



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 case of Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari and Haxhi Shala, KSC President Ekaterina Trendafilova on 5 April assigned a Constitutional Court Panel to decide on the accused's referral challenging the Registrar's change in KSC's legal aid regulations. The Constitutional Court Panel consists of the Judges Vidar Stensland, Roumen Nenkov and Romina Incutti.

On 8 April, the Pre-Trial Judge ordered the continued detention of Sabit Januzi and Haxhi Shala. He found that for both accused, the risk of flight, the risk of obstructing the progress of proceedings as well as the risk of committing further crimes continue to exist, especially considering that with the disclosure process progressing, the accused have an increased access to sensitive information.

On 8 April, President Trendafilova rejected the request by the Thaci defense to disqualify or substitute Judge Nicolas Guillou as Single Judge. The request was made on the background that Judge Guillou has been sworn in as a Judge for the ICC on 8 March 2024. He will exercise his judicial functions at the ICC as of 19 August 2024.

Mr Thaci had argued, among other things, that Judge Guillou's independence is affected as he answers to two courts and that the need to prepare for the cases he will be seised with at the ICC will render him unavailable for the work at the KSC.

The President found that her competence to substitute a Judge cannot be triggered unless that Judge becomes unable to perform his or her duties and that this is not the case with respect to Judge Guillou as he will only exercise his judicial functions at the ICC as of 19 August 2024.

She further found that Mr Thaci has advanced no arguments that Judge Guillou's work as a Single Judge or his independence has been impacted and that no Judge may be disqualified on the basis of sweeping or abstract allegations that are neither substantiated nor detailed. She concluded that Judge Guillou's availability to exercise his functions as Single Judge is a matter for the President to assess and is administrative in nature and not subject to appeal by the parties.

The next hearing in the Thaci et al case is scheduled to take place on 22 April starting at 9 in the morning.

In the case of Pjetër Shala, the closing statements will take place from 15 to 18 April 2024 with the prosecution starting with their closing statements on 15 and 16 April, followed by the closing statements by Victim's Counsel and Defense. Mr Shala will make a statement after the parties and Victims' Counsel have completed their submissions.





Once the Presiding Judge has declared the case closed, the judges of the Trial Panel will deliberate confidentially, in order to reach a judgment on the charges in the indictment. The Trial Judgment shall be pronounced within ninety days of the closing of the case, unless the circumstances require additional time.

Journalist Questions

There were no questions asked.

