



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.

On Monday, 17th April, the Panel ordered the continued detention of Mr. Thaci and Mr. Veseli. The Panel found that there continues to be a risk that Mr. Thaci and Mr. Veseli obstruct the progress of proceedings and/ or commit further crimes. The Panel further found that these risks can only be sufficiently mitigated through the communication monitoring framework of the KSC detention facilities. Given that both, Mr Thaçi and Mr. Veseli have been in detention for a significant period of time, the Panel as well as all parties are asked to be mindful of the need to ensure the trial proceeds as expeditiously as possible.

The first two witnesses called by the prosecution in the trial of Hashim Thaci, Kadri Veseli, Jakup Krasniqi and Rexhep Selimi finished their testimonies. They have been testifying with protective measures and mostly in private session and they both have been cross-examined by the defence teams, one also by victims counsel. The testimony of the third witness is currently ongoing and held in closed session.

All trials before the KSC are public, however sometimes judges will decide to conduct part of the trial hearing in a so-called private session or to redact certain information to protect the identity and security of witnesses or victims.

The decision to conduct the hearing in a private session in order to protect witnesses is carefully considered by the judges on a case-by-case basis. Even when a witness testimony is not public, the lawyers of the accused can hear what the witness says and have the right to cross-examine the witness.

Today's hearing in the *Thaçi, et al* trial is scheduled to conclude at 16:00. The presentation of evidence by the Specialist Prosecutor's Office will resume on Wednesday, 10th May at 9:00 am.

In the Pjetër Shala case, the Trial Panel on 13th April authorised the testimony of three witnesses via video link. The Panel found that the available technology allows for the witnesses to be examined under the same conditions as they would be in the courtroom and at the same time would allow these specific witnesses to testify free of anxiety, which would improve the quality of their evidence and guard their physical and psychological well-being. The Panel therefore ordered the Registry to make the necessary arrangements ensuring that the witnesses' protective measures are respected.

In the same case, the SPO on 14th April filed a public redacted version of its pre-trial brief following an order by the Panel.

The next hearing in this case is scheduled for Monday 1st of May starting at 9:30. Hearings in this case will continue throughout the week between 1st and 5th May.





In other news, this week the KSC outreach team met with civil society in Gračanice/ Gračanica and with highschool students in Gjakove/ Dakovica. During such outreach meetings, the KSC explains the mandate and proceedings of the court and responds to people's questions.

Journalist Questions

