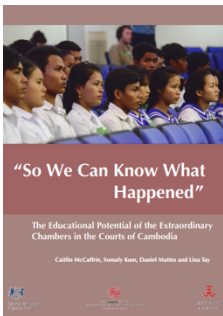


Launch of New Research Report: **‘So We Can Know What Happened’: The Educational Potential of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia**



On Thursday 25 January 2018 the Cambodia Programs of the WSD HANDA Center for Human Rights and International Justice, with generous support from the British Embassy in Phnom Penh and the East-West Center, officially launched its new report: *‘So We Can Know What Happened’: The Educational Potential of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)*. The report is the result of six months of research into Cambodian views, particularly those of youth, on the connection between the ECCC and the various education initiatives currently underway in Cambodia.

The report was launched at a special event at the National University of Management (NUM) attended by over 200 students, educators, members of civil society and government representatives. To open the morning event, the event’s emcee Ms. Chum Kimsreang invited H.E. Dr. Hor Peng, Rector of NUM to open the session and welcome guests to the hall. Next, H.E. Tun Sa Im, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, spoke of her personal experience living through the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime and the importance of teaching the next generation the lessons of the past. H.E. Ambassador Bill Longhurst then spoke of the value the United Kingdom places on supporting the work of the ECCC and related to outreach, in order to promote ending impunity for crimes no matter how much time has passed. Finally the Handa Center’s director, Professor David Cohen, thanked everyone for their attendance and emphasized the importance of youth engagement with the ECCC.



H.E. Hor Peng



H.E. Tun Sa Im



H.E. Bill Longhurst



Prof. David Cohen

Following the welcome remarks from the four guests, the international co-director of Cambodia programs for the Handa Center, Ms. Caitlin McCaffrie, presented the main findings of the report to the audience. The research for this report was conducted between July and December 2017 and gathers the views of 83 Cambodian university students and 16 Cambodian expert practitioners about the ECCC. A key finding is that during conversations about the ECCC, students identified the potential for the Tribunal to educate their generation about the past as its biggest potential legacy; ranking this higher than judicial, psychological or capacity-building legacies. In light of this, another key finding of the report is the generally low level of awareness among youth concerning the existing programs and opportunities available

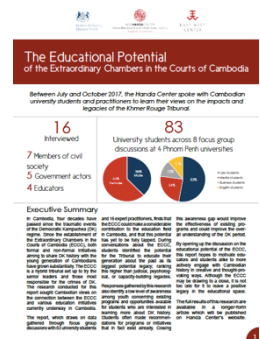


to those who are interested in learning more about the past. Closing this gap in awareness would improve the effectiveness of existing programs and improve overall understanding of the Khmer Rouge period. At the end of the report are a compilation of recommendations made by students and experts over the course of the research. These recommendations include creating more documents in Khmer, greater online engagement, and increased sharing and cooperation about existing programs between civil society and educational institutions.



Following the presentation of findings, four of the sixteen experts who took part in the research participated in a panel discussion about the main findings of the report. The panel consisted of H.E. Hor Peng; Chhay Visoth, director of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum; freelance consultant Ok Serei Sopheak; and Keo Duong, historian, lecturer and project officer for Bophana Center’s Khmer Rouge History app. The panel was convened by Handa Center’s national co-director of Cambodia programs, Mr. Tay Lina. The panel discussion raised a number of interesting issues. Participants discussed the need for young people to engage with their history in as varied ways as possible – through both the formal education system, informal ways of learning and also through dialogue with family members who lived through the regime. Panelists also encouraged youth to be proud of wanting to learn about the history of their country and to make the most of the presence of the ECCC in Phnom Penh to learn more about the DK period. Mr. Tay Lina closed the event by remarking on the considerable increase in attention that has been paid to the DK period since the ECCC opened and said he hoped this ‘ECCC domino effect’ would continue so that the young generation would better understand what had happened in the past.

The report and its launch were covered in local media and on radio talk shows. In line with the recommendations made by participants of the research that shorter, more engaging texts be produced, and in Khmer language where possible, the Handa Center also produced four-page summary versions in Khmer and English that were handed out to students and other attendees at the event.



The summary reports, as well as the full 62-page English report, complete with executive summary, recommendations and conclusion translated into Khmer, is available at www.krtmonitor.org. To request a hard copy please contact: caitlin.mccaffrie@handacentercambodia.org.