



Research Report | Historical Security Council

Forum: Historical Security Council

Issue: The Cambodian Genocide (1976, May 15)

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Welcome Letter

Dear Esteemed Delegates,

It is our honour to welcome you to the Historical Security Council session on the Cambodian Genocide. Your presence in this chamber is a testament to your dedication to international diplomacy.

The Cambodian Genocide presents the house with a formidable challenge, demanding our utmost attention and concerted efforts. Your delegation's insights, perspectives, and expertise are invaluable as we collaborate to navigate the intricacies of the situation at hand; and establish a course of action steadfast to lasting peace.

We implore each of you to approach the house deliberations with an open mind and a spirit of collaboration. We look forward to listening to your speeches and clauses on May 9 & 11. Let us bridge divides and right history's wrongs!



Background

On April 17, 1975, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, declared 1975 as the “Year Zero” for the inception of a new era in Cambodia, now referred to as the Democratic Kampuchea. Khmer Rouge’s implementation of Maoist Communism aimed to transform Cambodia into a self-sufficient, classless, and agrarian society. Furthermore, the ideals of the Khmer Rouge enforced an isolationist policy, and as such, little is known about the regime. However, information about the situation in Cambodia regarding radical revisionism, crimes against humanity, and genocide has been brought forth by intelligence sources from the accounts of Cambodian refugees seeking refuge in Thailand.

Shortly after the Year Zero declaration, millions of citizens were displaced from cities into rural areas. Those who refused to migrate were executed or imprisoned. In the rural areas of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge placed these citizens under forced labor in agricultural work, especially the plantation of rice. The working conditions in these areas are so severe that these citizens die of overwork, malnutrition, and disease. Moreover, epidemics are prevalent in Cambodia, specifically cholera, malaria, and dysentery. However, medical facilities are only accessible to the Khmer Rouge, and medical practitioners are either part of this workforce or executed.

In its pursuit of its self-sufficient, classless, and agrarian society, the Khmer Rouge established the re-education of Cambodia and the prohibition of intellectuals. The educated, i.e. former governors, medical practitioners, teachers, lawyers, and students, were executed, are at risk of execution, or were imprisoned. Those who possessed intelligence and past ideologies of Cambodia pre-Khmer Rouge were a threat to society. The regime also abolished schooling and trained these children for military use. Children were the most valuable resource to the



Khmer Rouge and did not possess the past ideologies of the older citizens. They were separated from their families and were indoctrinated and conditioned to the Khmer Rouge's ideals.

All threats to the Khmer Rouge eradicated all threats to its regime, including religion and ethnic minorities are executed. All religions have been prohibited from practice. Theravada Buddhists are the most prominent ethnic group in Cambodia. Theravada monks have been executed for their practice and those who were spared are disrobed. Ethnic groups unlike the Khmer are also being executed such as the Cham Muslims, Chinese, and Vietnamese. To the Khmer Rouge, these ethnic groups have different views and languages that could threaten the authority of the regime.

The infringement of human rights and genocide in Cambodia has become a pressing issue. With this, the Security Council called upon a meeting on May 15, 1976, to address the atrocities and genocide of the Khmer Rouge.

Definition of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Khmer Rouge	The Khmer Rouge was the communist movement and government that ruled Cambodia, causing the Cambodian Genocide by infringing the basic human rights of Cambodians and ethnic groups in Cambodia, leading to the Cambodian Genocide
Ethnic Minorities	Ethnic Minorities refer to the collective population that shares the same cultural background and constitutes a small part of the population
Re-education Camps	Re-education camps refer to the sites that the Khmer Rouge used to indoctrinate citizens to comply with the agrarian lifestyle and illiteracy
Agrarian Society	Refers to the ideals of the Khmer Rouge to create a society free of international influence and is self-sufficient in



	agricultural yield
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Major Parties Involved

The United States of America:

The United States of America was involved in the Vietnam Civil War and the Cambodian Civil War, due to its policy of anti-communism and to employ democracy and capitalism in developing countries. During the Cambodian Incursion, the United States heavily bombed Cambodia in response to the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army and the rising Cambodian communist movement (Khmer Rouge). In response, Congress has established bills such as the Special Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 and Continuing Approp., 1974 which have restricted the U.S.'s financial and military deployment in Indochina. However, the U.S. has taken note of the situation in Cambodia and strongly denounced Khmer Rouge's activities.

The People's Republic of China:

The People's Republic of China supported the Khmer Rouge and its leaders in its communist endeavors. Moreover, it provided the Khmer Rouge with financial and military support discreetly.

Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia):

The Democratic Kampuchea is the site of the Cambodian Genocide, brought forth by the Khmer Regime that Pol Pot led. It has committed human rights abuses due to its abolishment under the self-sufficient, classless, and agrarian society regime. However, information about the situation is limited due to no publications on the situation and because the Khmer Rouge closed itself from the rest of the world.



The Kingdom of Thailand:

The Kingdom of Thailand, a bordering country to Cambodia, has been a site for refugees fleeing Cambodia to seek protection.

South Vietnam:

South Vietnam also plays an important role in sheltering refugees, especially the refugees from the ethnic groups being cleansed. Along with the U.S. South Vietnam participated in the Cambodian Incursion.

North Vietnam:

North Vietnam aided the Khmer Rouge through financial and military assistance in the Cambodian Civil War against the Lon Nol government, which was backed by the U.S. and South Vietnam.

Timeline

Date	Description of Events
1975	Lon Nol is overthrown as the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot occupy Phnom Penh, establishing Khmer Rouge to power
April 17, 1975	Pol Pot declared 1975 as the “Year Zero” for Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge’s regime starts
May 10, 1976	The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok releases interviews from refugees fleeing from Cambodia about Life in Cambodia to the White House

Note: There is a lack of references and resources due to the isolationist policy of Democratic Kampuchea.

Delegates may feel free to access and focus on those linked below instead.



Possible Solutions

- **Possible Solution 1:** Power-sharing Treaties
 - Establish international agreements to prevent the invasion of political powers by creating international parties to support a new government structure by supporting a revolution incited within Cambodia.
- **Possible Solution 2:** Criminal Prosecution via International Law
 - Prosecute the Khmer Rouge and its leaders for its neglect and violations of human rights, crimes against humanity, and atrocities via international law.
- **Possible Solution 3:** International Refugee Groups
 - Create an accessible system for refugees fleeing from Cambodia to other nearby countries

Useful Resources: (from most useful to useful)

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