

**Documentation Center of Cambodia**

**Forensic Pathology and Anthropology of Historical Mass Killing in Cambodia**

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Forensic Project**

January 14, 2004

**DCCAM REPORT**

**Interim Mission Report for Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

**CONTENTS**

0.0 Contents.....

0.2 Illustrations.....

1.0 Executive Summary.....

2.0 Overview of Project.....

2.1 Phases and Objectives of the Forensic Project

2.2 Funding

2.3 Authorization and Compliance

2.4 Key Personnel

3.0 Results of Phase 2.....

3.1 Overview

3.2 Stages of Phase 2

3.2.1 Proposal Writing

3.2.2 Project Launch

3.2.3 Part One Mission

3.2.4 Interim Mission

3.2.5 Part Two Mission

3.3 Reconnaissance and Site Survey

3.3.1 Overview

3.3.2 Initial Sites Surveyed

3.3.3 Potential Candidate Sites

3.3.3.1 Ampe Phnom.....

3.3.3.2 Wat Kakoh.....

3.3.3.3 Tuol Kmaoch.....

3.3.3.4 Tuol Mesang.....

3.3.3.5 Stung Tauch.....

3.3.3.6 Phum La.....

3.4 Ground Truthing

3.4.1 Overview

3.4.2 Stung Tauch

3.4.3 Phum La

3.4.4 Tuol Kmaoch

3.4.5 Tuol Mesang

3.4.6 Ampe Phnom

**Interim Mission Report for Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

- 3.5 Conclusions on Site Selection
  - 3.5.1 Primary Site Designation: Stung Tauch
  - 3.5.2 Treatment of the Primary Site during Phase 2
  
- 3.6 The Tuol Sleng Exhibit
  - 3.6.1 Background and Rationale
  - 3.6.2 Selection of Specimens for Exhibit
  - 3.6.3 Objectives and Considerations
  - 3.6.4 Methods and Materials
  - 3.6.5 Exhibit Completion
  
- 4.0 Budget, Variances and Reporting.....
  - 4.1 Budget Expenditure
  - 4.2 Variances from Plan
  - 4.3 Reporting

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Draft Specimen Descriptions for Tuol Sleng Forensic Exhibit

APPENDIX B

Appendix B-1 – Raw Timeline for Phase 2 of the Forensic Project

Appendix B-2 – Critical Paths and Project Milestones

Appendix B-3 – Complete Phase 2 Gantt Chart

**APPENDIX B-4-- REASONS FOR NOT DOING A LIMITED EXCAVATION:  
MS. KATHERINE GRUSPIER'S MESSAGE**

**Interim Mission Report for Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

**Maps**

1. Kampong Speu Province, Chbar Morn District, Ampe Phnom.....
2. Takeo Province, Bati District, Wat Kakoh.....
3. Prey Veng Province, Mesang District, Tuol Kmaoch.....
4. Prey Veng Province, Mesang District, Tuol Mesang.....
5. Kampong Cham Province, Ponhea Krek District, Stung Tauch.....
6. Kampong Cham Province, Ponhea Krek District, Phum La.....

**Photographs**

1. Dr. Gruspier Examines River Bank at Ampe Phnom .....
2. Human Skeletal Remains Discovered at Wat Kakoh.....
3. Witness Paok Aun Leads the Team to Tuol Kmaoch Site.....
4. Witnesses and Team Members at First Tuol Mesang Location.....
5. Witnesses and Team Members at Second Tuol Mesang Location.....
6. Children Under Pig Stye at Third Tuol Mesang Location.....
7. Pair of Suspected Pits at First Stung Tauch Location.....
8. A Larger Suspected Pit at First Stung Tauch Location.....
9. Villagers Gather at Suspected Pit at Second Stung Tauch Location.....
10. Yeay Yatt Well at the La Village Site.....
11. Sou Vet Well at the La Village Site.....
12. Ta Kham Well at the La Village Site.....
13. Yeay Nha Well at La Village Site.....
14. Ren Well at La Village Site.....
15. Witness Testimony at Stung Tauch.....
16. In the Forest at Stung Tauch.....
17. Prototype of Forensic Exhibit Display Case.....

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 1. Executive Summary

This report describes Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia's Forensic Project, formally titled "Forensic Pathology and Anthropology of Historical Mass Killing in Cambodia." The report provides an overview of the Forensic Project, and then discusses the objectives, activities, and findings of Phase 2 of the project. In summary, Phase 2 was successfully executed within the budget and time frame provided by the funding agency.

Phase 2 had two primary objectives. The first objective was to identify appropriate sites to carry out the full-scale multidisciplinary forensic exhumation that is planned for Phase 3. A second objective was to collect and preserve a set of human skeletal remains exhibiting evidence of trauma.

In Part 1 of Phase 2, the research team identified a set of promising mass grave sites, and carried out physical surveys of these sites to determine their suitability as candidates for Phase 3. The team discovered that most of these sites had recently been looted, and or else had been destroyed by environmental action, and therefore none of them was appropriate as a Phase 3 candidate. With this discovery, the research team concluded that it would be necessary to add a new step to the research protocol, involving a more comprehensive survey of possible mass grave locations. During Part 1, the research team also collected and preserved a representative sample of traumatized human skeletal remains, thereby achieving one of the primary objectives of Phase 2.

The research team then planned and implemented an Interim Mission. This work began with a comprehensive analysis of all 348 suspected mass grave sites that have been identified by the Documentation Center during the last eight years of the Mass Grave Mapping Project. We prepared a list of 53 sites that appeared to have some or all of the desired characteristics, and Documentation Center research teams proceeded to visit each of these sites to update our understanding of the current condition of those sites. This process yielded six candidate sites for further inquiry. At this juncture, the Principal Researcher traveled to Cambodia, carried out extensive investigations of these six sites, and prepared a report on his findings for analysis by the project's forensic specialists. During the Interim Mission, the project team also made progress on the design of a new exhibit for the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, using the human skeletal remains that had been collected and preserved during Part One of the research.

In December, the Principal Research and the Forensic Experts returned to Cambodia for Part 2 of Phase 2, aiming to complete the final investigations of the six candidate sites. After careful consideration of the data, the team concluded that the Stung Tauch site in Kampong Cham Province is (and possible another site in Prey Veng province) the most promising candidate for Phase 3 exhumation. This site was consequently designated as the Primary Site. During the Part 2 Mission, the team also finalized the design for the Tuol Sleng Museum Forensic Exhibit, and that exhibit is expected to open to the public in early April 2004.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 2. Overview of Forensic Project

#### 2.1 Phases and Objectives of the Forensic Project

The Documentation Center of Cambodia is carrying out a long-term, three-phase project aiming to assemble forensic data on mass killing in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime. Phase 1 of this project consisted of a preliminary forensic feasibility assessment of human skeletal remains at mass grave sites and associated memorials; Phase 1 was completed in April of 2002. Phase 2 comprised two primary objectives. The first objective of Phase 2 involved a detailed reconnaissance of mass graves to identify potential candidate sites for a full-scale forensic exhumation; the second objective of Phase 2 was the collection and preservation of a representative sample of traumatized human skeletal remains. Phase 2 was initiated with a two-week mission in June 2003, continued with a three-week interim mission in September-October 2003, and concluded with a two-week final mission in December 2003. Phase 3 is a definitive, multi-disciplinary forensic analysis of a representative sample of mass graves.

#### 2.2 Funding

Phase 1 was funded by the Coalition for International Justice (CIJ), and those funds were administered by CIJ outside the Documentation Center budget; CIJ is a Washington-based non-governmental organization. Phase 2 was funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The funds were administered by The Asia Foundation (TAF). Phase 3 of the Forensic Project is not yet funded; the final phase remains in the planning stages.

#### 2.3 Authorization and Compliance

The Forensic Project is being carried out pursuant to a general authorization from Prime Minister Hun Sen, dated July 25, 2001, and a specific authorization from Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Minister of Interior, Sar Kheng, dated March 10, 2003.

All phases of the Forensic Project are carried out in strict compliance with all relevant Cambodian national legal and regulatory provisions. Appropriate sensitivity to prevailing religious and community sensibilities has been observed by project personnel at all times. During Phase 2, the project's managers scrupulously applied the contractual criteria for project performance as specified in the Documentation Center's Letter of Agreement with The Asia Foundation. The Forensic Team performs according to generally accepted professional standards within the disciplines of forensic pathology and forensic anthropology.

#### 2.4 Key Personnel

The Forensic Project Team includes personnel from the Documentation Center of Cambodia, as well as specialized international personnel contracted to consult on this project. Mr. Youk Chhang, Director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, is the Manager of the

## **Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

Forensic Project. Mr. Sorya Sim, Deputy Director, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Field Supervisor of the Forensic Project. Dr. Craig Etcheson, an Advisor to the Documentation Center, serves as the Principal Researcher for the Forensic Project. Dr. Michael Pollanen, a consultant to the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, Canada, is serving as the Lead Scientific Consultant on Phases 1 and 2. Dr. Katherine Gruspier, a consultant to the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, Canada, is serving as the Anthropology Consultant on Phase 2. Mr. Pheng Pong Rasy, Mr. Ouch Sam Oeun, Mr. Sin Khin, Prum Phalla, Mr. Sok Vanak, Jeff Straka, staff and volunteer of the Documentation Center/Mass Grave Mapping Team.

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## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3. Results of the Project

#### 3.1 Background

Phase 2 of the Forensic Project had two primary objectives: (A) reconnaissance and initial site survey of mass graves to identify an appropriate set of candidate sites for a full-scale forensic exhumation, and (B) the collection and preservation of a representative sample of traumatized human skeletal remains. Securing these objectives involved an elaborate series of steps.

#### 3.2 Stages of the Project

The stages of the Phase 2 can be divided into proposal writing, tasks necessary for the launch of the project, the Part One Mission, the Interim Mission, and the Part Two Mission. As with most large-scale projects, far more time was required to prepare for the project than was actually spent carrying out fieldwork. In terms of cumulative time required for completion, the proposal writing and project launch phases of the work were the most time-consuming elements. (See timelines and Gantt charts in Appendix B for details.)

##### 3.2.1 Proposal Writing

The forensic experts began drafting the proposal for Phase 2 on August 21, 2002, producing a first draft in five days. By August 31, the Principal Researcher and the Documentation Center had completed revisions of the draft, including a review by an outside forensic consultant. The proposal was then submitted to potential funding agencies. On January 16, 2003, the Documentation Center received a commitment in principle from the US Agency for International Development to fund the proposal.

##### 3.2.2 Project Launch

The promise of funding in mid-January initiated the formal launch of project activities. The Project Team immediately set about the tasks of refining the budget detail, preparing contracts for proposed consultants to the project, and securing formal permission from the Cambodian government for the project activities. These tasks were completed on May 12. Formal approval of the project budget came from USAID on May 21. Documentation Center Mapping Teams launched initial site reconnaissance four days later, on May 25. On June 6, the Documentation Center received the initial tranche of funds, and two days later, the Principal Researcher departed from the United States to begin the Part One Mission.

##### 3.2.3 Part One Mission

Part 1 of Phase 2 was executed from June 8 through June 25, 2003, and Objective B – the collection and preservation of a sample of traumatized human skeletal remains – was completed

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

in the course of that work. Progress was also made on Objective A – site selection for Phase 3 – during the Part 1 mission. However, in the course of the Part 1 fieldwork, the Project Team discovered that there had been a very high rate of mass grave looting since the original Documentation Center mass grave mapping work began in 1995. Consequently, we concluded that it would be more difficult than anticipated to identify appropriate sites for Phase 3 of the project. In response to this finding, the Project Team modified the original work plan, adding an Interim Mission between Part 1 and Part 2 of Phase 2. The objective of the Interim Mission was to refine the list of candidate sites prior to the return of the forensic experts to the field.

### 3.2.4 Interim Mission

The objective of the Interim Mission was to define a set of target sites for review by the forensic experts. In preparation for the Interim Mission, the Documentation Center's Mapping Team carried out fieldwork in late July, August and early September. The Principal Researcher executed the Interim Mission between September 18 and October 10, 2003, working closely with Documentation Center personnel. The project's forensic specialists were consulted at every step of the work.

The Interim Mission succeeded in its primary objective of defining a list of candidate sites for evaluation by the Project Team's Forensic Specialists. Beginning with a master list of 19,471 suspected mass graves at 348 sites throughout Cambodia, the Project Team evaluated the master list and selected fifty-three mass gravesites for more detailed review. This selection was based on a variety of criteria, including logistical considerations, quality of the available data, condition of the site, and potential relevance of the site to an understanding of violations of international humanitarian law during the Democratic Kampuchea regime. The Project Team then conducted physical inspections of these fifty-three sites.

This process resulted in the a list of six sites deemed by the Project Team to hold potential as candidates for the full-scale forensic exhumation planned as Phase 3 of the Forensic Project. These sites include: 1) Kampong Speu Province, Chbar Morn District, Svay Kravann Commune, Ampe Phnom Village; 2) Takeo Province, Bati District, Kandoeng Commune, Wat Kakoh; 3) Prey Veng Province, Mesang District, Chyphoch Commune, Tuol Kmaoch; 4) Prey Veng Province, Mesang District, Prey Rumdeng Commune, Tuol Mesang; 5) Kampong Cham Province, Ponhea Krek District, Kak Commune, Stung Tauch Village; and 6) Kampong Cham Province, Ponhea Krek District, Kaong Kang Commune, La Village. These six sites were subjected to repeated visits by the Project Team with the aim of maximizing our understanding of the physical and historical facts associated with each site.

The Interim Mission prepared the ground for Part 2 of Phase 2 of the Forensic Project. Our original work plan envisioned conducting Part 2 in the August through October 2003 time frame. However, a variety of unanticipated contingencies arose, including the extended political uncertainty associated with the July elections, the necessity of adding an Interim Mission to the work plan, and scheduling complications for key members of the Project Team. Consequently,

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

we re-scheduled Part 2 for execution in December 2003, and we were granted an extension of the project completion deadline from The Asia Foundation in order to accommodate this revised schedule.

### 3.2.5 Part Two Mission

The Part Two mission was executed in December 2003, and is described in detail below in section 3.4, under the heading of “Ground Truthing.” Before we come to that part of the narrative, however, it will be useful to review in some detail the findings of the Interim Mission, in order to set the stage for a description of the final stage of Part Two of the Forensic Project. We will therefore now turn to an extended summary of the activities undertaken during the Interim Mission, under the heading of Reconnaissance and Site Survey.

