



Press Update

Welcome to the 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, Jakup Krasniqi and Rexhep Selimi, on 25 August 2025 the Trial Panel granted in part a request by the Veseli Defence to make public parts of the transcript from the trial hearing held on 27 March 2025 which took place in private session and which relate to a prosecutor who previously worked in the detention management unit of the court.

The judges found that excerpts of the transcript relating to internal and sensitive security and operational matters of the Detention Unit should remain confidential but they decided to make other portions of the transcript public. The Trial Panel agreed with the Defence that those portions of the transcript do not deal with confidential matters or issues that are subject to protective measures. In addition, the Trial Panel could not identify any relevant public interest that would warrant or justify any other redaction of this part of the record.

The judges in the case have put in place a system to regularly review and publicize materials that were previously confidential. This is done to ensure that the trial proceedings are as public as possible.

In the same case, a decision from May 2025 was made public this week, in which the Trial Panel considered a request by the Prosecution to admit evidence related to alleged efforts to unlawfully influence witnesses in the trial.

The Trial Panel denied parts of the Prosecution's request, while accepting others.

The evidence in question relates to recordings made during visits to the KSC detention facilities in 2023 which appear to show Mr. Thaci giving detailed instructions to some of his visitors about how they should influence the testimony of witnesses in his war crimes trial. While these allegations are the subject of a separate indictment against Mr. Thaci and four others for obstructing justice, the issue at hand in this decision was whether such evidence is relevant and admissible in the war crimes trial of Messrs. Thaci, Veseli, Selimi and Krasniqi.

The judges found that the evidence was relevant and admissible for assessing the credibility of witnesses who have testified in the trial and for assessing a climate of witness intimidation surrounding the trial. In its decision, the Trial Panel also revealed that several Prosecution witnesses in the case have refused to testify in court for reasons related to concerns for their safety and that of their families.

At the same time, the judges rejected the Prosecution's request to consider the evidence in relation to Mr. Thaci's potential criminal culpability in the war crimes case, or for any possible sentencing in case of





conviction. The Trial Panel decided to exclude the evidence for these purposes to ensure Mr. Thaci's right to a fair trial.

The Trial Panel also rejected the Prosecution's request to admit evidence that included transcripts from the Detention Facilities of Rexhep Selimi and Kadri Veseli where they appear to disclose confidential information related to protected witnesses, citing similar reasons, and the Trial Panel rejected the Prosecution request to amend its exhibit list for lack of good cause, and because the Prosecution request was not timely.

In the case of Hashim Thaci, Bashkim Smakaj, Fadil Fazliu, Isni Kilaj and Hajredin Kuci, on 27 August, the Pre-trial Judge rejected as formulated a request by the Kilaj Defence to receive the unredacted version of an earlier search and seizure order, deciding instead that a second, lesser redacted, confidential version of the Search and Seizure Decision will be issued and notified shortly to all Defence teams.

In the same case, on 22 August 2025 the Pre-Trial Judge decided that the Annex to the Specialist Prosecutor's Request for Modification of Hashim Thaci's detention conditions should remain confidential for the time being.

As a reminder, on 18 August, the Pre-Trial Judge granted in part a request by the prosecution to prohibit 11 individuals from visiting Mr. Thaci in the detention facility.

In her decision, the judge explained that the decision to prohibit visits from a limited group of listed individuals was necessary to mitigate the risk of further unlawful disclosure of confidential information about protected witnesses; and proportionate because it only relates to individuals for whom there are, at a minimum, credible indications of (a) participation in non-privileged visits at the Detention Facilities where Mr Thaci revealed confidential information related to SPO (protected) witnesses and (b) involvement in, or potential for, conduct incompatible with the integrity of proceedings and/or the regulations of detention.

The decision does not affect any other potential visitors to Mr. Thaci in the Detention Unit. In particular, the Pre-Trial judge rejected the request of the Prosecution to ban visits from three of Mr. Thaci's brothers, recalling that, in a detention setting, it is an essential part of a detainee's right to respect for family life that contact with close relatives, which may also include siblings, be maintained.

