



No civil parties in Duch sentencing, judges say
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Representatives of civil party complainants will not be allowed to weigh in on the punishment for Khmer Rouge prison chief Duch, judges for the UN-backed tribunal announced Thursday.

Two of four groups of civil parties had requested they be allowed to share their opinions on the proper punishment for Duch, who is facing atrocity crimes charges for the deaths of 12,380 people at his Tuol Sleng prison.

Hong Kim Suon, a lawyer for the one of the civil parties, called the decision “unfair to victims,” though defense lawyers said it helped maintain balance and fairness in the proceedings.

The trial for Duch is expected to last through October, with a verdict expected early in 2010, tribunal spokesman Reach Sambath said.

Judge Nil Nonn, head of the tribunal’s Trial Chamber, said civil parties would be allowed to request reparation but would not be able to question expert witnesses.