### 3.3 Reconnaissance and Site Survey

#### 3.3.1 Overview

Objective A of Phase 2 consisted of reconnaissance and initial site survey of mass graves in order to identify an appropriate set of candidate sites for a full-scale forensic exhumation. In furtherance of this objective, the Forensic Project Team carried out initial reconnaissance of mass gravesites, aiming to identify potential candidates for full-scale forensic characterization. Between 1995 and 2003, Documentation Center Mass Grave Mapping Project identified 19,471 mass graves at 348 sites throughout Cambodia. From this master set of sites, the Cambodian Forensic Team led by Pheng Pong Rasy selected a subset of sites based on several criteria, including logistical considerations (e.g., ease of access, site security), quality and extent of existing witness and documentary data (focusing on contemporaneous evidence), condition of the site (e.g., extent to which site is believed to be undisturbed, and the hydrological regime), and potential relevance of the site to understanding violations of international humanitarian law during the period of the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

#### 3.3.2 Initial Sites Surveyed

This selection process resulted in a target list of fifty-three mass grave sites in six provinces (Kampong Speu, Kandal, Takeo, Kampong Cham and Kampong Thom, Prey Veng) and the municipality of Phnom Penh. The complete list of target sites was:

1. Kampong Speu: Chbar Morn District, Svay Kravann Commune, Ampe Phnom Village
2. Takeo: Bati District, Kandoeng Commune, Wat Kakoh
3. Takeo: Tram Kak District, Kus Commune, Kraing Ta Chan
4. Kampong Cham: Cheung Prey District, So Tep Commune, Wat Skun
5. Kampong Cham: Kampong Siem District, Ampil Commune, Wat No Kor
6. Kandal: Ponhea Leu District, Phsar Dek Commune, Oudong
7. Phnom Penh: Chamkar Morn District, Boengkengkang 3 Quarter, Tuol Sleng

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

8. Kampong Cham: Kroch Chmar District, Trea Commune, Trea II Village
9. Kampong Cham: Stung Trang District, Prey Kak Commune, Wat Stung Trang
10. Kampong Thom: Stung District, Kampong Chen Cheung Commune, Tuol Plorng
11. Kampong Cham: Kroch Chmar District, Poes 1 Commune, Koh Phal
12. Prey Veng: Sithor Kandal District, Prek Chang Kran Commune, Phsar Prek Sandek
13. Prey Veng: Sithor Kandal District, Prek Chang Kran Commune, Prek Sandek High School
14. Prey Veng: Sithor Kandal District, Prey Daem Thnoeng Commune, Prey Daem Thnoeng Pagoda
15. Prey Veng: Sithor Kandal District, Chrey Khmum Commune, Prey Sva Pagoda
16. Prey Veng: Sithor Kandal District, Russei Sanh Commune, Prey Chhieng Pagoda
17. Prey Veng: Mesang District, Prey Torting Commune, Tuol Cheung Chap
18. Prey Veng: Mesang District, Chyphoch Commune, Tuol Kmaoch
19. Prey Veng: Mesang District, Prey Rumdeng Commune, Tuol Mesang
20. Prey Veng: Kampong Trabek District, Kansaom Ak Commune, Trapeang Thnaot
21. Prey Veng: Kampong Trabek District, Kansaom Ak Commune, Trapeang Chhouk
22. Prey Veng: Kampong Trabek District, Kansaom Ak Commune, Tuol Chreh
23. Prey Veng: Kampong Trabek District, Kansaom Ak Commune, Tuol Roka
24. Prey Veng: Kampong Trabek District, Kansaom Ak Commune, Russei Chuor
25. Prey Veng: Kamchay Mear District, Kra-nhoung Commune, Ta Sam Prison
26. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Chamkar Andaung Commune, Andaung Ta Sun
27. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Chamkar Andaung Commune, Chamkar Kao Sou Lekh 2
28. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Chamkar Andaung Commune, Chamkar Ta Pom
29. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Speu Commune, Kuk Mitt Sao
30. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Speu Commune, Wat Por Pren
31. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Speu Commune, Prey Trapeang Kok Sam
32. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Speu Commune, Trapeang Khnar
33. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Svay Teap Commune, Chamkar Svay Chanty
34. Kampong Cham: Chamkar Leu District, Ta Ong Commune, Lo M 18
35. Kampong Cham: Kampong Siem District, Kra-La Commune, Wat Phnom Bros
36. Kampong Cham: Kampong Siem District, Vihear Thom Commune, Kok Pring
37. Kampong Cham: Kang Meas District, Peam Chikang Commune, Wat Prey Krabao
38. Kampong Cham: Kang Meas District, Peam Chikang Commune, Wat O Trakuon
39. Kampong Cham: Kang Meas District, Peam Chikang Commune, Wat Nikrot
40. Kampong Cham: Ponhea Krek District, Kak Commune, Trapeang Russei Village
41. Kampong Cham: Ponhea Krek District, Kak Commune, Stung Tauch Village
42. Kampong Cham: Ponhea Krek District, Kaong Kang Commune, La Ta Kham Well
43. Kampong Cham: Ponhea Krek District, Kaong Kang Commune, La Yeay Yatt Well
44. Kampong Cham: Ponhea Krek District, Kaong Kang Commune, La Yeay Nha Well
45. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Chrey Vien Commune, Sleng Village, Kuk Wat Ta Meak
46. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Chrey Vien Commune, Daun Dei Village, Tuol Trapeang Lvea

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

47. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Kor Commune, Takeo Village, O Ta Kung
48. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Kor Commune, Takeo Village, Tuol Krasaing
49. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Kor Commune, Takeo Village, Tnaot Chuor
50. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Kor Commune, Takeo Village, Munty Santesok
51. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Kor Commune, Ta Meas Village, Sala Paktham Soeksa Khum Kor
52. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Thma Run Commune, Andaung Ta Phann
53. Kampong Cham: Prey Chhor District, Thma Run Commune, Andaung Ta Pich Village, Munty Santesokh Srok 77 Leu

The Project Team investigated each of these sites in the course of the Interim Mission of Phase 2, and determined that six of them are potential candidate sites for site confirmation by the forensic experts in Part 2 of Phase 2. The quality of the sites varies, though all six meet the minimum criteria to qualify as being of possible interest for the full-scale forensic exhumation.

### 3.3.3 Potential Candidate Sites

In locating and evaluating the potential candidate sites, the project team employed multiple techniques at each site, including the collection of witness testimony, a physical search of the area, and observation of variations in vegetation and topography. This following overview of the sites summarizes the information gathered to date concerning each site.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.3.3.1

Kampong Speu Province  
Chbar Morn District  
Svay Kravann Commune  
Ampe Phnom Village

#### Overview of Ampe Phnom Site

The Ampe Phnom site is arrayed along the southern bank of the Prek Thnaot River, a few kilometers outside of Kampong Speu Provincial Town. At this location, we suspect the existence of multiple mass graves, based on our observations of surface scatter, skeletal remains protruding from the eroding river bank, and multiple first-hand witness, including the contemporaneous observations of one intended victim. Note that directly across the Prek Thnaot River from the site, there is a popular resort that receives heavy traffic from holiday-makers during much of the year, and consequently the site is frequented by families and their children.

To reach the site, one travels west from Phnom Penh for approximately one hour along National Road 4 to Kampong Speu Provincial Town; as of 3Q03, NR4 was in excellent condition. From Kampong Speu Provincial Town, the route to the site turns south along a provincial road for a couple of kilometers, and then one bears in an easterly direction for approximately five kilometers along a series of cart tracks and footpaths. On one of these cart tracks, a bridge has been under reconstruction for the last several years, requiring a short detour along a temporary footpath through private property and a paddy field. Consequently, a 4WD vehicle is advisable for travel to this site.

The site includes a genocide memorial containing human skeletal remains excavated from mass graves along the Preaek Thnaot River in the early 1980s. In addition to the previously excavated mass graves at this site, there are others that have reportedly been disturbed by farming activity, others that have been disturbed by water erosion along the edge of the river bank, and still others that have been disturbed by the action of foot traffic eroding the surface of the topsoil. It is possible that there may be some entirely undisturbed mass graves remaining in the area. The extant deposits appear to range from surface scatter to materials at a depth of approximately one meter or more. The top edge of the river bank upon which the suspected deposits are located is several meters above the mean dry season surface level of the adjacent river, and therefore it is likely that the hydrological regime is not adverse at this site.

The Global Positioning System reading for this site is Lat N 11° 27' 11.29" Long E 104° 32' 29.38". A map of Kampong Speu Province's Chbar Morn District is shown on the overleaf, where the location of the Ampe Phnom site is indicated by the polygon shape.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Direct Observations at Ampe Phnom by Team Members

During an initial visit to this site by the Project Team in 2002, the Principal Researcher discovered a variety of human skeletal remains scattered at the base of the river bank, which had been freshly eroded during the floods of the previous rainy season. Human skeletal remains and bits of cloth were also seen to be protruding from the soil of the river bank. During a return visit to the site in June 2003, the team discovered additional human bones protruding from the bank of the river. Consulting Forensic Anthropologist Dr. Katherine Gruspier extracted one sample of these remains, and identified it as a human ankle bone. In addition, on the path along the edge of the river bank, a few meters from the spot where Dr. Gruspier recovered this sample of skeletal remains, there are what appear to be crania and other human bones that have been exposed on the surface by the action of foot traffic wearing away the topsoil. The photograph on the previous page (9) shows Dr. Gruspier examining the area from which the ankle bone was recovered.

### Observations at Ampe Phnom by Local Witnesses

Several farmers who work plots of land in the area west of the memorial site and south of the river have told members of the Project Team that in the process of the annual plowing of their plots over the last twenty years, human remains regularly work their way to the surface of the fields. These witnesses say that these areas were not among those that were exhumed to obtain the skeletal remains that are deposited in the memorial. This information strongly suggests that a large number of mass graves were created in this area.

We also have the contemporaneous testimony of a first-hand witness to events at this site from the period of the Khmer Rouge regime. Yeay Ry says that she was evacuated from Takeo Province to this village by Southwest Zone Khmer Rouge cadre in late 1978, along with a large number of other individuals. Ry says that virtually all of those who had been evacuated with her were executed at this site in the first few days of January 1979, on the orders of Khmer Rouge Region Chief Mit Yang. She testified that she was spared from execution because she had been born and raised in this region, and her knowledge of the area was useful to the Southwest Zone cadre who had moved in from Takeo Province to seize control of the area. Ry argues that large numbers of individuals were executed under Mit Yang, far more than are represented by the remains displayed at the Ampe Phnom memorial.

We believe that additional first-hand witnesses can be located in the area, from among villagers who lived in the area during the Khmer Rouge regime. However, we have been unable to recover any contemporaneous written documentation produced at this suspected execution site.

In summary, these factors lead us to conclude there is a probability that additional mass graves exist at multiple locations in this immediate area, and that some of them may be undisturbed.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.3.3.2

Takeo Province  
Bati District  
Kandoeng Commune  
Wat Kakoh

#### Overview of Wat Kakoh Site

Wat Kakoh is situated in Bati District of Takeo Province, approximately fifty kilometers distant from Phnom Penh on National Road 2, and one kilometer down a dirt lane from NR2. This puts the site a few kilometers south of Lake Tonle Bati. At this site, we have identified a suspected mass grave based on the report of a first-hand witness, and direct observations by members of the Project Team. As of 3Q03, National Road 2 between Phnom Penh and the site was in excellent condition. Note that Wat Kakoh is also known as Wat Sophy.

On the grounds of Wat Kakoh, there is an elaborate, recently constructed concrete stupa containing a sizable collection of human skeletal remains, representing well in excess of several hundred individuals. Local witnesses testify that these remains were excavated in 1979 and the early 1980s from several mass graves located just outside the confines of the pagoda, in an area to the east of the main temple building, adjacent to the national road, and situated among rice paddies. The remains were stored in a temporary structure until the current stupa was completed a few years ago.

The terrain surrounding the pagoda property is primarily low-lying paddy land, prone to annual flooding in the rainy season when Lake Tonle Bati expands to inundate much of the area. Consequently, the land upon which Wat Kakoh itself is situated has been raised through landfill by approximately one to two meters above the mean surface level of the area. Thus the depth of any deposit in the area is a critical factor in determining the hydrological regime for a particular mass grave. The previously excavated mass graves at this site, for example, were situated just outside the raised land of the temple, and were therefore subject to the action of water for much of the wet season.

The Global Positioning System reading for the Wat Kakoh site is GPS Lat N 11° 16' 45.79" Long E 104° 49' 59.25". A map of Takeo Province's Bati District is shown on the overleaf, with the location of Wat Kakoh indicated by the polygon shape.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Observations at Wat Kakoh by Local Witnesses

In late 1999, religious authorities at Wat Kakoh decided to construct a new structure on the grounds of the pagoda. A monk, the Venerable Keo Kosal, was assigned to dig the foundation for this new structure. In a grove of coconut trees approximately thirty meters south of the main pagoda building, the monk began to dig a hole for a corner post of the new structure. At a depth of approximately one meter, he struck a cache of bones that appeared to him to be human remains. The venerable ceased digging, and authorities soon notified the Documentation Center of Cambodia. After Documentation Center personnel had inspected the site in 2000, the monk subsequently refilled the hole, and temple authorities selected another location for the new structure.

Thus far the Project Team has been unable to locate any contemporaneous witnesses to events at Wat Kakoh during the Khmer Rouge regime. We have also been unable to recover any contemporaneous written documentation produced at this suspected execution site.

### Direct Observations at Wat Kakoh by Team Members

As noted above, a Documentation Center Mass Grave Mapping Team visited the Wat Kakoh site in 2000, after being notified that a monk had discovered a suspected deposit of human remains. The Mapping Team examined the hole that had been excavated by the monk, and confirmed that it appeared to contain human skeletal remains. A photograph of this excavation is reproduced below on the next page. This suspected deposit is located within the confines of the temple, and thus the surface of the land upon which it is situated is above the level of the surrounding paddy land. Even so, as is suggested by the photograph, this location is not immune from the annual inundation of the surrounding area during the rainy season.

In June 2003, the Project Team revisited the site and interviewed the monk again. The Venerable Keo Kosal testified that the location in question had remained undisturbed since he had refilled the hole in 2000. The Project Team's Lead Scientific Consultant, Dr. Michael Pollanen, and the Chief Consultant for Forensic Anthropology, Dr. Katherine Gruspier, both inspected the location where the monk had uncovered and then reburied the remains, but they elected to forego an invasive evaluation of the site at that time.

