



BUILD CAMBODIA

ស្ថាបនាស្រុកខ្មែរ

Trip Report | January 2007



BUILD CAMBODIA

ស្ថាបនាស្រុកខ្មែរ

Trip Report

January 13 - 24, 2007



BUILD CAMBODIA
ស្ថាបនាស្រុកខ្មែរ

SATURDAY | 01.13.2007

Chris Scheerder arrives in Phnom Penh

Meeting with Bernie Krisher, publisher of The Cambodia Daily and Wendy Freed, psychiatrist

Dinner at Foreign Correspondents' Club in celebration of Chris's birthday

SUNDAY | 01.14.2007

9 Discussion with garment factory union workers

Lunch with Luisa Peticucci and Dennis McMahon

Central Market shopping expedition for village visits

Dinner at Amok Café with Foundation for Global Leadership group

MONDAY | 01.15.2007

Discussion with Thida Khus of SILAKA

Jeff Schoenberg arrives in Phnom Penh

11 Center for Social Development

Briefing on the work of CSD by Theary Seng, executive director

Lunch at Khmer Surin with Theary Seng

15 Tour of Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia by Peter Foster, public affairs officer

Tour of Documentation Center of Cambodia by Dacil Keo, response team intern

Dinner at Pacharan

13 Trip Reflection by Chris Scheerder

TUESDAY | 01.16.2007

17 Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE

Tour of Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE by Gary Jacques, medical director of Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE, followed by discussion with medical staff and incoming director, Daniel Liu

19 Discussion with Youk Chhang, the director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia

Lunch at Malis with young women in Phnom Penh

21 Royal University of Phnom Penh

Participant class presentations

23 Harpswell Foundation Dormitory

Tour of dormitory followed by discussion with women

Dinner at Java Café with Roland Eng, the former Cambodian ambassador to the U.S.

WEDNESDAY | 01.17.2007

27 Lveatae primary school

United States Embassy

29 Community Legal Education Center

Site tour of displaced and threatened communities

Dinner at La Luna with Mu Sochua, the former minister of Women's Affairs and a Nobel Peace Prize nominee

25 Trip Reflection by Jeff Schoenberg

THURSDAY | 01.18.2007

31 Toul Sleng
Genocide Museum

33 Choeung Ek
Memorial Killing
Field

Independent meetings

35 Jeff and Ed meet
with co-prosecutor
Robert Petit of
the Khmer Rouge
tribunal

Chris and Tha embark
on videography
excursion

37 Digital Divide Data
Shopping

FRIDAY | 01.19.2007

Travel to Siem Reap

41 Lvea Choum

43 Angkor Hospital
for Children

Dinner at Viroth's
Restaurant with
members of the board
of Angkor Hospital for
Children; Kenro Izu,
David Pritchard,
Tina Patterson and
Eugene Tragus

40 Trip Update:
Jeff Schoenberg

SATURDAY | 01.20.2007

45 Cambodian Living
Arts at Wat Bo

47 Tour of Angkor Wat
Temple

49 Tour of Ta Prohm
Temple

Wrap up dinner
and discussion at
Chez Sop'hé a

SUNDAY | 01.21.2007

Jeff, Kristi, Ed and
Kathryn depart
Siem Reap

WEDNESDAY | 01.24.2007

Chris departs Siem Reap



Vientiane

LAOS

THAILAND

Da Nang

Bangkok

VIETNAM

Siem Reap

Lvea Chom

Kompong Thom

CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh

Ho Chi Minh City

BURMA

Gulf of Thailand

South China Sea

Letters

Kathryn Lucatelli
Executive Director

Dear Chris and Jeff,

As participants, with your own project ideas and areas of interest, you helped Build Cambodia formulate how to orchestrate trips that could simultaneously accomplish multiple goals.

Chris, anyone who can remain calm at a deserted airport in a foreign land on her birthday waiting for the hosts she has never met gets major points. It was great to experience through you the serendipity of life that brought you to our project and the ways it has continued after the trip.



