



## 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 Thaçi and co-accused, three witnesses have testified this week with protective measures.

According to the Prosecution, the 42<sup>nd</sup> witness, who began their testimony on Monday, was abducted and detained by KLA members in the area of Prizren in June 1999.

The testimony of the 43<sup>rd</sup> witness called by the Prosecution also began on Monday. This testimony reportedly related to the murder of a victim, who was killed after being arrested and detained by KLA members in the Llap/Lab zone.

On Tuesday, the 44<sup>th</sup> witness called by the Prosecution commenced their testimony. The witness testified, according to the summary read by the Prosecution, about what he saw and learnt during multiple visits to a number of KLA headquarters during the relevant period, including the KLA Commanders he interacted with. This witness also testified on Wednesday and Thursday.

Following yesterday's trial hearing, the Trial Panel met with the Defence Team of Hashim Thaçi to discuss the motion filed by Mr Thaçi's lead Counsel Gregory Kehoe, withdrawing as Counsel.

In the Salih Mustafa case, the Registrar assigned Mr Laurens van Puyenbroeck on 26 January as Duty Counsel representing Mr Mustafa. This assignment followed the 25 January decision by the Supreme Court Panel which found that the earlier appointment of Venkateswari Alagendra as Counsel to Mr Mustafa had no legal effect, since Ms Alagendra did not notify Trial Panel II of her intent to represent Mr Mustafa, in addition to already representing Mr Krasniqi, nor did she obtain a determination from the Trial Panel on whether a conflict of interest exists.

In the case of Sabit Januzi and Ismet Bahtijari, the Pre-Trial Judge ordered the continued detention of Ismet Bahtijari on 29 January. The Judge found that there is a moderate risk that the accused may flee, as well as articulable grounds to believe that Mr Bahtijari may obstruct the progress of court proceedings or commit further offences.

The indictment against Mr Januzi and Mr Bahtijari, as confirmed, states that between at least 5 April 2023 and 12 April 2023, Mr Januzi and Mr Bahtijari individually met with a witness in order to induce the witness to withdraw evidence or refrain from providing evidence in official proceedings before the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, including by use of serious threat. Both accused in this case have pleaded not guilty to all charges.





In the case against Haxhi Shala, the Pre-Trial Judge issued this week a public redacted version of his earlier 4 December decision confirming Mr Shala's indictment. The indictment itself was made public on 12 December 2023. Mr Haxhi Shala is charged in relation to an alleged attempt to intimidate a witness. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges against him.

### **Journalist Questions**

There were no questions asked.