In summary, the accidental discovery of this suspected mass grave indicates a likelihood that not all of the mass graves at Wat Kakoh were located and excavated at the time of the search for human remains in the immediate aftermath of the Khmer Rouge regime. In turn, this suggests that there may be additional mass graves in the area that have not yet been identified. However, because we presently have no contemporaneous witnesses to the events at this location during the Khmer Rouge regime, at this time it is therefore not possible for us to definitively determine the extent of potential undisturbed deposits at this site.

3.3.3.3

Prey Veng Province  
Mesang District  
Chyphoch Commune  
Veang Village  
Tuol Khmaoch

Overview of the Tuol Khmaoch Site

Tuol Khmaoch, or “Chinese Hill,” is named for a small grouping of tombs situated among rice paddies a short distance outside Veang Village in Prey Veng Province’s Mesang District. At this location, we have identified a suspected set of mass graves based on the testimony of numerous first-hand witnesses. There is no contemporary surface scatter evident at the site. According to witnesses, however, most of these purported deposits are relatively shallow, at a depth of approximately one half meter.

The site is approximately one hundred meters distant from the nearest cart track, across a series of rice paddies. The jumping off point from the cart track is approximately two kilometers from the provincial road in Veang Village. Negotiating the provincial road itself involves a trek along some twenty to twenty-five kilometers of largely unimproved dirt track from National Road 1. The turnoff from NR1 is a few kilometers south of the Neak Loeung Mekong ferry crossing. National Road 1 was in poor condition during the 3Q03, occasionally slowing traffic to speeds of no more than five kilometers per hour. A 4WD vehicle is consequently required for rainy season travel to this site, and is recommended year-round. The trip from Phnom Penh to the site takes approximately 4-5 hours each way.

Because the site of the suspected mass graves is situated in a group of rice paddies, any remains there will have been subject to annual periods of being below the water table for most of the last twenty-five years. During the dry season, however, the water table appears to drop significantly in this area, and therefore it is possible that exhumation could be carried out under relatively benign hydrological conditions. We have located no contemporaneous written documentation regarding this site thus far in the course of our investigations.

On the next page is a map of Prey Veng’s Mesang District, with the location of the Tuol Khmaoch site indicated by a polygon. Global Positioning System readings for this site are currently unavailable.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Observations of Tuol Kmaoch by Local Witnesses

At the Tuol Kmaoch site, multiple contemporaneous first-hand witnesses testify to the existence of a set of mass graves, one of which is said to be undisturbed. The witnesses describe events surrounding the creation of numerous small (3-4 victims each) mass graves at this site. The purported gravesites are located in rice fields on property belonging to individuals named Soeun, Yeay Ting, Por, and Sim. Most of these mass graves are directly in the rice fields, and human bones have been stirred up during annual plowing over the years. At least one mass grave, however, is said to be located within a dike between two adjacent rice paddies, and consequently it has been undisturbed by agricultural activity since deposition.

Witness Paok Aun (male, age 55) testifies that he came to work one morning during the rainy season of 1978 at a rice paddy he had been assigned to tend. Upon arrival that day, he observed that at some point during the preceding night, an area of earth had been disturbed at the edge of the rice paddy. There was blood on the ground in the surrounding area, and a male human leg protruded from the disturbed patch of earth. Aun concluded from these observations that executions had taken place there during the previous night, and that this was the location of a mass grave. He believes that he knows the identity of the victims in this mass grave; the communal kitchen chiefs for the village had all disappeared over the previous few days, and were replaced by alien Khmer Rouge cadre from the Southwest Zone. Consequently, Aun and other villagers inferred that the new leadership that had seized control of the area had purged the disappeared local people. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, Aun helped to expand the area of rice cultivation in the village, and in the process, he built a dike on the site of this particular mass grave, preserving it in what he believes to be an undisturbed condition. A photograph on the following page shows Paok Aun talking to Project Team Member Pheng Pong Rasy at the site of the purportedly undisturbed mass grave.

In 1978, witness Soeun (female, age about 50) lived approximately 75 meters from the location of the undisturbed mass grave described by Aun, a short distance across the rice field. She says that during the rainy season of 1978, Khmer Rouge cadre came repeatedly in the evening to borrow her hoe, and each time they returned the hoe to her, it was stained with blood; this observation led her to conclude that the hoe had been used for executions. Moreover, she testified to having seen Khmer Rouge cadre leading groups of prisoners past her house in the direction of the mass grave sites, to having heard screams a short while later, and to having seen that the prisoners were no longer with the Khmer Rouge cadre when the cadre came back to return her hoe. This testimony was confirmed by a daughter of Soeun, named Sarim, and by Sarim's husband, Vann, though it is not clear that Vann was himself a first-hand witness to these events.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

Witness Noch Oim (age 34, another daughter of Soeun) currently lives in the house that is located approximately 75 meters from the purportedly undisturbed mass grave. She was a young girl in 1978, about eight years old. She says that at the time of the apparent deposition of the mass graves, her mother was repeatedly asked by very young Southwest Zone cadre, who Oim thought were not very much older than herself, for the loan of the family hoe. That hoe, according to Oim, was used to excavate the execution pits. Oim says that the cadre would bring the victims to the execution site in groups of 2 or 3 or 4 at a time. She believes that the victims included “17 April People,” that is, urban residents who became a reviled underclass during the Khmer Rouge regime, and “So Phim network people,” that is, suspected subordinates of Eastern Zone Khmer Rouge leader So Phim, who was purged on the orders of the Khmer Rouge Standing Committee. According to Oim, the victims were brought to the site only at night, and she remembers hearing shouting from the execution site after the Khmer Rouge cadre had taken individuals there. She says that these events occurred at irregular intervals, perhaps every few days or so, but always at night. She says that she assumes that the executions were carried out whenever an “investigation” was completed. Oim says that she was not did not actually see with her own eyes any of the killings being carried out. After the intermittent nightly visitations by Khmer Rouge cadre leading apparent victims past their house, however, she says that she would sometimes go out to the field the next morning, where she would see freshly disturbed earth, and blood on the ground. She says that the mass grave pits in question were typically very shallow. Consequently, according to Oim, during the rainy season, sometimes the bodies would float to the surface and emerge from the earth to the point where they could be seen. She says that in subsequent years, farmers plowing the area would frequently stir up human bones from the fields, but that in recent years, few human remains have surfaced during the annual plowing.

### Direct Observation of the Tuol Kmaoch Site by Project Team Members

Members of the Project Team visited this site in July 2003, and then returned again in September 2003. Team members observed no indication of surface scatter in the area during physical searches of the site on both visits. Local residents were unable to clearly describe what became of the human remains that they reported as having been “stirred up” by agricultural activity in the rice fields over the last two decades. Given that witnesses describe the original deposits at this site as having been very shallow, at a depth of one half meter or less, it appears probable that those deposits located directly in active paddy fields contain little or no forensically useful information at this point in time. Team members observed, however, that at the location of the purportedly undisturbed mass grave identified by witness Paok Aun, earthen works had been erected to a depth of approximately one meter above the surface of the paddy land. This would presumably have afforded good protection to any remains deposited at that particular location.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.3.3.4

Prey Veng Province  
Mesang District  
Prey Rumdeng Commune  
Tuol Mesang Village

#### Overview of the Tuol Mesang Site

The Tuol Mesang site in Prey Veng Province is complex, with multiple suspected deposits of varying types. We have identified three suspected mass graves, based on the assertions of numerous first-hand witnesses. Two of the three purported grave sites are currently used for agricultural purposes, while the third, according to witnesses, is largely undisturbed.

The multiple deposits at this site are distributed roughly along a line about one half kilometer in length. The first suspected deposit is purported to be a pit-style mass grave, situated approximately 100 meters off of the cart track in Tuol Mesang Village. It is on the edge of a small artificial pond. The second suspected deposit is a deep well, located approximately ten meters from the cart track, and some 100-150 meters north-northeast of the first location. It is on the edge of a drainage ditch-style pond, and within the outline of the now-disused well, there is distinctive vegetation. The third suspected deposit is on land currently used as a pig sty, located approximately 50 meters from the cart track, and a couple of hundred meters north of the second location. This purported burial site is a few meters from the edge of a bog. Thus all three of these locations are likely to contain relatively damp earth, and a potentially problematical hydrological regime. There is no evident surface scatter at any of the three suspected deposits. No contemporaneous written documents concerning this site have been recovered to date.

As noted, all three locations at this site are relatively proximate to the cart track which passes through Tuol Mesang Village, but this cart track is of a quality comparable to a provincial road. It is only a few kilometers on the cart track from Tuol Mesang Village to the district road. On the district road, it is approximately twenty-five kilometers to National Road 1, though the quality of this provincial road is marginal in places. The provincial road heads generally east and south off of National Road 1, a few kilometers south of the Neak Loeung Mekong ferry crossing. As noted above, NR1 was in poor condition during 3Q03. A 4WD vehicle is recommended for travel to this site year-round. The trip from Phnom Penh to the site takes approximately four hours each way; this site is about half an hour distant from the Tuol Kmaoch site.

The Global Positioning System reading for the first suspected deposit at the Tuol Mesang site is Latitude N 11° 19' 41.88" Longitude E 105° 35' 56.08". A map of Prey Veng's Mesang District is shown on the overleaf, with the location of the Tuol Mesang site indicated by the polygon shape.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Observations of the Tuol Mesang Site by Local Witnesses

The first suspected deposit is found on property belonging to Sam Vuthy (male, age 62), and his wife, Bin Khieng (female, age 60). The purported deposit is located behind the family home, some one hundred meters from the Mesang Village cart track. It is situated between a garden of trabek fruit plants and a small man-made pond.

Witness Kung Thakk (male, age 51) testified that he saw Khmer Rouge security cadre transporting suspected victims to this site by motor vehicle in 1978. He believes that the security cadre originated from the Southwest Zone, judging their origin based on their accents.

Witness Pol Pok (male, age 69) was appointed as village chief in January 1979, after the defeat of the Khmer Rouge regime. Soon after he had been appointed as village chief, local residents alerted him to the existence of a shallow open pit at this location, measuring approximately 2X10 meters. Pok says that he counted the bodies of 82 individuals in the pit. He reports that one of the corpses was female, and the remainder were male. Pok believes that all of the victims had been soldiers of a local Khmer Rouge Eastern Zone military unit, and that the female had been a medic with the unit. Pok had been acquainted with some members of the military unit. He inferred that the victims had been executed by blows to the head from bamboo logs, based on his observation of apparently blood-stained bamboo logs on the edge of the pit, and the apparent absence of shell-casings or any evidence of gunshot wounds on the corpses. Pok reports that the commander of the executed military unit was still dressed in his military uniform, but that the other victims had been stripped. Soon after his initial examination of this mass grave, Pok assisted in covering the open pit with water hyacinth plants, to protect it from scavenging by dogs and reduce the odor of decomposition.

Witnesses Sam Vuthy (male, age 62), and his wife, Bin Khieng (female, age 60), own the property upon which this suspected mass grave is situated. Khieng and Vuthy subsequently dug the pond that is now adjacent to the grave pit, and used the excavated soil to cover the mass grave to a depth of approximately one meter. There was conflicting testimony from the witnesses about whether or not additional human remains were discovered in the process of excavating the pond. Except for some scavenging by dogs prior to the grave being covered with vegetation, and the subsequent covering of the pit with soil, witnesses report that it has remained undisturbed since deposition. Additional contemporaneous witnesses to the existence of this purported mass grave include individuals named Yim, Lim, Thy, Tho, Yem and Ran.

A photograph of the first location at the Tuol Mesang site is displayed on the following page. It shows villagers and Project Team members arrayed in the immediate area of the suspected mass grave, with recently planted trabek fruit plants in the foreground, and the artificial pond in the background.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

The second location at the Tuol Mesang site is an old and originally deep well. The former well sits on property belonging to Hun Sokhon (male, age approximately 50). As noted above, this well is some 100-150 meters north-northeast of the first Tuol Mesang location, the suspected pit-style mass grave described above. The former well is situated approximately ten meters from the village cart track.

Between the location of this former well and the cart track is a road-side drainage ditch several meters wide, which at the time of our June and September investigations was completely filled with water. The water table was consequently only a few centimeters beneath the land surface. This indicates that any remains deposited at this location have been submerged at least part of the time since deposition, and that any lower-level strata at this location may well have been continually submerged since deposition.

Witness Hun Sokhon says that the well was “deep,” “six to eight” meters by his estimation. Observation by Project Team Members suggests that based on the distinctive vegetation outlining the apparent mouth of the well, it was roughly circular in shape, and approximately four to five meters in diameter. Sokhon reports that the well had originally been dug during the “Sangkum time” (late 1950s and 1960s) by ethnic Chinese and Vietnamese residents who owned this property at that time.

In 1978, an unidentified neighbor told witness Sokhon that he had observed that ten bodies had been deposited in the well. The unidentified neighbor further asserted that these individuals had been victims of executions carried out by Southwest Zone Khmer Rouge cadre. According to Sokhon, that unidentified neighbor was subsequently executed by the same Khmer Rouge cadre. Sokhon suspects that the individual who told him of the bodies having been placed into the well was himself deposited into the same well-type mass grave after he was executed.

After the fall of the Pol Pot regime, according to the current property owner, a water buffalo accidentally tumbled into the then unused well and was killed. The seriousness of this economic loss prompted the villagers to completely fill the well with soil, rendering it safe to livestock and children. Sokhon reports that the soil used to fill the well was excavated from the edge of the cart track, and that the adjacent drainage ditch-style pond was the result of this excavation. Sokhon and other local witnesses testify that the well has remained undisturbed since it was filled.

A photograph of the second Tuol Mesang location is displayed on the next page. It shows villagers and Project Team members gathered around the perimeter of the now disused well. The outline of the well is clearly indicated by the distinctive leafy vegetation. The standing water in the background suggests the high level of the water table during the rainy season.

Like the first two Tuol Mesang locations, the third Tuol Mesang location is also situated on private property. The property belongs to the family of Chy Tho (male, age 38). The precise

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

location of the suspected deposit is presently the site of the family's pig sty, which was home to half-a-dozen mature swine at the time of our investigation. This location is approximately 200-300 meters north of the second location, the dis-used well pictured above. The pig sty stands approximately 50 meters from the village cart track, and is slightly north and to the rear of the family home.

The pig sty is adjacent to a large boggy area, approximately four to five meters from the bog. At the time of our investigation, the bog was covered with standing water. The pig sty itself sits on land that was approximately one half meter higher than the surface of the bog. This suggests that any remains interred at this location are likely to have endured a relatively adverse hydrological regime for at least part of the time since deposition.