Jeff, it was apparent from our pre-trip lunch that being a spokesperson for worthy causes is a role you take seriously and I was pleased Cambodia was gaining such a friend. I still laugh thinking of the pig that nearly ate your shoe in the village school of Lveatae, and remember our visit to the temples on Shabbat as the most refreshing moment of

the trip. It demonstrated to me the value of slowing down and reflecting on what we had experienced.

I want to encourage each of you to keep up with your involvement, follow your heart, do what you see is missing and be sure to call on us for support.

Kathryn



Ed Bachrach
Founder

Dear Chris and Jeff,

From each of you the word of your interest in Cambodia came to me in different ways: one a voice mail message in the night and the other a reply to an email. Now, after our time traveling, talking and taking in this moving nation, we are different people. We know the Cambodia that we saw in this time and place. We know each other. And, I think we know our own souls a little better.

It took a lot of courage and sacrifice for each of you to make this trip and for that I am profoundly grateful. My greatest wish is that your lasting memories of our unforgettable trip are matched with an enduring commitment to this stricken land. I thank each of you for sharing your self with me.

Gratefully,

Ed

Biography



Chris Scheerder

Chris Scheerder is an avid cyclist, kick boxer, film enthusiast, world traveler and amateur photographer. Presently she is the sponsorship director for the United Nations Association Film Festival at Stanford University. She is also involved with Child Advocacy Group in San Jose, California.

Previously, Chris served on the film jury selection committee of the United Nations Association Film Festival at Stanford University in 2006 and 2005. She produced and directed a documentary film titled, “Lomami – An Artist’s Way,” which was shown in conjunction with the artist, Jaap Bongers, exhibition at the San Jose Contemporary Museum in 2004.

Chris is the mother of 2 college-aged children and currently resides in Los Gatos, California.



Jeff Schoenberg

Jeff Schoenberg is an Illinois State Senator for the 9th district. As a state senator, Schoenberg has sponsored and supported many diverse bills; he is particularly concerned with inefficient government spending and the state's procurement code.

Schoenberg serves as the Chairman on both the Appropriations II Committee, Vice Chairman of the Appropriations I Committee, and a member of the Appropriations III, Health and Human Services, and Financial Institutions Committees.

Jeff lives in Evanston, Illinois with his wife and two children.





Discussion with garment factory union workers

Organizers of the Union Leader Institute and the Free Trade Union brought us to the home of some of their members. Wooden footbridges led us over a sea of trash to the cramped and hastily constructed home of 15 garment factory workers. We sat together on the floor and asked questions about the women's lives, work and hardships. The women were between 18 and 22 years old, some with children living apart from them in villages being cared for by their parents. Many reported sending about US\$20 of their US\$45 salaries home to their families in far away provinces. The women said they don't like their work but have no choice due to the poverty of their families and the lack of other employment opportunities. While the biggest success of the Cambodian labor movement has been to set a minimum wage in the garment industry, the push for a higher wage continues today. We gave some money to the women to organize a small party for themselves as a thank you for meeting with us.



USAID

Programme
National New Year Resolutions:
Updating the Four Freedoms

FACE
BOOK



Over-takes issue with Great Supreme Patri

and the perverse effects of foreign aid

Largest and renewable

Hot off the Lempert

Center for Social Development

The Center for Social Development encourages broad participation in public affairs at both the national and local level. This non-profit group of committed researchers, legal experts and social advocates publishes studies, monitors the court system and holds public forums and training programs to generate discussions about issues of national concern. This has helped to promote a respect for human rights and the rule of law, and enhance transparency and accountability in the government and private sector. Executive director Theary Seng presented our group an overview of their work and showed a film highlighting one of CSD's Open Forums, which provide community members an opportunity to learn about the upcoming Khmer Rouge tribunal.



