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Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia

Chambres Extraordinaires au sein des Tribunaux Cambodgiens

ECCC Press Release

OCIJ Statement on Reconstruction Recordings

The Co-Investigating Judges of the ECCC wish to confirm that the recent on-site investigative reconstructions at Choeung Ek and Tuol Sleng, were successfully completed. They would like to thank all concerned and affected for their cooperation and assistance to the court.

A number of queries have been raised concerning the recording of the reconstructions. It is of course the case that these operations constituted confidential acts of investigation and all such acts are recorded by ECCC staff for the purposes of the case file. This material will be released in the normal course of the trial process.

In addition, other recordings were made for pedagogical and archive objectives. This material is part of a broader documentary project to describe the technical aspects of the investigative phase of these proceedings. After reviewing several options, a team of professionals were chosen for the documentary: Jean Reynaud and Remi Lainé. They have legal qualifications, experience in Cambodia, are specialists in precisely this kind of judicial documentary and were willing to agree to all of the Co-Investigating Judges' constraints. To respond to a particular question raised, it goes without saying that these persons did not pay the ECCC or anyone to be allowed to complete this work.

This documentary will be released only after all ECCC trials and appeals are completed (which will be a number of years). Control of confidential material filmed and its use remains at all times with the ECCC. There is therefore no question of certain press accessing investigative work and others not: the pedagogical and archiving documentary made in the circumstances outlined above cannot be considered to amount to press coverage, where time is of the essence and to which the above-noted level of content control would be inappropriate.

In addition, all images recorded by this team of acts of investigation will made available by court decision to any interested person or organization after all ECCC trials and appeals are completed.

The Co-Investigating Judges recognise that balancing the legitimate “watchdog” role of the press with the necessary confidential nature of the investigations is a complex one. This should become easier once the “public” phase of the proceedings begins. In order to assist in this respect, the Co-Judges would take this opportunity to announce that they will, on a monthly basis, publish a report on their activities as the case file allows.