Witness Chy Tho discovered this suspected mass grave. He was clearing land for agricultural purposes in the wake of the Pol Pot regime, and began to dig a hole at this location. At a depth of approximately one meter, he says that he encountered what he recognized as a human long bone. Upon making this discovery, Tho ceased digging, and subsequently refilled the hole with soil. Some years later, the family constructed the pig house on the site where Tho had made his discovery. According to Tho, except for the very shallow holes dug to anchor the corner posts of the small pig house, the subsurface soil has remained otherwise undisturbed in the intervening years since the time he observed the long bone in the earth at this location.

The following page displays a photograph of the third location at the Tuol Meang site. It shows a group of children standing at the edge of the pig sty, directly above the location where Tho dug into the suspected human remains. One of the pigs is visible to the right of the four boys, in the shade of the pig house. In the left background, Project Team Members and villagers observe the investigation.

### Observations of the Tuol Mesang Site by Project Team Members

Project Team members visited the Tuol Mesang site in June 2003, and returned to the site again in September 2003. The largest of the three suspected deposits at this site – the purported pit-stye mass grave reportedly containing 82 individuals – is notable for the plethora of first-hand witnesses. As noted above, however, all three suspected deposits here are situated on relatively wet land, suggesting that continuous pumping might be required for any exhumation, even during the dry season. Notwithstanding the distance from Phnom Penh, this site is relatively accessible, situated as it is close to a hard-pack albeit poorly maintained road. As all three of these locations are on private property, excavation of these locations would require the cooperation of the property owners, but that would likely be forthcoming upon an official request. Security of this location is judged to be good.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.3.3.5

Kampong Cham Province  
Ponhea Krek District  
Kak Commune  
Stung Tauch Village

#### Overview of the Stung Tauch Site

The Stung Tauch site is complex, and it is fascinating for a variety of reasons. The site features at least four suspected deposits at two distinct locations. Multiple first-hand witnesses describe a set of undisturbed mass graves in a first location at this site. Five of these witnesses say that they were intended victims who managed to escape execution after having been transported to this first location. Here witnesses report the existence of at least three pits. Two of these purported mass grave pits are about 5 meters apart, with dimensions of about 2X2 meters. The third pit is located approximately 50 meters away, and appears to be about 3X3 meters in diameter. All three of these purported pits are adjacent to the commune police headquarters.

The second location at this site is situated on private property a few hundred meters north of the first location. It is reported to be a shallow pit containing the remains of numerous individuals. The witness testifies that her family discovered the uncovered pit, and subsequently covered it using the soil that had been piled around the edge of the pit. No contemporaneous written documentation relating to either location at the Stung Tauch site has been recovered to date.

Stung Tauch Village is situated in eastern Kampong Cham Province, less than twelve kilometers from the Vietnam border. To reach the site from Phnom Penh, first travel east along National Road 6 to Kampong Cham Provincial Town, a journey of approximately two hours on relatively good pavement. Cross the Mekong Bridge at Kampong Cham Provincial Town and continue east on National Road 6A for another hour or so to Ponhea Krek District Office in Kaong Kang Commune; this recently reconstructed road was in excellent condition during our visit in 3Q03. From the District Office, turn south on a relatively good cart track for another hour to the site near Stung Tauch Village. Reaching nearby witnesses, however, involves traversing another cart track, one that is of very poor quality. Consequently, a 4WD vehicle is required to fully accomplish this site in the rainy season.

The Global Positioning System reading for the first location, situated around the Kak Commune police headquarters, is Latitude N 11° 44' 06.25" Longitude E 105° 51' 17.50". The Global Positioning System reading for the second Stung Tauch location, the smaller of the two locations, is Latitude N 11° 44' 13.34" Longitude E 105° 51' 19.56". The following page

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

displays a map of Kampong Cham Province's Ponhea Krek District, with the Stung Tauch site indicated by the polygon shape.

### Observations by Team Members at the First Stung Tauch Location.

At Stung Tauch Village, Kak Commune, Ponhea Krek District of Kampong Cham Province, the first location of interest is situated behind the Commune Police Headquarters, and thus security at this site is good. We have gathered a rich collection of testimony regarding this site. There are numerous first-hand witnesses, five of whom were intended victims who escaped death. One of these witnesses says that he was actually clubbed and thrown into a mass grave pit in June 1978, but managed to elude the fate of his fellow villagers, crawling from the pit before it was buried. Consequently, he is able to provide a detailed rendition of the execution process.

At this location, today we can observe two suspected mass grave pits situated close together, a few meters apart, directly behind Commune Police Headquarters. These two purported pits are approximately ten meters from the main police building. Surface topographical features suggest that each of these two purported pits would be approximately two meters in diameter. (See photograph on the overleaf.) No surface scatter was observed in the vicinity of either of these purported pits.

Some fifty meters away, there is an expansive open area measuring perhaps one hundred meters by three hundred meters. This open space is largely covered by low vegetation, with a few small trees scattered about randomly, but it features spots here and there where there is little or no vegetation. Near the center of this large open area, witnesses identify a third and apparently slightly larger suspected mass grave pit. Based on surface topographical features, this purported pit would appear to be approximately three meters in diameter. (See photograph on the page after next.) No surface scatter was observed in the vicinity of this purported pit.

In 1978, this large open area – indeed, the entire area including the immediate vicinity of the present-day police station – was heavily forested. We did not determine from witness testimony under exactly what circumstances, or at exactly what time, this forest cover was cleared. At the time of our investigation, during the climax of the 2003 rainy season, no standing water was observed anywhere in the area of the purported mass grave pits. This suggests that the soil in this area is relatively porous, and that the surface lies well above the water table, at least at the time of our investigation.

As will become apparent from the testimony of contemporaneous witnesses recounted below, at least two hundred people were reportedly executed and buried at this location in June 1978. It is possible that a very much larger number of people were killed and buried here around that same time, because this report is based on testimony from the thirteen known surviving residents of a single village, and their account of events involves only what happened to residents of that particular village on that particular day. Our historical understanding of the chronology of state repression in this region leads us to believe that the fate of that village was typical of

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

villages across this entire area, meaning that many thousands of people were executed around that same time. The remains of some of those other victims may well also be located here.

### Observations by Local Witnesses at the First Stung Tauch Location

Sokh Kun (male, age 51) claims to be a first-hand witness to events at this site. His story of what happened here is quite extraordinary, and warrants a detailed recounting. Kun says that in late May or early June 1978, Khmer Rouge officials arrived from the Southwestern Zone and took over the district, seizing control from the previous local Eastern Zone authorities. Less than a month after the new authorities had arrived, they informed the residents of Prey Tum Nup village that they were to be relocated en masse to a new village. About 5 pm one afternoon, Kun and his family – along with the entire population of his village – were loaded onto three large trucks, each carrying 50-60 persons, men, women and children. They were then transported approximately fifteen to twenty kilometers to this site near present-day Stung Tauch Village, which in 1978 was a forested area.

Upon reaching the site, Kun says that the male villagers were ordered to dismount the truck, and the men were individually tied up with kramas, and then bound together in strings of eight victims each. However, the victims were not blindfolded. These groups composed of eight male victims each were segregated to one side of the clearing in the forest, and then the women and children were ordered to dismount the trucks. The women and children were then individually bound, and as with the men, assembled into a second set of groups of eight, tied together. At this point, Khmer Rouge security cadre informed the villagers that they were accused of being “CIA,” and loyalists of the purged Eastern Zone Khmer Rouge chief, So Phim. It was clear to all of the villagers that this accusation meant that they were to be executed.

The men were the first to be taken away. One string of eight men at a time, these groups of victims were marched into the forest by the security cadre. Kun’s string of eight was the second string from his truck to be taken into the forest. After walking a certain distance into the forest, the string of men was ordered to halt. Then, one person at a time, the victims would be separated from their string, though still individually bound by a krama. Once separated from the string of victims, each individual would be escorted by two security cadre to a pit just out of sight of the other victims, about ten meters beyond where the string had been ordered to halt. Kun says that it was about 6 pm when the cadre cut him loose from his string, and that they shouted at him as they took him the short distance beyond where the remainder of his string was waiting. He was instructed to stand on the edge of a pit, which he estimated was two meters on each side, and two meters deep. As he stood on the edge of the pit, he observed that there were at least ten corpses in the pit. He believes that two strings of eight men had been brought to this particular pit prior to the arrival of his string.

According to Kun, two security cadres had positioned themselves in such a way that one was in front of him, facing him, and one was behind him, where he could not see the cadre. At this point, without any further verbal comment, they simultaneously clubbed him on the front

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

and back of his head with logs measuring about 80 centimeters in length, and with a girth approximately the size of a human wrist. The blow stunned him, causing him to tumble into the pit atop the other corpses, but it did not render him unconscious. Kun says that he decided that the most prudent course of action in these circumstances was to feign death. As he lay there motionless, more victims were brought to the pit, one by one, clubbed, and then piled on top of him.

Kun notes that after each set of clubbings, a cadre would climb down into the pit and remove the bindings from the dispatched victims. If any victims showed signs of life, the cadre would stab them using a bayonet mounted on the muzzle of a rifle. The cadre would then arrange the bodies, stacking them head to foot, so as to maximize the storage capacity of the pit. He estimates that a total of 28 people were deposited into his pit before the security cadre decided that particular pit was full.

After about two hours of feigning death, around 8 pm, when the executioners departed to collect more victims, Kun says he crawled out of the pit and concealed himself behind a small grove of trees “thirteen meters” away from the pit, and a few meters from the spot where the strings of victims were ordered to halt and await their turns for execution. He says that he stayed in that grove of trees for about eight hours, until around 4 am. Despite painful head wounds from having been clubbed, he remained hidden and silent while observing what was occurring around him. During that period of eight hours, Kun estimates that approximately 200 victims were brought to the immediately surrounding area, clubbed and thrown down into pits. He says that he heard the victims begging the cadre to spare them, but that the cadre told them there was no point in begging for mercy, because the Khmer Rouge “knew” that the victims were all “CIA.” Kun also says that he could hear shouts and cries coming from the pits where people were being killed.

Around 4 am, after it had been quiet for some time in the immediate area around the killing site, Kun heard the sound of gunfire from another area off to the west of his location. He decided that the executioners were otherwise engaged at that moment, and so he took advantage of their apparent preoccupation to flee some one hundred meters further, to a more well concealed hiding place deeper in the forest. He remained there until around 9 am, whereupon he fled as far as he could, eventually arriving in a relatively distant village, Kaong Kang.

Kun bears a long scar on the back of his scalp that he says is from the wound inflicted during his attempted execution. Kun says that his pregnant wife and another of the couple’s children were executed at the site the same day. Several other blood members of Kun’s family were also killed there, including both parents, and two brothers. Kun estimates that there are thirteen surviving individuals from Prey Tum Nup village who had relatives killed at this site on that day in June 1978. Possession of this information makes it theoretically possible for us to determine the identity of some of victims at this site through DNA analysis.

A second witness to the events at the first Stung Tauch location is Yem Yut (male), who

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

is currently a police officer in Kak Commune. Yut is able to confirm one part of Kun's story. Yut was returning from his work in the fields on the day after Kun's failed execution, when he encountered Kun as Kun was fleeing the area where his attempted execution had taken place. Yut says that Kun told him what had happened during the previous day and night. Upon hearing the story, Yut assisted Kun in finding shelter and rudimentary medical assistance in a nearby village.

Four additional witnesses from Prey Tum Nup village testify that Southwestern Zone cadre also transported them to this execution site on the same day in June 1978 as Kun, but that they were eventually spared execution. These witnesses confirm key parts of Kun's story. They are Yuok Iem (female, age 71), Yuok Aun (daughter of Iem, age 32), Yuok Peou (son of Iem, age approximately 30), and Im Nhem (son of Iem, age approximately 50). Note that two of these witnesses – Aun and Peou – were aged approximately five at the time of the incident in 1978, and therefore their testimony is of limited utility.

As Kun had related, Yuok Iem says that in June 1978, recently arrived Khmer Rouge cadre instructed the residents of Prey Tum Nup village that they were being relocated to another village. Iem says that the population of the entire village was loaded onto three trucks, but that she climbed onto a different truck than Kun. During the drive to the killing site, she says, one Khmer Rouge cadre armed with an automatic rifle rode in the back of the truck to guard the occupants, while three more cadres rode in the cab of the truck.

Iem confirms that upon arrival at the killing site, the Khmer Rouge ordered the adult male residents of the village to dismount the truck first, and then proceeded to tie them all up. In contrast to Kun's recollection that the men were tied up in groups of eight victims, Iem recalls that the men were tied up in groups of five to six victims.

Iem says that after the men had been ordered down from the truck, bound up, and then placed to one side, the Khmer Rouge returned to the truck and spoke to her in a "sweet" tone of voice, addressing her using a respectful Khmer term for "mother," asking her gently to come down from the truck and promising that no harm would come to her. When she complied with their request to climb down from the truck, she says that the Khmer Rouge cadre nonetheless seized her and began to bind her up, just as the men had been bound. She says the Khmer Rouge cadre told her that they were all accused of having been supporters of the purged Eastern Zone Khmer Rouge chief, So Phim. As the Khmer Rouge were tying her up, she pleaded with one of the security cadre to permit her to breast feed her youngest child. Perhaps in response to her pleas, the cadre bound her only loosely, allowing her enough freedom of movement so that she could feed her child.

While the security cadre prepared the victims for execution, according to Iem, one of Iem's male neighbors called out to the Khmer Rouge security cadre, saying 'do not kill her, she has a son named Phoeuk who works in the Central Zone army.' (We believe that the Central Zone was allied with the Southwestern Zone in the purging of the Eastern Zone, though it is not

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

clear if the villagers were aware of this fact.) According to Iem, at this point, the security cadre turned to her and asked, “Why didn’t you tell me this when I prepared to catch you?” Iem says that she replied to him, “I don’t know, just because you said that you did not want to ask me anything... Anyway, you did not tell us that you were arresting us for killing, you told us that you were bringing us to another place to live.” This answer, combined with the claim of a son in the Central Army, apparently gave the security cadre pause, and he went to find his commander in order to report this information. By the time the security cadre had returned with the countermanding order from his commander, however, the group of women and children to whom Iem had been tied had reached the front of the execution queue, and was on the verge of being marched into the forest to be killed. It was apparently a very near thing for Iem and her family.