Trip Reflection

During my visit to Cambodia I was struck by the enthusiasm and spirit of the people, in particular the children, who were full of curiosity, eager to meet strangers and were so engaging with their giant smiles! Many of these faces I have captured on film and have created a bulletin board in my office, which depicts them to remind me of my visit.

One of my favorite visits involved a trip to the Lveatae primary school, which is located 2 hours outside Phnom Penh. Sokchea Monn



commutes to this, his home village, to check in on a program he started. His program supports the teachers by providing supplemental funding for the teachers. Despite the

obvious lack of resources including a major shortage of teacher supplies, I witnessed the children's desire and keenness to learn. Sokchea Monn's personal dedication to the project had a profound impact on me. In addition to his full time job and three children

he travels an arduous 2 hours to monitor the program. Upon my return to California I felt inspired to help improve their situation so I sent some school supplies and I am now helping to provide supplemental funding for the teachers.

Build Cambodia offered me the unique opportunity to visit people and organizations that otherwise I would not have had access to. Among the trip highlights was visiting the Documentation Centre of Cambodia and meeting the program director, Youk Chhang. I was also impressed by our dinner with Mu Sochua, a politician, who was just elected as secretary-general of the Sam Rainsy Party. Mu Sochua is the first woman in the country to hold such a position in a political party and she provided us with some interesting insights into other aspects of Cambodian life.

I felt truly inspired by all the Cambodians that I met and the NGOs that are currently working in Cambodia. I feel that Build Cambodia made me aware of the needs and current concerns that exist in Cambodia today. It did so in a very positive and respectful way and by their example and guidance I feel that I can continue to help in a way that can make a meaningful difference. There are many stories that still remain to be told about Cambodia and my dream is to return and record one of those stories on film.



វិស័យ
Court Room
Salle d'Audience



Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia

Peter Foster, the public affairs officer of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), gave our group a tour of the ECCC consisting of the court building and a spirit statue called “Grandfather with an Iron Stick.” All trial witnesses will take an oath before “Lok Ta Dambang Dek” to tell the truth on the witness stand. The ECCC is a new style of court mixed with both Cambodian and international judges. Its mission is to prosecute the few surviving leaders of the Khmer Rouge, a fanatical, ultra-Maoist group that killed nearly two million people between 1975 and 1979 in its quest to create a classless, self-sustainable agrarian society. At the time of our visit, judges were in the process of determining the particulars of over 300 internal rules. We also noted there was considerable physical infrastructure to be completed before the trials begin. We learned that there was no plan to broadcast the tribunals to an international audience.





Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE

The Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE delivers 24-hour, high-quality, free medical care for those who could not otherwise afford it, while also furthering the education and clinical training of Cambodian medical professionals. The hospital has treated half a million patients free of charge since its doors opened in 1997 and employs a lottery system to determine which patients can be admitted into the hospital's care system. Gary Jacques, the hospital's medical director, gave our group a tour of the facilities. We saw hundreds of exhausted and sick mothers, fathers, children and grandparents camped out in the outdoor waiting area. Each day, the names of 20 "lucky winners" are drawn and the chosen patients are admitted for care. Those who are not called continue to wait. We also spent time talking with nurses and doctors to understand the challenges they face in treating patients living with AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in an overburdened hospital.



Documentation Center of Cambodia

Since its inception in 1995, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) has been at the forefront of documenting the crimes and atrocities of the Khmer Rouge era. Operated entirely by Cambodians with support from scholars and experts in the United States, Europe and Asia, DC-Cam is run by director Youk Chhang, a survivor of the Killing Fields. DC-Cam's main objectives are to record and preserve the history of the Khmer Rouge regime for future generations to understand, as well as to compile and organize information that can serve as potential evidence in a legal accounting for the crimes of the regime. We spoke with Youk Chhang regarding his work and the upcoming Khmer Rouge tribunal.





