a slap on the wrist. Justice was not served for the people of Cambodia.

Jeffrey Serey Hola
Lancaster, California

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