At the last moment, then, word was passed down from the commander of the Khmer Rouge security contingent that Yuok Iem and her family were to be spared. Iem’s son, Im Nhem, says that he had an even closer call that evening than his mother. As he was a young man, he had been tied up with a group of men, and, as Kun testified, the men had been taken to be killed before the women and children. Nhem recalls that just as he was being lined up at a pit to be clubbed, a Khmer Rouge commander intervened to stop his execution, telling him, “It’s your luck to have a brother working in the Center’s Army.” As he was being led away from the execution site, Nhem says that he heard the screams of women as they were being killed. Iem says that her husband was executed at the site a short time before the Khmer Rouge released her.

Thus it was, according to Iem, that she and eleven other members of her family – including her children Aun, Peou and Nhem, her sister, her sister-in-law, and several grandchildren – were all rounded up and removed from the execution queue. The Khmer Rouge then loaded Iem and her kin onto a truck, and prepared to transport them to another location. Iem recalls that the truck was covered in blood, so she asked the Khmer Rouge, “Where did this blood come from?” She says the Khmer Rouge cadre replied, “That is the blood of the enemy who we were fighting last night.” The truck took Iem and her family to the Maisakk Security Office, where they were held as Iem was interrogated at length by the chief of the security office. The security official began by reassuring her, saying “I won’t kill you,” but he nonetheless questioned her closely and repeatedly about the identity and posting of her son, Phoeuk, the soldier in the Central Zone Army. Evidently satisfied with the outcome of the interrogation, after five days, the security chief released Iem and her family and sent them to a cooperative.

A final witness with information regarding the first Stung Tauch location is Nget Samoeun, the Kak Commune police commander. Samoeun asserts that besides the three specifically identified mass grave pits alleged to be located in the vicinity of the Kak Commune police station, there are many additional mass grave pits in the area. However, he declined to reveal the nature of basis upon which he is able to make this assertion. Samoeun also insists that all of these mass graves – both the identified and the unidentified ones – have remained undisturbed since the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, due to the continual presence of police personnel on the site. The reports from the contemporaneous first-hand witnesses regarding the number of individuals executed at this location would seem to confirm the police commander’s

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

belief that numerous additional deposits exist in the area, beyond the three suspected deposits that we have identified.

### Observations by Local Witnesses at the Second Stung Tauch Location

Compared to the first location at the Stung Tauch site, we have a relative paucity of corroborating information for the second location. This second location at the Stung Tauch site lies several hundred meters north of the first location, on private property. The suspected mass grave pit itself is situated behind the home of the Aun family, approximately one hundred meters off of the adjacent cart track which runs through Stung Tauch Village.

Witness Aun Yun (female, age 35) reports that when she came to settle at this location in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge regime, she discovered a shallow open pit containing human bones, approximately two meters by two meters in size. There was dirt piled around the edges of the pit. Yun was unable to estimate the number of individuals represented by the remains.

Yun pushed the dirt on the edge of the grave over the open pit, covering the bones. However, the soil did not cover the bones very deeply. As a result, on occasion over the intervening years, Yun says that some human remains have made their way to the surface. The witness could not clearly describe what has become of the remains that have surfaced over the years.

At the time the witness discovered this pit, she reports that this entire area was heavily forested, and very sparsely populated. The family subsequently built a home on the site, and apparently engaged in a certain amount of clearing of the forest. Thus the suspected mass grave pit now lies to the rear of the family home.

At the time of our investigation, there was no apparent surface scatter at the site. The surface of the ground at the site was damp and muddy. It appeared that there may have recently been standing water on and around the location of the purported mass grave.

A photograph of this site is displayed on the following page. The photo shows the precise location of the suspected deposit, as indicated by a small tree branch planted in the center of the purported mass grave. Aun Yun stands around the perimeter of the purported pit with other villagers and a Project Team member, with the family home visible in the background.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.3.3.6

Kampong Cham Province  
Ponhea Krek District  
Kaong Kang Commune  
La Village

#### Overview of the La Site

This is a complex site, both physically and psycho-socially. There are five suspected deposits distributed roughly along a line approximately one kilometer in length. Witnesses testify to the existence of five well-type mass graves, although most of this testimony is not of a first-hand nature. All five of the wells have been filled in, and in most of the cases, this was apparently done at the time the deposits were created. According to the owners of the property on which these disused former wells are located, the purported mass graves have remained undisturbed in the intervening years since deposition, despite occasional solicitations from individuals who have proposed to excavate the mass graves and share any gold that might be discovered with the property owners.

La Village is situated in Kampong Cham Province's Ponhea Krek District, on the eastern side of the province. The village sits approximately thirty kilometers short of the Vietnam border. To reach the site from Phnom Penh, take National Road 6 from Phnom Penh to Kampong Cham Provincial Town, a drive of about two hours on that recently reconstructed road. From Kampong Cham Provincial Town, cross the Mekong Bridge and follow the newly refurbished National Road 6A for approximately one hour. Just past the Ponhea Krek District Office in Kaong Kang Commune, one arrives at La Village, which lies directly on NR6A. Note that Roads 6 and 6A have become the major surface transportation corridor for commercial shipping between Phnom Penh and Vietnam, and thus at times there is heavy truck traffic along this route. Otherwise, however, as of the time of our investigation in 3Q03, this route was in generally excellent condition, and can be easily traveled with any type of vehicle.

Generally speaking, the area surrounding La Village is dedicated to rice cultivation, and hence for much of the year it is subject to shallow inundation. As an inhabited area, La Village itself is raised slightly above the elevation of the surrounding terrain, and therefore the surface of the ground in the village was mostly dry at the time of our investigation, despite the fact that we visited at the height of the rainy season. However, the rainy season water table here is most likely well less than a meter below the surface.

Global Positioning System readings for several of the locations at the La site are given below. The following page (40) displays a map of Kampong Cham Province's Ponhea Krek District, with the La Village site indicated by the polygon shape.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Observations of the La Site

#### Yeay Yatt Well

We have adopted the convention of identifying locations of suspected mass grave sites in La Village by referring to them according to the name of the property owner upon which each of the five now-disused wells is situated. Thus, the first La location is known as the Yeay Yatt well. The former well sits on property belonging to the elderly Yeay (“Grandmother”) Yatt. The well is to the rear of Yatt’s plot, behind the family pig sty, along the fence line with her back neighbor. Hence, an excavation at this location would require dismantling the fence, and obtaining the consent of Yatt’s neighbor, with whom we have not yet spoken. The Global Positioning System reading at the Yeay Yatt well is Lat N 11° 47' 50.98" Long E 105° 53' 26.04". The Yatt family also operates a small lumber mill at this site, and consequently, about half of the property is covered with a thick layer of fine sawdust.

Yatt is a native of La Village, but she says that in 1978, she was evacuated from the village, and temporarily resettled in Kampong Thom Province. Immediately after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime in January 1979, she came back to La Village to reclaim her property. She says that when she returned to the village, she discovered that there had been some sort of commotion around her well. There were many items of female clothing scattered all around the opening of the well, including dresses and hair clips. Along with the clothing, kramas and hammock strings were also scattered around, and Yatt assumes these had been used as bindings. She also observed blood on the ground around the well.

Both Yatt and her daughter, Savin, say that they saw bubbles floating up to the surface of the water in the well, and they believe the bubbles were being produced by decomposing bodies, due to the odor and the nature of the oily residue on the surface of the well. Yatt says the water in the well was “blue.” Based on these observations, Yatt and Savin infer that the well contains female victims of execution by the Khmer Rouge.

The well had been partially filled with materials, and Yatt subsequently finished filling in the well with soil she gathered from around the well. Both Yatt and Savin have lived here continuously since then, and say that the well has remained undisturbed during the intervening years. Yatt reports that scavengers have proposed to excavate wells in La Village in search of gold, including hers, and have in fact looted some wells in the village. Yatt, however, insists she has not permitted this on her property, out of respect for the souls of the victims. Savin reports that she has frequent nightmares about the mass grave, dreaming that the victims have returned from the dead, rising up out of the well to strangle her. Yatt suggested that prior to any forensic exhumation, it would be a good idea to perform proper religious ceremonies in order to appease the spirits of the victims. Savin fervently agreed. Yatt requested cash from the Project Team, but was rebuffed. A photograph of the Yatt Well is displayed on the following page.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Sou Vet Well

One block south and two blocks east of the Yatt Well – approximately several hundred meters in linear distance – is the second location in La Village, the Sou Vet Well. The property upon which this suspected mass grave is situated is owned by a man named Sou Vet. However, Vet lives in Phnom Penh, and according to residents of La Village, he is an employee of the National Assembly. Sou Vet's grandfather owned and lived on this property for many years, from the Sangkum regime (late 1950s through the 1960s) to the Khmer Rouge regime, but some years ago ("a long time ago"), the grandfather died. Ownership of the property subsequently passed to Sou Vet, who retains title to the plot today.

About five years ago, Vet leased the property to a man named In An. Recently, management of the property was assumed by In An's daughter, and that daughter was our primary witness at this location. Because she had only recently moved to the property, she possessed little concrete information about the history of the site, and no first-hand knowledge of events here at the time of the putative deposition of the purported mass grave.

The former well is said to be located behind the main house, near the center of the property, next to the stump of coconut tree. According to In An's daughter, the well was very deep, approximately eight meters in depth. The owner of the well has told her – presumably the witness was referring to Sou Vet – that the Khmer Rouge deposited victims of execution in this well. However, we were unable to elicit information from the witness regarding whether or not Sou Vet had personally witnessed any bodies in the well. The witness also did not know whether there are any other extant first-hand witnesses to contemporaneous events at this location, or to the existence of bodies in this former well.

At some point subsequent to the purported deposition of victims in the well, it was evidently filled with soil. It remains unclear whether the well was filled at the time of the deposition, or after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime. According to the witness, the immediate area surrounding the former well remained undisturbed since the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, and unused for agricultural or any other purposes, until the 2003 season. At the time of our investigation, the area where the former well is said to be located had been freshly plowed. The witness said this had just been done for the first time ever, this season. She intends to plant a crop of bitter melon atop the location of the former well.

We observed no apparent surface scatter at the site. The witness testified that she was unaware of any human remains having worked their way to the surface in past years, and she said that nothing had been stirred up during the recent plowing of the area. A photograph showing villagers and Project Team Members surrounding the location of the former Sou Vet Well is displayed on the following page; in the foreground is the stump of the coconut tree, and the freshly plowed earth is evident.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Ta Kham Well

The third location of interest at the La Village site is situated on property currently belonging to Ta (“Grandfather”) Kham. The former well at this location is therefore known to Project Team Members as the Ta Kham Well. This property is approximately one block east from the Sou Vet property, on the same street of La Village.

Prior to the Khmer Rouge regime, this property was owned by Ta Chy, who currently lives immediately next door to the Ta Kham location. Chy dug the well himself, and he reports that the well was one meter in diameter and six to seven meters deep. The former well is situated in the front of the property, just a few meters from the village street. After the Khmer Rouge regime, Chy subdivided his property, and gave this piece of land to his nephew, Ta Kham, the current owner.

Ta Chy testifies that at some point near the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, presumably in 1978, the Khmer Rouge evacuated La Village and relocated him to Phnom Sruoch Village. However, because he was assigned to work as a vegetable forager for a cooking unit, he was able to move about, and he used this freedom of movement to frequently visit his property and check on it. One day, he came by his property, and observed that the condition of the well appeared to be normal. The next day, however, he happened to return, and discovered that there was some clothing scattered around the opening of the well, and that leaves of trees had been thrown into the well, partially filling it. He returned again the next day, and was surprised to discover yet more clothing scattered about, and that the well had been completely filled with vegetation and soil. He says that a large clay pot that had been next to the well was missing, and he assumes that the pot had also been thrown down into the well.

Chy also observed bloodstains on the ground surrounding the opening of the well. The type of clothing scattered about appeared to Chy to be the sort that would be worn by two distinct social groups, members of a kong chalat (or youth mobile work unit), and members of an Eastern Zone Khmer Rouge military unit. All of these combined observations led Chy to conclude that the well had been the site of mass executions, and that the bodies of these two types of people had been buried in the well.

Chy returned to reclaim his property immediately after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, and has lived here ever since. Both he and the current property owner, Ta Kham, assert that except for having been filled in, and having recently had a small papaya tree planted on top of it, the well has remained undisturbed over the intervening years. Ta Kham is amenable to a forensic exhumation of the site, on the condition that it be accompanied by appropriate religious rituals.

A photograph showing the location of the Ta Kham Well is displayed on the following page, in which Ta Kham’s daughter indicates the precise position of the former well.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### Yeay Nha Well

In the next block along the same street, two houses further east of the Chy and Kham residences, we find the fourth location of interest in La Village. This property belongs to a woman named Yeay Nha, and thus the location of this purported deposit is known as the Yeay Nha Well. The Global Positioning System reading at the Yeay Nha Well is Lat N 11° 47' 18.91" Long E 105° 53' 43.37". The former well is in a grove of trees behind Nha's house.

Witness Um Tim lived in a nearby village in 1978, and he says that after the population of La Village had been evacuated by the Khmer Rouge, he was occasionally assigned to forage for plants around La Village. During these excursions, he observed that the Khmer Rouge were detaining victims in the houses of La Village. When the killing of victims was taking place, he says he was prohibited from foraging in that area, and consequently he did not witness any executions. However, one day when he was collecting vegetable shrubs in the area, he noticed that Yeay Nha's well had been filled with dead bodies.

Yeay Nha believes the well contains the remains of victims of execution, because she says that when she returned to reclaim her property in the wake of the Khmer Rouge regime, the odor of decomposing bodies was coming from the well. Moreover, scattered around the opening of the well, she found what appeared to be personal items of the type that were typically carried by Eastern Zone Khmer Rouge soldiers, including hammocks and sundry other standard military-issue gear. Consequently, Nha believes that the well contains the remains of Eastern Zone soldiers.

Nha says that the Khmer Rouge completely filled the well, then dug up a young coconut tree that her husband had recently planted nearby, and transplanted it onto the top of the filled well. However, she says that there were so many decomposing bodies in the well that the surface became unstable, and the coconut tree toppled over. She subsequently re-filled the surface of the well with rubbish, vegetation and other materials, and many years later, she planted a papaya tree on the site.

Nha says that she has protected the site from any other disturbances over the intervening years, despite entreaties from local grave robbers. She says she honors the victims by cooking rice and putting it on the site of the mass grave each Pchum Ben Day and each New Year Day. Nha says that if she forgets to do this, the victims come to her in her dreams and ask her for food. She believes that the victims have rewarded her for this devotion by telling her winning lottery numbers in her dreams on two occasions.

Nha would welcome a forensic investigation of her well. She says that after the first visit by Project Team Members in July, she put sticks of incense on the mass grave, and that night, the victims appeared in her dreams and informed her that they, too, approved of a forensic

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

exhumation. A photograph of the next page shows Yeay Nha and Project Team Member Sin Khin indicating the site of the former well.