Royal University of Phnom Penh

The Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) is the oldest and largest university in Cambodia. The university closed its doors during the Khmer Rouge era and was reopened by a small group of dedicated people in the early 1980s despite a serious lack of human resources and infrastructure. The university slowly worked its way back to its former status through the support of the Royal Government and many international partners. RUPP offers varied degree courses and draws some of the brightest students in the country. Our group had the opportunity to lead discussions with students in an upper level English class. These curious students asked us questions about U.S. politics and shared stories from their own lives.



Harpwell Foundation Dormitory

Harpwell Foundation Dormitory was founded by American physicist and author Alan Lightman in 2006 to enable some of the brightest women from the countryside to pursue a college education in Phnom Penh. One of the major barriers facing these women is the lack of student housing in the capital. While young men can stay in the rent-free Buddhist pagodas while attending university, young women can only take advantage of Phnom Penh's schools if they have hospitable relatives in town. The dormitory aims to play a major role in raising the next generation of women leaders in Cambodia. Our group toured the dormitory and talked extensively with the 32 young women who currently reside there.



Trip Reflection

On a scorching January day nearly eight months ago, I was sitting on the dusty floor of a sparse and nearly empty bamboo hut that was the one-room home of one of the local elders in the rural Cambodian province of Kompong Thom, a desolate and destitute area on the route between the capitol city of Phnom Penh and the majestic temples of Angkor Wat in Siem Reap. The rickety structure was elevated several feet off the ground and I was joined by about a dozen other adult males in a semicircle as we awkwardly sought to communicate through a translator of the hardships that characterize life in Cambodia, especially in that severely impoverished area.

As we struggled with the conversation, I must concede that my mind began racing backward over half a century to a time when history was indelibly stained by the horrors of the Holocaust:

- ▶ What if the infamous Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann and all of his peers and subordinates in the Third Reich were allowed to walk away from their heinous crimes, living out their days in a relative comfort surrounded by those whose lives they had brutally altered forever?
- ▶ And which of my hosts in Kompong Thom faithfully obeyed the orders of his superiors over thirty years ago as part of the



murderous, Maoist-inspired Khmer Rouge cadre that claimed the lives of nearly two million people?

Our minds and our souls are seared with the haunting memories of the Holocaust, and despite our determined vows and those of the civilized world's pledging "Never Again", we have experienced wholesale, systematic killings in East Timor, Kosovo, Rwanda and now, in the Darfur region of the Sudan. Unlike these preceding genocidal campaigns, where international prosecutors have actively sought to hold those responsible for their reprehensible actions accountable shortly after they committed their heinous crimes, it is nearly unfathomable that nearly 30 years after the savage genocide conducted by the Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot countless members of Khmer Rouge cadres have remained free without the slightest fear of prosecution.

Only recently has the process of attaining justice and national reconciliation begun. After numerous delays spanning decades, an international court has now finally delivered

Continued on page 26

formal charges against the first of several surviving senior Khmer Rouge leaders, all of whom are elderly.

My deeply held conviction that the painful experiences of the Holocaust must never be forgotten and that we all have a moral obligation to avert any future attempts at systematic mass murder are what ultimately prompted me to take that fact finding trip to Cambodia. As a Jew whose family was



touched by Hitler's atrocities and as a public official, I felt compelled to see what I could learn about another massive crime against humanity half way around the world and decades after the Holocaust. Of particular interest to me were the imminent proceedings of the Extraordinary Chambers of the Cambodian Court (ECCC) commonly referred to as the Khmer Rouge tribunals. As fate would have it, there

was yet another delay when I arrived, so instead of witnessing the trial proceedings I toured the court facilities and had a long and frank chat with Robert Petit, the United Nations' chief international co-prosecutor assigned to the trials. Robert

is a lawyer on leave from the Canadian Justice department who served as part of the prosecution teams in Rwanda and Kosovo and who now is the lead international counsel for trying this series of cases. Like most prosecutors I've come to know, he is driven by the pursuit of what is fundamentally just and works tirelessly to make certain that his cases are airtight.

