



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.

Hearings continued this week in the trial of Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi.

On Monday, 6 May, the Presiding Judge addressed the parties and participants in the trial with some general comments about the progress of proceedings and the number of witness testimonies thus far. He noted that 60 witnesses had been heard in court, while another 45 witness testimonies were admitted in written form, without the witness being heard in court, bringing the total number of witness testimonies as of 6 May to 105.

The Presiding Judge also noted for the record that since the trial phase began, 427 filings or submissions seeking a decision were filed by the Prosecution, Defence or Victims' Counsel and that the Trial Panel had issued 367 written and oral decisions in the case so far. Noting the complexity of the case, the Judge expressed the Trial Panel's gratitude to all of the parties and participants for their cooperation thus far with the Panel's efforts to ensure that the trial is conducted not just fairly, but also expeditiously and efficiently.

After this, the 61st witness heard by the court commenced their testimony under protective measures. According to the summary read out by the Prosecution, the witness was arrested and detained by KLA soldiers at various KLA detention sites during the relevant period.

On Tuesday, 7 May, the 62nd witness to be heard in court testified via video link. This protected witness was arrested and detained by KLA soldiers in early 1999 according to the Prosecution's in-court summary.

In the same case, on 3 May the Trial Panel granted a request by the Prosecution for one witness to submit part of their evidence in written form and to testify via video this Friday, 10 May. The judges found that doing so would contribute to the expeditiousness of the proceedings by reducing the time needed for the testimony, and that it would be conducive to the well-being of the witness, who has serious health issues. However, at the trial hearing yesterday, the judges decided to admit the witness's written statement without cross-examination, as agreed by the parties, meaning that the video link testimony scheduled for this Friday is cancelled.

Also on 3 May, the Trial Panel granted in part a request by the Prosecution to admit the written testimonies of six witnesses who are unavailable to testify for different reasons, including medical and health issues and the fact that some of the witnesses have died.

The next hearing in the Thaçi et al trial is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 21 May, starting at 09:00 am.





In the case of Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari and Haxhi Shala the Pre-Trial Judge on 2 May granted the request by Mr Shala to extend the time limit set by the Pre-Trial Judge for the Defense to submit requests in relation to the disclosure process. The Pre-Trial Judge found that good cause has been shown as Mr Shala intends to object to the admissibility of an audio recording and requires time to give proper consideration to all relevant materials following their disclosure.

The new deadline for the defense to submit any requests and objections in regards to the disclosure process is Monday, 13 May.

Journalist Questions

There were no questions asked.

