



## Press Update

Welcome to the weekly press briefing of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, where we aim to provide journalists with an update on the latest developments at the court, and the opportunity to ask questions.

In the trial of Hashim Thaci, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi, the Trial Panel on 23 April approved the withdrawal of one of the victims from participating in the proceedings. The Panel found that victims should not be obliged to take part in proceedings.

On 29 April, the Trial Panel rejected a request by the Veseli defence to appeal an oral order that had rejected a previous defence request to order the SPO to disclose all notes from the preparatory meeting with a witness to understand what document the witness referred to during their testimony. The Panel found that it was clear that the document the witness referred to and which triggered their refusal to testify was the statement the same witness had made in 2001. This statement had already been disclosed to the defence.

On 29 April, the Trial Panel rejected a joint request by the defence teams for permission to appeal the admission into evidence of the prior statement of one of the witnesses called by the Prosecution. In light of the witness' refusal to answer the questions asked by the Prosecution despite the Panel's warnings and directions, the Panel was satisfied that the Prosecution was not able to question the witness in relation to their prior statement and as such admitted said statement. The Panel found noteworthy that the Defence was able to cross-examine the witness in regards to the relevant statement. The Panel highlighted that it will at a later stage assess the witness's credibility and the reliability of his statements in light of the entire body of evidence admitted at trial.

Following the closure of the Prosecution's case on 15 April, the Law provides that the defence be given the possibility to request for the dismissal of all or some of the charges in the indictment. In a recent status conference, the defence teams have announced that they intend to make a joint request for dismissal of charges. The Trial Panel set them the deadline of 2 June or 14 days after the Panel's last ruling on admission of evidence. The Prosecution will be given 30 days to respond to their request. Once the Panel decided on the request, Victims Counsel will present their case.

In the case of Hashim Thaci, Bashkim Smakaj, Fadil Fazliu, Isni Kilaj and Hajredin Kuci on the alleged influencing of witnesses, Hashim Thaci on 15 April submitted a written plea of not guilty regarding





all allegations outlined in the amended confirmed indictment, which includes the additional form of incitement confirmed by the Pre-Trial Judge on 14 April.

President Ekaterina Trendafilova on 24 April assigned an Appeals Panel to decide on Fadil Fazliu's request for a 14 days extension to file an appeal against the Pre-Trial Judges decision on his continued detention. The Appeals Panel consists of Judges Michèle Picard, Emilio Gatti and Nina Jørgensen.

On 25 April, the Appeals Panel denied Mr. Fazliu's motion and found that he waived his right to appeal the Pre-Trial Judge's decision on his continued detention given that he filed the request for extension five days after the deadline and did not indicate or demonstrate good cause for the delay of his request or for the need to extend the deadline to file his appeal. Considering that the reasons for Mr Fazliu's detention are being reviewed every two months and given that the deadline for the Defence to file their submission on his next review of detention is 5 May, the Appeals Panel was of the view that not considering his Appeal would not lead to a miscarriage of justice.

On 24 April 2025, President Ekaterina Trendafilova assigned a Constitutional Court Panel to decide on Salih Mustafa's referral that he filed the same day alleging violations of his fundamental rights and freedoms. His referral follows the latest decision by the Supreme Court from 25 February. The Constitutional Court Panel consists of Judges Vidar Stensland, Roumen Nenkov, and Piotr Hofmański.

There were no questions asked