I also spent significant time befriending Youk Chhang, the director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, which is the chief repository of all of the records and photographs that were meticulously kept by the Khmer Rouge as they slaughtered millions of people and caused millions more to suffer unthinkable hardship and pain. Youk is widely considered the conscience of the country — I think of him as the Cambodian counterpart of Elie Wiesel — a humble and determined individual who personally suffered greatly but who survived a genocide and is determined to bring accountability and justice for his loved ones, his people and for all of humanity as well.

I found my conversations with Robert Petit and Youk Chhang quite illuminating and they left an indelible impression upon me. But even more so, the facts I found during the rest of my trip opened my eyes in a different way.

Since 1970 every generation of Cambodians has been at risk. In the 1970s it was US bombing, civil war, and the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime. In the 1980s it was continued civil war and domination by the harsh Vietnamese occupiers. In the 1990s, as the UN brought peace to this stricken land the risk was political instability, corruption, malnutrition, and an exploding HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Over the six days I spent in Cambodia I immersed myself in current day life and issues. Our group, led by the Chicago-based organization Build Cambodia, traveled from one end of

the country to the other visiting villages, schools, hospitals, human rights organizations, even the U.S. ambassador. We saw projects of great accomplishment and inspiration and then saw circumstances of such wanton abuse and deprivation that we were rendered speechless.

Before we would visit the famous temples at Angkor Wat we visited one of the more than 380 known killing fields. In this one I viewed the excavated skulls of more than 17,000 Cambodians brutally executed after weeks of torture and starvation. In all, the country lost between 1.75 and 2 million people in the three years that the Khmer Rouge was in power.

Today there is little hope for most Cambodians. The average median household income is \$365 per year, and one-third of the nation struggles to exist on less than \$1 a day. When we visited the Sihanouk Hospital of HOPE in Phnom Penh early one morning, we arrived just in time for the daily 8:30 a.m. lottery which is held in the courtyard out front to select perhaps 10 out of 200 applicants for admissions and treatment that day. In the wards of the Angkor Hospital for Children, we witnessed heart-wrenching cases of infants whose lives were imperiled by curable malnutrition, tuberculosis, and malaria.

Our travels also took us to a desolate tent city on a dry patch of land outside of Phnom Penh, where a whole neighborhood of city dwellers had been forcibly relocated so that corrupt developers could seize their homes for a lucrative profit. Their new homeland was a tent city with no running water, sanitation, food, shelter, and was miles from work or shopping. The heavy, putrid smell of garbage burning enveloped the air and the disease and desperation. Just living is still a struggle for so many of the people.

Still, there were glimmers of inspiration that emerged in

the course of our travels — namely, the determination of young Cambodians eager to live in a truly democratic society and experience a better quality of life. We visited rural elementary schools and saw young children embracing their studies with enthusiasm and hope. At the Royal University of Phnom Penh, where I gave a guest lecture on Contemporary American Politics, and later at the Harpswell Dormitory, I met with young women and men, the future of the country, and heard their dreams and aspirations and answered their questions. When we asked them what they hoped for they told us about their desire to help rebuild their poor country. When we asked about their prospects they universally told us that their challenges would be overwhelming as long as the current government holds on to power and continues its corrupt, predatory, and negligent political and economic practices. Their analysis was sobering, but at the same time their insights told of a determination to create a better way of life for themselves, their families and friends, and for their country.

My thoughts, however, were never far from the tribunals and the stakes associated with them. The idealist in me felt that if, after an indefensible delay of almost thirty years, the tribunals could bring those responsible for directing the horrific crimes against humanity to justice and set an example of impunity, then the political system would inevitably open up and those students would indeed have a chance. Without the opportunity to finally have justice served, those young people who are Cambodia's future would otherwise be discouraged. They might resign themselves to their fate or they might leave for more opportunity elsewhere. If that were to occur, yet another generation — this time, the future of the Cambodian nation — will have tragically been put at risk.