### Ren Well

The fifth and final location of interest at the La Village site is located on property directly adjacent to the Yeay Nha property, just to the east. This property is currently inhabited by a woman named Ren, and hence, it has been designated as the Ren Well.

The Ren Well is situated up against the fence line marking the border of the Ren and Nha properties. Like Nha's former well, this now-disused well is also at the rear of the house. Unlike the other four wells discussed above, however, this former well is not completely filled in. The well appeared to be approximately one meter deep, though it is not clear from observation how solid the apparent surface of the bottom of the well might be. It is possible that the accumulated vegetation in the opening of the well – branches and leaves – has created a false surface. There are no topographical features that would suggest the well has been excavated at any time in recent years.

Our witness information regarding the Ren Well is almost entirely lacking. Ren, the current resident on this property, says that she has lived at this location for only a brief period. Consequently, she possesses no knowledge of the history of either the property or the well. Ren says, however, her neighbors have told her that the former well was indeed the site of a Khmer Rouge mass grave.

Yeay Nha, who lives immediately next door to Ren, asserts that this purported mass grave in the Ren Well, like hers, has remained undisturbed since she returned here in 1979.

A photograph displayed on the following page shows the Ren Well, with the fence line between the Ren and Nha properties visible in the background.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.4 Ground Truthing

The penultimate goal of Part 2 of Phase 2 of the Forensic Project was a process known as “ground truthing.” According to generally accepted international forensic standards, a suspected mass grave can be confirmed only upon the completion of a physical inspection by suitably qualified forensic pathologists and anthropologists. We carried out this process in December 2003, focusing on the six sites that were identified during the course of the Interim Mission in September-October 2003.

#### 3.4.1 Overview

As noted in the Report on the Interim Mission, the Forensic Project’s consulting forensic experts sought to achieve the following objectives in Part 2 of Phase 2:

- 1) independently confirm the information gathered by the Documentation Center Mass Grave Mapping Team;
- 2) assess the surface features and accessibility of the candidate sites for future excavation;
- 3) interview key eye-witnesses regarding the number, distribution and condition of the bodies at the time of burial, and the details of the burial process, size of the graves, and subsequent history of the grave site (i.e., cultivation, building, protection, flooding, etc.);
- 4) confirm that there is a local will for the examination of the site, including interaction with the religious and secular communities; and
- 5) meet and consult key local people who will be instrumental for Phase 3 operations

The forensic experts traveled to Cambodia on December 13, 2003 to secure these objectives. Upon arrival, the experts immediately launched a detailed review of the findings from the Interim Mission. Conferring with the Documentation Center’s Mass Grave Mapping Team, the forensic experts concluded that one of the six candidate sites – the Wat Kakoh site in Takeo – required no further investigation beyond that which they had carried out in June. Their evaluation determined that the Takeo site and Ampe Phnom do not possess the optimum qualities for inclusion in Phase 3.

Over the course of the following week, the Project Team traveled with the forensic experts to the three provinces where the other five candidate sites are located, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu and Prey Veng. Carrying out a rigorous program of physical inspection and witness interviewing, the forensic experts concluded that the Stung Tauch site in Kampong Cham Province (and site in Prey Veng province) presents the optimal conditions for a Phase 3 exhumation. The following sections briefly describe the process the forensic experts carried out

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

to reach this conclusion.

### 3.4.2 Stung Tauch

The Project Team spent two days at the Stung Tauch site in Kampong Cham Province, Tuesday and Wednesday, November 16 and 17, 2003. On November 17, Ms. Chan Serey of USAID accompanied the team to Stung Tauch in order to observe our field investigations. The forensic experts decided to focus on the Stung Tauch site first among the six candidate sites, because based on the information gathered during the Interim Mission, they concluded that this location presented the most promising possibilities. This focus paid significant dividends.

We identified and interviewed several new and highly productive witnesses at Stung Tauch during the Part 2 mission. The new witnesses included village chief Ros Savy (male, age 60), Sam Sok (middle age male), Dim Beat (middle age male), and Sao On (male, age 47). We also gathered useful new information from several previous witnesses who we had interviewed in September, including Yem Yut (middle-aged policeman), Nget Samoeun (male, the Kak Commune police commander), and Aun Yun (female, age 35).

These witnesses provided a great deal of additional information, prompting us to revise some of the preliminary conclusions we had reached in September. Among other things, we determined that at the first Stung Tauch location, the suspected mass grave pit in the large field to the south of the police station had been disturbed when the area was cleared, burned and ploughed to plant a cashew grove. (A photograph of this site is displayed on next page.) In addition, a contemporaneous witness informed us that the two purported mass grave pits a few meters behind the police station at the first Stung Tauch location were in fact a single disused well, and that human skeletal remains found scattered in the area during the immediate aftermath of the Khmer Rouge regime had been deposited in this well by people who were returning to the area. Moreover, at the second Stung Tauch location, the witness we interviewed in September, Aun Yun, revised her account of the deposit on her property, informing us that this particular deposit had in fact been looted during the 1980s in search of gold.

Beyond these revisions of the information we gathered in September, December's Part Two mission significantly expanded our understanding of the Stung Tauch site. In particular, additional witnesses identified seven new locations that they believe contained human remains. It almost began to appear as if every time a villager has put a spade into the earth in this area, they have hit a deposit of human remains. The relative density of suspected mass grave deposits in the vicinity of Stung Tauch tends to confirm the testimony of witness Sokh Kun, who told us in September that he narrowly escaped execution here, and hid in the bushes as he watched a team of Khmer Rouge execute approximately 200 people over the course of one evening. Kun testified that the Khmer Rouge killed the entire population of his village here that night. Our understanding of the history of political violence in this region suggests that the atrocity Kun witnessed here in June 1978 was not a one-day affair, but that in fact it played out over the

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

course of many days, as the Khmer Rouge attempted to exterminate the entire population of multiple villages in the area. If this is correct, then the Stung Tauch site may contain many more mass graves than have been identified to date. These mass graves appear to be undisturbed.

Beyond the deposits previously identified on the September mission, the villagers pointed out numerous additional suspected deposits to us. Approximately twenty to thirty meters behind the commune police post, policeman Yem Yut showed us two more suspected mass grave pits. The configuration of the pits in this general area suggests that there may well be more within a radius of one hundred meters or so, beyond those previously identified. Witness Sao On showed us a location immediately adjacent to the village road, approximately one hundred meters north of the police station, where excavations for road improvements in 2000 revealed human remains on both sides of the road. On the east side of the road, the remains of numerous individuals were uncovered, with their arms bound by hammock string, suggesting that they were victims of execution. On the opposite side of the road, the remains of a single individual were found.

In 2002, Vietnamese authorities contacted the Stung Tauch village chief in connection with Vietnam's multi-year program to recover remains of Vietnamese soldiers who had been lost in Cambodia. The chief told the Vietnamese about the discovery of this lone individual buried beside the road, and Sao On then took a team of fifteen Vietnamese officials to the site. They exhumed a small set of remains from this location, totaling two arm bones and two leg bones, and removed those remains to Vietnam. No one in the village informed the Vietnamese officials about the remains that had been discovered on the opposite side of the road, nor about the numerous other deposits located in the vicinity.

East of the roadside deposits that Sao On showed to the Project Team is a formerly forested area that has recently been cleared of trees in preparation for cultivation. Approximately one hundred meters into this now-cleared area, several witnesses showed us the locations of three suspected mass graves. One of these suspected mass graves is located in a disused Vietnam War-era well; Sao On and others told us that in 1980-81, this deposit was partially exhumed by grave robbers seeking gold and jewelry, but that the looting effort was abandoned because the smell of decomposing bodies was too strong. According to multiple witnesses, the two other suspected deposits located in the same immediate vicinity have not been disturbed, apart from some rooting near the surface by wild pigs that was observed by villagers in the 1979. Village Chief Ros Savy said that when he first came here early in 1979, he noticed that there was a rudimentary road leading to the area of these suspected mass graves, and it appeared to him that many heavy trucks had used this road. He concluded from this observation that many people had been executed and buried in this area. It is significant to note that this independent deduction by the village chief is consistent with the testimony we gathered from Sokh Kun and Yuok Iem in September. They told us that they had been transported to this area in June 1978 on large trucks that brought the entire population of their village to be executed at this site. The corroborating testimonies of these various witnesses increased our confidence. A photograph on the following page shows members of the Project Team in the field at this site.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

The Stung Tauch site is thus quite promising. It has many witnesses who give consistent testimony, some of whom witnessed the events here at first hand. It also appears to have undisturbed deposits, and may yield more that are yet to be identified. Security and the hydrological regime are both favorable. Access is relatively easy from Kampong Cham City.

### 3.4.3 Phum La

The Project Team visited Phum La in Kampong Cham Province on Tuesday, November 16, 2003. The forensic experts surveyed three of the six suspected well deposits in Phum La. They also investigated four active water wells in the vicinity of the suspected deposits in order to assess the dry season water table levels. We concluded that the mean water table depth at the time of this investigation was approximately four meters. This result implies that many if not most of the remains in the disused wells have been continually under water since their deposition approximately a quarter of a century ago. Given the generally acidic quality of Cambodian soils, that does not bode well for preservation of the remains at this site.

The team determined that several factors rendered this site suboptimal for exhumation. The hydrological regime mentioned above was one such factor. Another consideration had to do with the proximity of the suspected well deposits to roads and houses. Exhuming deep wells entails a significant logistical challenge, insofar as a very large area around the well would have to be excavated. This would require retaining the services of an engineering firm, necessary to safely manage a dig of such proportions, and to institute a complex water management system, involving the construction of a cofferdam with continual pumping to keep the excavation dry enough for forensic work. There would also be significant social management challenges, necessary to deal with the disruption of such an excavation on public (roads) and private (homes) property. Altogether, these challenges suggest that Phum La should not be included on the list of primary sites for Phase 3 operations.

### 3.4.4 Tuol Khmaoch

The Project Team visited the Tuol Khmaoch site in Prey Veng Province on Thursday, November 18, 2003. The forensic specialists interviewed Rith Pon (male, 48 years old), and carried out a physical inspection of the suspected deposit in a rice field paddy dike. They concluded that given the depth of the suspected deposit, and the fact that it has been situated in an active rice field since deposition, it has been subjected to annual inundations of water for extended periods continually for the last a quarter century. Consequently, questions arise as to the likely condition of the remains. Moreover, this deposit is suspected to be a small one, with perhaps only two or three bodies. While these considerations do not necessarily entirely rule out the Tuol Khmaoch site, we concluded that it should not be placed on the list of primary target sites for Phase 3.

### 3.4.5 Tuol Mesang

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

The Project Team visited Tuol Mesang in Prey Veng Province on Thursday, November 18, 2003. Recall from the preliminary review (above, section 3.3.3.4) that Tuol Mesang contains three suspected deposits. At this site, the team surveyed all three suspected deposits and interviewed numerous witnesses. The information gleaned on this visit caused us to revise our understanding of information about this site that was reported to us by witnesses during the Interim Mission.

The largest of the three suspected deposits at this site is known as the “military grave,” because it is believed to hold the remains of an Eastern Zone militia unit executed by Southwestern Zone cadre. The forensic experts interviewed two key witnesses regarding this site, including a man named Pol Pok, aged 80 years, and a younger man, Sam Vuthy, age 49, both of whom had also been interviewed during the Interim Mission. The experts concluded that three factors render the site suboptimal for Phase 3: animal foraging near time of initial deposition, possible looting in aftermath of deposition, and an adverse hydrological regime. The last factor, in particular, was compelling in reaching this conclusion. The deposit appears to have been submerged in water for much of the last quarter century, and appears to remain below the mean water table even in the dry season.

The second suspected deposit at Tuol Mesang is known as the “well grave,” because it is situated in a disused water well. Here the team interviewed Pol Puok, age 80 years. The well is ruled out as a candidate for Phase 3 operations due to the logistical complexity of attempting an exhumation of such a deposit. This would require a huge excavation, with structural engineering and elaborate hydrological management. It would also entail the closure and possible re-routing of the village’s only road. This would represent an unacceptable inconvenience to village residents, and would present the project with excessive financial and social cost requirements.

The third suspected deposit at Tuol Mesang is known as “pig sty grave,” because it has recently been the location of a shelter for swine. Several witnesses were interviewed about this deposit, including Pol Pok, 80 years old, an elderly man named Yen Ron, 76 years old, and a younger female named Yen Sokhon, 38 years old. Pol Pok witnessed approximately ten dead bodies in this deposit, prior to the time that it was covered with soil. Since then, the site was disturbed in the mid-1980s, though apparently in a case of curiosity rather than straightforward looting. After this disturbance of the deposit, the site has been used for a variety of agricultural purposes, but there appears to have been no further opening of the site. It is possible that there are undisturbed layers in the deposit below those penetrated by the digging in the mid-1980s. Thus this suspected deposit can be considered as a possible candidate for Phase 3 operations, although due to the prior disturbance of the deposit and the high water table in the area, it is not considered optimal.

### 3.4.6 Ampe Phnom

The Project Team visited the Ampe Phnom site in Kampong Speu Province on Friday, December 19, 2003. This was the fourth visit to Ampe Phnom by the forensic experts since the

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

Forensic Project was launched, an indication of their intense interest in this site. During the December visit, several new witnesses were interviewed here, including Piv Mom (female, 41 years old), Chaun Teng (male, 66 years old), and Un Hak (male, 73 years old). These interviews yielded significant new information about the history of this site.

Witnesses report that mass graves in the immediate area of this site were excavated to create the memorial that is visible today. The digging associated with the memorial was organized by the provincial authority, and carried out by villagers in 1982. The memorial was upgraded in 1985 to the present structure, a ramshackle two-room wood and thatch building with a dirt floor and a covered veranda. The structure has deteriorated significantly over the course of the nearly twenty years since then, losing a wall and much of the roof covering one of the rooms. The project's forensic anthropologist estimates that there are remains from at least 1,000 individuals in the memorial, with a complete range of ages from children through old people. Witnesses report that no remains were brought here from other sites, and that all the remains in the memorial were sourced from adjacent pits.

