



## Media Release

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### Women's Hearing and the Young Generation 2013

The Cambodian Defenders Project (CDP), in partnership with Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) and the Victims Support Section at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), hosted its third Women's Hearing on 24 September 2013.

The Women's Hearing heard the public testimonies of four women who bravely spoke to end the silence on gender based violence during the Khmer Rouge. Their accounts of forced marriage, rape, sexual humiliation and torture are heartbreaking; their survival is a testament to their fortitude and determination.

The aim of this year's Women's Hearing was to improve knowledge and understanding of the young generation about the broader history of the Khmer Rouge, acknowledging the experiences of survivors of gender based violence. The Hearing sought to engage young people in advocating for support and justice for survivors, as well as preventing gender based violence now and in the future. Most of the 400 plus attendees were university students, including the six member Panel (with representation from fields of law, finance, psychology and gender studies).

#### Panel Statement key points and recommendations

For many of the students on the panel and in the audience, this is the first time we have heard about gender based violence that took place during the Khmer Rouge regime. We learned a lot from the testifiers and are impressed and inspired by their courage and resilience. We make the following recommendations.

#### Government to:

- Establish reparations for free counselling and other supports for survivors of gender based violence during the Khmer Rouge
- Enforce the law and ensure punishment for perpetrators of gender based violence during the Khmer Rouge, and provide greater transparency around the legal process
- Ensure historical evidence of this violence is kept for future generations to know and understand it by: preserving the crime sites and evidence of torture; and holding a history competition on this subject at a national level to engage youth

- Raise awareness nationwide of gender based violence under the Khmer Rouge by: including information about it in school and university curriculums; and conducting study tours of crime sites
- Fund NGOs to work on issues of gender based violence under the Khmer Rouge
- Establish mechanisms to ensure that the Khmer Rouge type of regimes never happen again.

**ECCC to:**

- Expedite cases of 002
- Include gender based violence crimes on forced marriage in the indictment of Cases 003 and 004.

**NGOs to:**

- Conduct work on gender based violence under the Khmer Rouge so that this issue is not forgotten
- Provide counselling and other supports for survivors; and provide survivors with opportunities to tell their story and support them to do so
- Work more with authorities and law enforcement on responding to gender based violence
- Hold workshops, forums and training to engage the young generation on issues of gender based violence during the Khmer Rouge, about prevention of such violence and reconciliation
- Work with NGOs of other countries which have also experienced conflict to share experiences and knowledge about responding to these issues
- Conduct more in-depth study of the history of gender based violence under the Khmer Rouge to better understand the past and inform prevention responses.

**Youth to:**

- Support victims of gender based violence in the past and today
- Actively report gender based violence to the authorities
- Participate in more training and study of gender based violence in the past and today in order to understand and prevent it
- Share information with each other.

**Donors to:**

- Provide more funding to NGOs working on gender based violence
- Support documentation of gender based violence in conflict so that future generations will know about these events
- Support NGOs to hold future Women's Hearings
- Raise awareness of the topic in the international arena and share the experience with others.

**Media to:**

- Provide greater coverage of this topic to ensure that it remains in the consciousness of the public and authorities, and that survivors' voices are heard.

*Next steps*

In the next week, the Panel will formalise their complete Statement. Over the coming months, CDP will take the testimonies and Panel Statement and make them publically available in a report, to be published on the Gender Based Violence website: <http://gbvkr.org/en/>

A video of this year's Hearing will also be uploaded to the website. Please see this site for videos and reports of the previous Women's Hearings in 2011 and 2012.

*Women's Hearing participants*

**Survivor testifiers:** Mrs MOM Vun, Mrs YAM Lash, Mrs LOS Vanna and Mrs CHEA Nom

**Student Panel (PUC, RULE, RUPP – psychology, law, finance and gender studies):**

Main panel: SOR Chhivegech; PHAY Sakphea Panha; KHUT Ich; RIM Souvannary; IN Ratha; KEO Bopha Osaphea

Support panel: Adi Mere MISIVONO; KHONH Chantha; CHHENG Channita; CHHUN Siakva; KEO Rattana; NAY Udom; NOCH Sreyneang; SEM Hak; THORN Phearc; YOUN Sreynich

**CDP Organisers:** Mr DUONG Savorn; Ms HENG Charya, Ms SREA Ratha, Ms YE Beini

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