Lveatae Primary School

Lveatae primary school is benefiting from an innovative after school program started by Sokchea Monn. Sokchea was orphaned during the Khmer Rouge regime at a young age and education was a large part of what allowed him to rise above his dire circumstances. Perhaps due in part to the experiences of his own life, he became particularly sensitive to the importance of education. He wanted to make sure teachers had what they needed to be able to provide students with the best education they could. Sokchea returned to his home village of Lveatae two hours north of Phnom Penh with funds he raised and paid teachers at the Lveatae primary school an extra US\$20 a month to supplement their US\$35 monthly salaries. In return, teachers give an extra two hours of instruction after the normal half day of school. With this extra support, teachers are now able to focus on educating their students rather than worry about how to feed their families. Students are getting the extra help they need and the results are beginning to show. Officials from the Ministry of Education were surprised by the reading rates of the school's kindergarteners and only then learned of Sokchea's work. Our group took a scenic two-hour ride to the school, visited classrooms and met with the school director.





Community Legal Education Center

As Cambodia's economy grows, powerful businessmen, government officials and military officers are hungry for land for speculation or development. As a result, thousands of people are being forcibly and often violently pushed off valuable property they once called their own. Land grabbing is rampant in Cambodia today. The Community Legal Education Center (CLEC) is helping educate Cambodians about their rights to their land, helping them advocate these rights and resist illegal resettlement. Our group toured a displaced community 25 kilometers from Phnom Penh where people were living with no sanitation or means to earn money. Their hope for the future was dwindling. We also visited "Group 78," a determined community that has stood up for their rights with the support of CLEC to evade displacement.



Toul Sleng Genocide Museum

The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum is a former high school whose five buildings were converted into a prison and interrogation center known as Security Prison 21 (S-21). Between the Khmer Rouge evacuation of Phnom Penh in 1975 and the Vietnamese invasion of 1979 that overthrew the regime, an estimated 17,000 people were imprisoned and tortured in S-21. Many prisoners, including Khmer Rouge members and soldiers, were accused of treason. Prisoners were transferred from S-21 to the Choeung Ek extermination center, where they were murdered. Only seven people imprisoned at Tuol Sleng survived.

គុកស្រព្វ
MASS GRAVE
86 MASS GRAVES
8985 VICTIMS

6
គុកស្រព្វ
MASS GRAVE
8985 VICTIMS

Choeung Ek Memorial Killing Field

The Choeung Ek Memorial is one of more than 380 known killing sites in Cambodia. Those determined by the Khmer Rouge to be enemies of the Communist regime were taken to these sites to be executed and buried in crude, unmarked mass graves. Most people killed at Choeung Ek came from Toul Sleng prison. The site is now a Buddhist memorial that houses more than 5,000 human skulls exhumed from the surrounding field of mass graves. Bone and cloth visibly protrude from the dirt paths — a fresh reminder of how recently the tragedy took place. It is estimated that between 1.5 million and 3 million people out of a population of 8 million died during the Khmer Rouge regime.



ECCC Co-Prosecutor Robert Petit

Ed Bachrach and State Senator Jeff Schoenburg from Illinois met with Robert Petit, a co-prosecutor for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Petit is a criminal attorney who has served on international genocide tribunals in Rwanda and Sierra Leone. Has also worked as a U.N. legal adviser in Kosovo and a serious crimes prosecutor during the U.N. mission in East Timor.



JTA Daily News Bulletin

tered. These benefits include deferral and certain tax credits allowed on goods imported in foreign trade.

It was pointed out that the provisions are as sweeping as opponents of the bill are. They affect only that part of

Digital Divide Data

Digital Divide Data (DDD) provides socially responsible outsourcing services to local and international clients, including Harvard University and the World Bank. DDD trains and employs Cambodians with disabilities, victims of rape and human trafficking and others facing greater challenges than most. Currently DDD employs 200 people in its three offices and has catalyzed the growth of Cambodia's technology industry. It offers young people a first job experience [as well as the time and scholarships] to complete a course of study that will lead to higher paying work. We met with general manager Kunthy Kann and toured the office to learn about the kind of international clients DDD seeks.