Based on witness testimony, the Project Team was able to identify seven or eight mass grave pits that are said to have been the source of the remains in the memorial. Chaun Teng says there is a pit behind the memorial, in the vegetable fields to the west of the stupa, and that this pit was excavated and the remains were deposited in the memorial. Witness Un Hak says that in 1980, he witnessed the two pits on the edge of the riverbank, east of the present-day memorial, at a location presently less than one meter from the lip of the bank. (The riverbank has eroded substantially over the last two decades.) One of these pits was open, and beside it was another that had been covered with soil. He reported that there was a very bad smell, and clothing was scattered about the immediate area of these two pits. Both of these pits were also excavated in the course of the original memorial dig in 1982. In addition, in front of the memorial to the east, and south of the two pits on the edge of the riverbank, there were two or three additional mass grave pits. These pits were also among those that were excavated and emptied into the memorial in 1982. Two other pits, each two meters square, were found within the walls of the adjacent pagoda, and both of these were also emptied into the memorial.

The team's forensic anthropologist observed that apparently human skeletal remains are embedded in the path along the river to the north of the memorial, still visible as they were in June 2003. This suggests that there may be unexhumed deposits along the riverbank. As was observed in January 2002 and again in June 2003, there is significant surface scatter of human skeletal remains on the dry portions of the riverbed, although the team could not determine the origin of these remains. The forensic experts suspect that much of this surface scatter could be residue from the memorial excavations carried out long ago. This conclusion is suggested because there is no apparent stratigraphy, or layering of the soil with skeletal remains, evident in the eroded riverbank. These considerations would make choice of an excavation site problematical.

Despite the shortcomings of the Ampe Phnom site – particularly the difficulty to date in

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

unambiguously identifying undisturbed deposits – this location continues to fascinate the forensic specialists. The quality and variety of skeletal remains stored in the memorial, along with the nature of the trauma exhibited on these remains, provide an excellent opportunity for extensive forensic analysis. The regular discovery of new human skeletal remains on the bed of the river suggests that there could be additional sources of new deposits that are being opened when each successive flood season further erodes the bank. The emergence of new witnesses with each visit to the site suggests that more information about the history of the site could be gathered with additional work. The presence of human remains visible in the surface of the path along the riverbank also provides a potential clue to as-yet undiscovered mass grave pits. Though this site was not selected as a primary target for Phase 3 operations, lead scientific consultant Dr. Michael Pollanen summarized his view of Ampe Phnom by saying, “We haven’t heard the last of Kompong Speu, I can tell you that.”

### 3.5 Conclusions on Site Selection

As a result of the work undertaken by the Project Team during Part Two of Phase 2 of the Forensic Project, the main objective of the project was successfully accomplished. The team has selected a primary site for Phase 3 of the Forensic Project. Out of the nearly three score sites examined in the course of Phase 2, the Stung Tauch site is by far the most promising, and we have consequently designated it as the primary site for a full-scale forensic exhumation.

#### 3.5.1 Primary Site Designation: Stung Tauch

The Stung Tauch site has numerous characteristics that recommend it as a location for a full-scale multidisciplinary forensic exhumation of mass killing during the Democratic Kampuchea regime. The range of first-hand witnesses to events at this location is excellent, spanning the period of time from the day (or days) that the mass graves were created through the present day, with only a few small gaps in time. The witnesses include one man who was physically inside one of the mass grave pits as it was being created. We believe that with further investigation, additional witnesses can be located, possibly including potential perpetrators.

The physical characteristics of the site are quite promising. Access to the site is generally excellent, with primary roads most of the way from Phnom Penh, and a decent secondary road for the last segment. The principal locations of interest are adjacent to the secondary road, in fields that have been largely cleared of forest, and in which it would be easy to establish field camps and excavation sites. Security in the area is good, with no reports of bandits or active post-Khmer Rouge guerilla activity, and a commune police headquarters is situated roughly in the center of the areas of interest. The site is relatively close to Kampong Cham City, close enough that quarters for the project team and a laboratory could be established there, eliminating the need for an extended bivouac. The hydrological regime is also encouraging, as the deposits appear to be shallow enough to lie above the mean dry season water table, and the highly permeable soil in this area means that in the wet season, there is relatively good drainage and hence few reports of standing water immediately in the area of the locations of interest. The

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

suspected deposits themselves range from some that have disturbed by looting, some that have been disturbed by agricultural activity, some that have apparently been disturbed by animal foraging, some that may be entirely undisturbed, and quite possibly, additional deposits at this location that have not yet been identified, and that are also undisturbed.

If we should be lucky enough to uncover the correct mass grave pit at this location, it is possible that we could identify individual named victims. There has been some success with mitochondrial DNA analysis of skeletal remains in the former Yugoslavia and East Timor. This type of DNA analysis requires a maternal relative. There are however, related survivors to the purported victims at this site, allowing for the possibility of positive identification of some of the remains. This type of analysis requires the investment of some additional monetary resources.

Multiple contemporaneous witnesses to the executions at Stung Tauch have testified that the Khmer Rouge soldiers who carried out these killings were from the Southwest Zone. This means that they would have been operating under the authority of Southwest Zone Secretary Ta Mok. Mok is currently being detained in Phnom Penh on suspicion of genocide and crimes against humanity. Should the Co-Prosecutors of the Extraordinary Chambers eventually file formal charges against Mok, information gathered at Stung Tauch could potentially prove to be probative in the case against him.

The only desirable characteristic for Phase 3 investigations that we have not yet discovered in relation to the Stung Tauch site is contemporaneous documentation. Given our understanding of the chaotic nature of events in this region in June 1978, it is probably unlikely that we will ever find any such documentary records created on the scene. On the other hand, with continuing investigation, it is possible that some documentary references to events in that region at that time could eventually be uncovered, in cables, telegrams or other communications between field elements and higher command. We will continue the search to locate such documentary materials.

As a result of all of these considerations, we have come to the conclusion that the Stung Tauch site is virtually ideal for a Phase 3 investigation. These factors also account for how the team's forensic pathologist and anthropologist treated this site during Phase 2, relying strictly on unintrusive measures.

### 3.5.2 Treatment of Primary Site in Phase 2

In archaeological research, survey work is always undertaken first, in order to identify the best place to dig to get the desired result. Archaeological surveys rely on a variety of techniques for determining what lies under the ground. With ancient features, these techniques often include surface surveys for topographical differences and collections of surface artifact scatter. They may also include remote sensing tools such as ground penetrating radar or others. Research proposals always leave open the possibility for test trenching of an area. This is because you never really know what is under the ground unless you dig. Provisions for undertaking test

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

trenching must be included in research proposals, but because they are intrusive and destructive, they usually require different permits and permissions. They can also interfere with evidence.

In this particular research project, we have a case that falls in between digging ancient remains and digging very recent forensic graves. In the case of very recent graves, you usually have direct knowledge of what is to be found. In the case of the quarter-century old Cambodian mass graves, at the outset of Phase Two, it was not clear to our investigators what we would be able to learn about those graves from interview and observational methods, as opposed to intrusive methods, like test trenching. What we have discovered over the course of Phase 2 of this project is that there is a lot of good information from witnesses. We have also discovered that there has been a great deal of grave robbing. These were two things that our forensic experts did not expect. We must presume that the witness information is good, as they have been generally forthcoming about the grave robbing, and the testimony has been internally consistent to a highly significant degree.

The specific locations of some of the graves, as reported by the witnesses, may not be as precise as one would prefer, given the time that has passed. This is something that will be investigated in due time. Nonetheless, we obtained very good information in Kampong Cham province about a number of possible excavation sites. From a forensic perspective, it would have been irresponsible, given the good witness information we obtained, to begin digging at this juncture of the overall plan. While digging may have confirmed the fact that there were bones present, it would also have opened the graves. In view of the history of grave robbing, any renewed interest in the graves, and opening of them would most likely lead to more disturbance in the intervening year or so before we will be able to implement Phase 3. Even if no one touched the remains, and we back-filled the graves, they would remain disturbed and more prone to decomposition than if left alone. By balancing the seeming veracity of the witness accounts with the need to protect the graves, a decision not to carry out preliminary digging was the wisest course of action for Phase 2.

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

### 3.5 Tuol Sleng Exhibit

The original proposal for Phase 2 of the Forensic Project set out the goal of preserving evidence of homicidal violence in Cambodia. The idea was to collect a representative sample of traumatized human skeletal remains from memorial sites, and then to characterize these remains using standard forensic methods, and preserve, store and curate these remains in an appropriate facility in Cambodia, such as the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide. From this original idea, we developed the notion of designing a forensic exhibit in cooperation with the Tuol Sleng Museum.

During Part 1 of Phase 2, the forensic experts collected a sample of traumatized human skeletal remains and performed preservation work on the remains. This sample of remains was then stored at Tuol Sleng Museum. Preliminary designs for the Tuol Sleng exhibit were developed by the Project Team with the assistance of a Documentation Center volunteer experienced in archaeology and anthropology, Mr. Jeff Straka. This element of the work was carried out during the Interim Mission in September and October. During the Part 2 mission, prototypes of the exhibit were vetted and reviewed, and the final exhibit design emerged with input from the forensic experts. We anticipate that the exhibit will be opened to the public at Tuol Sleng Museum in early April 2004.

#### 3.5.1 Background and Rationale

As noted above, a key objective in Phase 2 of the Forensic Project was the collection and preservation of a representative sample of traumatized human skeletal remains. This part of the work was carried out in collaboration with the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide. As this element of the Forensic Project developed, the Project Team and the Tuol Sleng Museum determined that the best approach would include the design of a forensic exhibit for the museum. Thus was born the concept of the Tuol Sleng Forensic Exhibit.

Working with samples collected from memorial sites in several provinces, as well as the collection housed at Tuol Sleng Museum, the team's forensic specialists, forensic pathologist Dr. Michael Pollanen and forensic anthropologist Dr. Katharine Gruspier, selected 20 specimens for preparation and detailed forensic characterization. This part of the process involved two steps. The first step was careful cleaning of those specimens that had been collected in the field. The second step was an analysis by the forensic specialists of the taxonomic characteristics of the specimens. As the forensic characterizations to be displayed in this exhibit will demonstrate, evidence of murder can be scientifically described from the remains of victims. This medico-legal data helps to qualify how victims of were killed.

#### 3.5.2 Selection of Specimens for Exhibit

Of the twenty specimens selected for characterization, the forensic experts chose ten for display in the forensic exhibit. The specimens, all skulls, were selected based upon their condition, level of preservation, and variety and appearance of exemplary wound types. The

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

forensic specialists described various types of skeletal trauma, which caused or contributed to the death of each individual. Described skeletal trauma includes blunt-force trauma (e.g. created by strikes from a gun butt, hammer, mallet, or log), sharp-force trauma (e.g. created by strikes from a cutting implement such as a machete, knife, hoe, ax, or hatchet), and gunshot wounds.

It is important to note that the specimens described by the forensic specialists come from a non-random sample of skeletal remains. Consequently, no demographic or anthropologic generalizations can be made regarding the total universe of Cambodian genocide victims based on this sample. Skulls were chosen for description based upon dramatic appearance and exemplary nature of the wounds. For example, the fact that one of the ten skulls chosen for the exhibit happens to be the remains of a female does not mean that 10% of total victims in the Cambodian genocide were women. Similarly, the fact that four of the ten skulls in the exhibit display gunshot wounds does not mean that 40% of the total victims of the Cambodian genocide suffered from firearms injuries. In other words, it is by coincidence rather than design that nine of the skulls are male and one is female, that there is a certain distribution of age ranges among the displayed specimens, and that there is a given incidence of particular types of skeletal trauma. We should also note that it is known that children were murdered during the Khmer Rouge genocide, and again, it is simply a coincidence that the remains of infants and children are absent from the small, selective sample chosen for display.

### 3.5.3 Design Considerations

The Tuol Sleng Forensic Exhibit was designed with several key considerations in the forefront of our minds. First, an over-riding consideration in preparing this exhibit has been to maintain respect for the spirits of the victims and the sensibilities of the survivors of the Cambodian genocide. Second, the exhibit is intended to demonstrate the value of forensic evidence in physically documenting Khmer Rouge crimes against humanity. Third, a central aim of the exhibit is to educate Cambodian and international visitors to the museum about the types of information that can be scientifically gleaned from victims' remains in order to document evidence of violence. Fourth, we anticipate that the exhibit will also be used as a teaching tool in the training of Cambodian students of pathology and anthropology. Finally – although this is to a certain extent a matter of faith rather than demonstrable scientific fact – we are convinced that educating the public about the consequences of genocide will help to prevent it from recurring.

In the process of developing this exhibit, it was necessary for the design team to evaluate and resolve numerous many highly sensitive issues. Some of the most challenging of these issues include cultural and religious sensitivities, scientific integrity, display integrity and security, ease of access, clarity of understanding, and the demographics of museum clientele. These factors affected the focus and design of the exhibit in some important ways.

With respect to the last of these considerations, it is estimated that 80% of visitors to Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide are foreign tourists, while 20% percent of visitors are Cambodian nationals. Cambodians are uncomfortable with the idea of boxing human remains for fear of

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

trapping the spirit of the bones, thus angering the spirit. Although the spirit no longer “lives” in the bones, Cambodians believe that the bones should be open to access by the spirit. Ideally, the remains of the dead are cremated by the family of the individual and stored in a stupa to shelter the remains. But the tragedy of the Khmer Rouge genocide is that the spirits of long dead victims continue to suffer because their remains were prevented from receiving proper funerary rites from their families.

Some Cambodians consulted during the process of designing the exhibit said they feared that boxing the remains of victims would be tantamount to “boxing the spirit of Cambodia.” In grappling with this concern, we evaluated the possibility of housing each specimen in an open-topped box. However, it was decided that an open-top display box was not feasible, primarily due to two problems, hygiene and security. First, given Phnom Penh’s air quality in general, and the unpaved streets in the immediate vicinity of the museum in particular, heavy loads of airborne dust are a ubiquitous feature of the museum’s environment. We judged that the challenge of maintaining the cleanliness and preservation qualities of an unenclosed exhibit was problematical at best, and most likely impossible. Second, an unenclosed display would create temptations for the specimens to become a “souvenir” for an unscrupulous museum patron.

As a result of these factors, we reached a compromise that aims to harmonize the competing values of exhibit security and hygiene with spiritual considerations. Each specimen will be enclosed in a transparent 5-sided box, providing protection for the remains. (Details on the display methodology are discussed in the following section.) We address the spiritual dimension by incorporating a votive element into the overall exhibit design. This involves providing a small stupa or altar where visitors can make offerings to appease and provide for the spirits of the dead. The specimens will be arrayed in an oval layout, and the stupa will be placed in the center of the oval. At the entrance to the exhibit, an introduction to the display will explain the design rationale, and invite the making of offerings at the stupa for those who wish to pay their respects to the spirits of the victims in this fashion.