**Groundbreaking Web Site to Chronicle Cambodia War Crimes Tribunal
Cambodia Tribunal Monitor (www.CambodiaTribunal.org) to provide webcasts, news,
information and expert commentary on tribunal created to try Khmer Rouge**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 19, 2007

CHICAGO – A new Web site has been launched that will provide ongoing coverage and commentary on the Cambodia war crimes tribunal, now in its early stages of work near Phnom Penh. The Cambodia Tribunal Monitor, now available at www.CambodiaTribunal.org, will serve as a leading source of news and information on the upcoming trials of senior officials of the Khmer Rouge regime for atrocity crimes.

Throughout the court proceedings, the Web site will offer news updates, video excerpts of the trials and guest commentaries by leading international experts on the recent history of Cambodia, politics, human rights and international law.

From April 1975 to January 1979, an estimated 1.7 million Cambodian citizens died under the Khmer Rouge regime. After nearly 10 years of negotiations, a special war crimes tribunal has commenced near Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), as the special Cambodian court is formally known, will oversee the proceedings and is a joint partnership of the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

In addition to archiving daily international news articles, the Web site also provides background

information on the history of the Khmer Rouge and ECCC. Important resources such as court documents and bibliographies of scholarly articles and books are also posted. Once the trials formally begin, which is estimated for early 2008, Cambodia Tribunal Monitor will provide daily tape delayed video of the court proceedings, as well as video of interviews with Cambodian citizens documenting their reaction to the events.

The Cambodia Tribunal Monitor will also feature essays written by leading experts on the subject. The commentary section opens with companion essays by David Scheffer, Northwestern University law professor and former U.S. Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues, and Youk Chhang, executive director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam). In their essays, Scheffer and Chhang set the stage for the tribunal and reflect on why the trials are important to both the international community and the Cambodian people.

“Cambodia has had enough justice administered behind closed doors. It is essential that the ECCC provide some answers ... about who is accountable and why,” Chhang writes. “The tribunal must leave people with a judgment, something concrete they can

take away and debate, and something they feel was done in fairness to all.”

When discussing the importance of the ECCC, Chhang speaks from personal experience as he lived in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime. During this time, his family was relocated to the countryside and into forced labor.

Several of his family members were killed by the regime, including his sister and brother-in-law.

In addition to the significance the ECCC represents to the Cambodian people, Scheffer points out that it will also be a closely observed by an international community of human rights and justice advocates.

“That fact alone [the existence of the ECCC] sends a powerful signal throughout the world that the international community is getting serious . . . about accountability for atrocity crimes and that there is no stopwatch for justice,” writes Scheffer, who is currently the director of the Center for International Human Rights at the Northwestern University School of Law.

In the coming months, commentary and insight from more than a dozen additional contributors will be added to the site.

The Cambodia Tribunal Monitor was developed by a consortium of academic, philanthropic and non-profit organizations committed to providing public access to the tribunal and open discussion throughout the judicial process. The academic manager and sponsor of the site is Northwestern University School of Law’s Center for International Human Rights, joined by co-sponsors Documentation Center of Cambodia and the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center.

The prime sponsor of the site is the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation. The Web site concept was conceived by Illinois State Senator Jeff



Schoenberg, a Chicago-area legislator who also advises the Pritzker family on its philanthropy.

In January, Schoenberg participated in a trip sponsored by Build Cambodia, a U.S. based not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Cambodians build their lives and society. As a result of the experience, Schoenberg enlisted the support of the aforementioned sponsors, and with their assistance the Cambodia Tribunal Monitor was created.

“The goal of this site is to provide broader public exposure to one of the greatest atrocities in modern history and the pursuit of justice that is now in front of us,” Schoenberg said. “Unfortunately, because these crimes were committed more than 30 years ago, there is a generation who knows nothing about this period of history. I encourage professors, teachers, students, historians, journalists and the general public to use Cambodia Tribunal Monitor to ensure that we don’t forget the past — and to demonstrate that in the end, justice prevails.”

In the coming months, certain portions of the site will be translated into Khmer and French.

###



Village of Lvea Choum

Lvea Choum is a small village outside of the provincial town of Kompong Thom. Small thatch hut homes line a narrow dirt road in this village that suffers equally from draught and flooding. We traveled there on our way to Siem Reap from Phnom Penh. This village was introduced to us through contacts at the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization. Our group presented the village with kramas — traditional Khmer scarves, hand pump flashlights, a large basin and a cooking pot that we had purchased in the Central Market in Phnom Penh. We then took a tour of the village to assess the current needs. We learned that the playground of the village school routinely floods and required a couple hundred trucks of earth to level it and keep it dry. We also learned that a number of people were forced to sell their land to alleviate their debts of US\$20 to US\$40, which ultimately only plunges them deeper into poverty.



Angkor Hospital for Children

The Angkor Hospital for Children in Siem Reap is a pediatric teaching hospital funded by Friends Without A Border, an international nongovernmental organization based in New York City. It is dedicated to improving the health and future of Cambodia's children by providing medical, nursing and paramedical education, coupled with the highest quality pediatric care possible. We were given a tour of the hospital and shared a meal later that night with hospital founder Kenro Izu and members of the board David Pritchard, Tina Patterson and Eugene Tragus.



Cambodian Living Arts

Cambodian Living Arts (CLA) had its beginnings in 1998 when Arn Chorn Pond, who survived the Khmer Rouge era by playing the flute, started supporting master musicians to teach the younger generation forms of traditional music that risked extinction. By learning this craft the students are not only keeping traditions alive but are able to perform and earn money where very little opportunity exists otherwise. We walked to the temple of Wat Bo where monks currently live and practice and sat in on a classical wedding music class by master Man Men. Afterwards we were shown the impressive leather puppets of the shadow puppet dance troupe and viewed scenes from the Ramayana painted inside the temple walls.



Angkor Wat Temple

Angkor Wat is the largest and most recognized temple in Cambodia. It is believed to be the largest religious structure in the world. King Suryavarman II dedicated the temple to the Hindu god Vishnu in the 12th century. Angkor and its many other temples served as Cambodia's capital until it fell to the Thais in the 15th century. Jeff and Ed walked the four miles from the hotel to the temple. They agreed it was well worth braving the heat and humidity to take in the beauty and grandeur of the area.



Ta Prohm Temple

Ta Prohm is a Buddhist monastery from the Angkor era. After Angkor fell to the Thais, Ta Prohm and the surrounding temples were abandoned. Trees and shrubs wrapped around the structures until they became a living part of the jungle. Ta Prohm was rediscovered in 1914 and has been left in its natural condition, giving visitors a sense of the extensive clearing and restoration that was done to reclaim the other Angkor temples from the jungle.

Acknowledgements



Build Cambodia would like to thank and acknowledge translator **Lach Chantha** and event specialist **Kristi Sebestyen** for their assistance in the planning and coordination of this trip.

We would also like to acknowledge photographer **Heng Chivoan** whose work is featured in this book.







BUILD CAMBODIA

ស្ថាបនាស្រុកខ្មែរ

**Committed To Helping Cambodians Who
Are Rebuilding Their Lives And Future**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

1555 North Astor Street 45W
Chicago, Illinois 60610 USA
T/312.423.6689
BuildCambodia.org



BUILD CAMBODIA

ស្ថាបនាស្រុកខ្មែរ

**Committed To Helping Cambodians Who
Are Rebuilding Their Lives And Future**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

1555 North Astor Street 45W
Chicago, Illinois 60610 USA
T/312.423.6689
BuildCambodia.org