Beyond the cultural and spiritual dimensions of the exhibit, we designed the display with close attention to the impact it would have from a scientific point of view. The exhibit is not intended merely as a “curiosity” for foreign tourists visiting the museum. The exhibit will educate Cambodians as well as foreign patrons of the museum about the physical consequences of violence during the Khmer Rouge regime, as illustrated by the examples of human skeletal trauma in the display. In addition, the exhibit will also serve as a teaching tool for Cambodian students of forensic pathology, anatomy and anthropology, providing clearly documented specimens of several classic types of skeletal trauma.

### 3.5.4 Materials and Methods

The Tuol Sleng Forensic Exhibit consists of ten specimens, all skulls, presented in identical display cases. The ten display cases are arranged in an oval, with approximately two meters of separation between each of the cases. This spacing facilitates movement around the

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

room and around each display, and also helps to emphasize the individuality of each of the specimens, which are, after all, the remains of particular human beings. Each display case thus permits 360 degree viewing. In addition, each display is accompanied by an individual specimen description in Khmer and English.

The display technology is comprised of a 1.1 meter tall pedestal table topped by a transparent Lexan box. The pedestal supports the box, and the box houses each specimen. The display description is mounted on the top left corner on the front (side facing the interior of the oval) of the pedestal. The display cases, arranged in an oval with ample space for movement completely around each case, are securely anchored to the floor. This adds a measure of stability to each display. A photograph of the prototype display is presented on the following page.

Non-rational (or emotional or spiritual) elements played a crucial role in determining our display design methodology. As noted above, Cambodians are concerned by the idea of enclosing remains of the dead. We determined through interviews with a focus group of Cambodians that the idea of enclosing remains in a plastic box was more distressing than a wooden box, because unlike a plastic box, a wooden box “can breathe.” We settled on a compromise that the design team believes will address all of the competing values. We decided on a closed box design, with a Lexan case fashioned into a 5-sided enclosure, to provide protection for the specimens. Within the Lexan enclosure, the specimen rests atop a small wooden mount, and the mount is covered with black tapestry. The enclosure box itself rests on the top of the wooden pedestal table. The idea is that the skull can “breathe” through the wooden mount, which is itself in direct contact with the wooden top of the table upon which the enclosure box rests, despite the fact that the specimen itself is entirely enclosed. Members of our Cambodian focus group felt that this was a satisfactory resolution of the spiritual concerns they had raised.

The Lexan case is secured to the pedestal using clear, soft silicone caulk. This seals the display from the ubiquitous dust that pervades Phnom Penh. In the event that the display needs to be cleaned, moved, or altered in anyway, a razor blade can be used to unseat the box from the table.

The forensic descriptions to be included in the display are attached below as Appendix A. Note that orientations of “right” and “left” are described from the victims' perspective. Age estimates are based only on skull features. Due to the lack of additional skeletal information the age range is relatively large (15-25 years).

## 4.0 Budget, Variances and Reporting

### 4.1 Budget Expenditure

As of December 31, 2003, the Documentation Center's Forensic Project consumed USD 49,049.55 of the \$50,000 in grant funds. This leaves a balance of USD 950.45 from the allocated funds. A detailed final accounting of project expenditures is being submitted with this final project report.

### 4.2 Variances from Plan

There are no variances to report in Part 2 of Phase 2 of the Forensic Project. The "Revised Plan for Part 2 of Phase 2" was approved by TAF on November 17, 2003. All elements of this plan were executed on schedule.

### 4.3 Reporting

This Final Report on Phase 2 and the accompanying financial report satisfy one element of the reporting requirements for the Forensic Project. Dr. Pollanen, with the assistance of Dr. Gruspier, is preparing technical reports on Phase 2 project findings. They will submit their report for publication in one or more peer-reviewed professional forensic journals. The project's forensic experts are also preparing a detailed forensic report for the Documentation Center, which is to be published as part of the Documentation Center's monograph series. Copies of all such reports will be provided to TAF, per the provisions of the Letter of Agreement.

This concludes the Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center's Forensic Project. Appendices follow.

APPENDIX A

Draft Specimen Descriptions for Tuol Sleng Forensic Exhibit

Cranium of a man, 30 to 50 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL1, 2A50720]

Blunt impact trauma of right mid-parietal convexity (right side of head) with a depressed “punched out” skull fracture. In addition, there are other skull fractures related to separate blunt impact sites on the back of the head on the left side and the left temple.

Cranium of a man, 20 to 40 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL2, 2A50694]

Gunshot wound of right anterior-parietal convexity (right side of the top of the head) with the bullet passing downward into the skull through the brain and exit to the left of the foramen magnum (base of the neck where the spinal cord emerges from brain).

Cranium of a man, 20 to 40 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL3, 2A50707]

Two deeply incised wounds (cuts), or superficial chopping/hacking wounds superior to the right lambdoid suture (right side of the back of the head). The small (0.5cm) hole on top of the skull was made by forensic investigators.

Cranium of a man, 25 to 45 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL6, 2A50696]

Complex system of radiating skull fractures due to an impact in the right posterior-lateral cranium near the mastoid process (right side of the back of the head). The small (0.5cm) hole on top of the skull was made by forensic investigators.

Cranium of a woman, 35 to 50 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL11, 2A50709]

Chopping/hacking wound on the anterior portion of the right parietal convexity (right side of the top of the head). The small (0.5cm) hole on top of the skull was made by forensic investigators.

Cranium of a man, 25 to 45 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL13, 2A50700]

Gunshot wound of entrance in the left frontal convexity with the bullet passing into the brain from right to left and downward on a 45-degree angle (as indicated by the “keyhole” effect).

Cranium of a man, 30 to 50 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL14, 2A50701]

Multiple blunt impact sites with a complex system of skull fractures. The small (0.5cm) hole on top of the skull was made by forensic investigators.

Cranium of a man, 20 to 40 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL15, 2A50695]

Gunshot wound of right superior parietal convexity (top of the head) with the bullet passing downward into the skull through the brain and exit to the left of the foramen magnum (base of the neck where the spinal cord emerges from brain).

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

Cranium of a man, 25 to 45 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL16, 2A50706]

Deeply incised wound (cut), or superficial chopping/hacking wound crossing the left lambdoid suture (left side of the back of the head). The small (0.5cm) hole on top of the skull was made by forensic investigators.

Cranium of a man, 30 to 55 years old. [Catalogue No. TSL17, 2A50699]

Gunshot wound of entrance in the superior-posterior frontal convexity (top of the head) with the bullet passing left to right and downwards into the brain and exiting the skull in the right temple.

**DCCAM REPORT**

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

**APPENDIX B**

**Phase 2 Project Timelines**

1 – Raw Timeline for Phase 2 of the Forensic Project

2 – Critical Paths and Milestones for Phase 2

3 – Complete Phase 2 Gantt Chart

4--REASONS FOR NOT DOING A LIMITED EXCAVATION: MS. KATHERINE GRUSPIER'S MESSAGE

**DCCAM REPORT**

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

**APPENDIX B-1**

**RAW TIMELINE FOR PHASE 2 OF THE FORENSIC PROJECT**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Begin</u>	<u>End</u>
<b>PROPOSAL</b>		
Write Initial Proposal		
Forensic Team Rough Draft	8/21/02	8/25/02
Principal Researcher Second Draft	8/25/02	8/26/02
Forensic Peer Review	8/26/02	8/30/02
DC-Cam Approval	8/30/02	8/31/02
Secure Funding		
Submit Proposal to Funders, Funding Committed	8/31/02	1/16/03
<b>PROJECT LAUNCH</b>		
Detail Project Tasks		
Determine Fieldwork Tasks/Times	1/17/03	1/22/03
Define Budget Detail	1/17/03	1/27/03
Confirm Project Personnel		
Draft Contracts	1/22/03	1/27/03
Review Contracts	1/27/03	2/26/03
Revise Contracts	2/26/03	3/11/03
Sign and Submit Contracts	3/11/03	5/12/03
RCG Authorization	1/11/03	3/10/03
Final Budget Approval		
Approval by DC-Cam	1/27/03	1/28/03
Approval by TAF	1/28/03	3/14/03
Approval by USAID	3/17/03	5/21/03
Funding Authorized/Contracted	5/21/03	5/29/03
Funding Contracted/Received	5/29/03	6/6/03
<b>PART ONE MISSION</b>		
Mapping Team Initial Site Recon	5/25/03	6/9/03
Assemble Full Team		
Principal Researcher to PP	6/8/03	6/9/03
Forensic Team to PP	6/10/03	6/12/03
Field Work	6/9/03	6/25/03
Mission Planning	6/10/03	6/14/03
K'pong Speu Mission	6/15/03	6/15/03

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

Takeo Mission	6/16/03	6/16/03
K'pong Cham/Kandal Missions	6/17/03	6/17/03
Data Analysis	6/18/03	6/18/03
K'pong Cham Mission	6/19/03	6/19/03
Data Analysis	6/20/03	6/25/03
Museum Work	6/18/03	6/22/03
Administrative Work	6/21/03	6/24/03
Report Writing & Submission	6/30/03	7/12/03
TAF Approval for Budget Variance	7/12/03	8/19/03
 INTERIM MISSION		
Mapping Team Site Recon	9/1/03	9/15/03
Principal Researcher to PP	9/16/03	9/18/03
Field Work	9/19/03	10/2/03
Field Work Planning	9/19/03	9/22/03
Prey Veng Mission	9/23/03	9/23/03
Data Analysis	9/24/03	9/28/03
K'pong Cham Mission	9/29/03	9/30/03
Data Analysis	9/30/03	10/1/03
Administrative Work	10/7/03	10/9/03
Report Writing	10/7/03	10/15/03
Museum Work	10/21/03	10/24/03
Design Exhibit	10/21/03	10/23/03
DCC/TSL Sign-offs	10/23/03	10/24/03
TAF Approval for Budget Variance	10/16/03	10/17/03
 PART TWO MISSION		
Assemble Full Team		
Principal Researcher to PP	12/4/03	12/6/03
Forensic Team to PP	12/13/03	12/15/03
Museum Work	12/8/03	12/14/03
Field Work	12/11/03	12/20/03
Field Work Preparations	12/11/03	12/15/03
K'pong Cham Mission	12/16/03	12/17/03
Prey Veng Mission	12/18/03	12/18/03
K'pong Speu Mission	12/19/03	12/19/03

**Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project**

Final Report Drafting	12/10/03	12/31/03
Final Report Reviewing and Formatting	1/1/04	1/14/04
Final Report Submission	1/15/04	1/15/04

/ends/

**DCCAM REPORT**

**APPENDIX B-2**

**PHASE 2 CRITICAL TASKS AND MILESTONES**

[using the MS Project file, "Forensic Timeline," that I put on Racy's PC, generate and print using a laser printer the Project Summary, Critical Tasks and Milestones Reports from Microsoft Project, and then insert those reports here; to do this you will need to install a 2000 or later version of Microsoft Project on a PC with a laser, or else hook up a laser printer to Racy's PC]

**DCCAM REPORT**

### APPENDIX B-3

#### COMPLETE PHASE 2 GANTT CHART

[using the MS Project file, "Forensic Timeline," that I put on Racy's PC, generate and print on a laser printer a full-scale Gantt chart from Microsoft Project and then insert it here; to do this you will need to install a version of Microsoft Project from 2000 or later on a computer with a laser, or else hook up a laser to Racy's PC]

### APPENDIX B-4

#### REASONS FOR NOT DOING A LIMITED EXCAVATION: MS. KATHERINE GRUSPIER'S MESSAGE

From: kathy Gruspier <[gruspier@sympatico.ca](mailto:gruspier@sympatico.ca)>  
To: SIM Sorya <[truthsorya@dccam.org](mailto:truthsorya@dccam.org)>; Craig Etcheson <[etcheson@ix.netcom.com](mailto:etcheson@ix.netcom.com)>  
Cc: Pollanen, Michael (JUS) <[Michael.Pollanen@jus.gov.on.ca](mailto:Michael.Pollanen@jus.gov.on.ca)>  
Sent: Sunday, January 04, 2004 9:10 AM  
Subject: Re: Fw: Hello

- > Happy New Year to All:
- > I am sorry my reply is somewhat delayed - I have been sick since Christmas.
- >
- > In regards to our decision not to undertake any intrusive archaeological
- > test trenching during this phase of our investigations:
- >
- > When we put together the proposal for this phase of the forensic
- > investigation, there were many unknowns. A general proposal was thought to
- > be best, based on the information we had at the time. As the end point was
- > to identify and eventually exhume a grave or selection of graves, provisions
- > for identifying said graves had to be included. In archaeological research
- > proposals, survey is always undertaken first, in order to identify the best
- > place to dig to get the desired result. Archaeological survey usually
- > includes various techniques for determining what lies under the ground.
- > With ancient features, these often include surface surveys for topographical
- > differences and collections of surface artifact scatter. They may also
- > include remote sensing tools such as ground penetrating radar or others.
- > Preliminary research proposals always include a section leaving open the
- > possibility for test trenching of an area. This is because you never really
- > know what is under the ground unless you dig. Provisions for undertaking
- > test trenching must be included in research proposals because they are
- > intrusive and destructive, and usually require different permits and
- > permissions.
- >
- > In our particular situation, we are between digging ancient remains and

## Final Report on Phase 2 of the Documentation Center of Cambodia Forensic Project

- > digging very recent forensic graves (those in which you usually have very
- > direct knowledge of what is to be found). These differences were not fully
- > known at the time the proposal was put together. What we have discovered in
- > the last two missions is that there is a lot of good information from
- > witnesses, and that there has been a lot of grave-robbing. Two things we
- > didn't expect. We must presume that the witness information is good as
- > they have been generally forthcoming about the grave-robbing. The actual
- > locations of some of the graves (specific) may not be as good given the time
- > that has passed, but that is something that will be investigated in due
- > time. We received very good information on our trip to Kampong Cham
- > province about a number of possibilities to excavate. It would have been
- > very irresponsible, given the good information to then start digging. While
- > this may have confirmed the fact that there were bones present, it would
- > have opened the graves. Given the history of grave-robbing, any renewed
- > interest in the graves, and opening of them would most likely lead to more
- > disturbance in the intervening year or so before we can return to them.
- > Even if no one touched the remains, and we back-filled the graves, they
- > would remain disturbed and more prone to decomposition than if left alone.
- > By balancing the seeming veracity of the witness accounts with the need to
- > protect the graves (given that we have found very few undisturbed ones to
- > date), a decision not to dig was the most parsimonious.
- >
- > Hope this clarifies things,
- > Kathy
- >