



## Press 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 18 June, the Constitutional Court Panel exceptionally granted a request by Victims' Counsel to submit observations regarding Pjetër Shala's referral to the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court on one of the complaints raised in the referral. The submission is limited to eight pages and must be filed by 26 June.

The Chamber also allowed Pjetër Shala to respond to the submission by 10 July, should he choose to do so. Mr Shala's response may be up to 10 pages if he addresses the submissions of Victims' Counsel and the Prosecution separately, or up to 15 pages if he files a single joint response to both.

The Constitutional Court Chamber emphasized that this decision is without prejudice to its assessment of the admissibility or merits of the complaint concerned, or of the referral as a whole.

On 23 June, President Ekaterina Trendafilova granted in part a request by Mr Haxhi Shala who had sought permission to renew his expired identification and travel documents to travel to Albania for a short holiday.

In December 2024, Mr Shala pleaded guilty to intimidation during criminal proceedings and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. After serving two-thirds of his sentence, President Trendafilova ordered his conditional release to Kosovo for the duration of the remainder of his sentence.

In her decision, the President considered that individuals should have valid and up to date identification documents and instructed the Registry to return his identification documents to Mr Shala so he can have them renewed. The President further ordered that Mr Shala return his renewed documents to the Registry as soon as he receives them.

However, the President considered Mr. Shala's request to travel to Albania for recreational purposes to be fundamentally incompatible with the sentence imposed on him, stating that conditional release is not meant to be interrupted unless it is for compelling legal or humanitarian grounds.

She further found that a short holiday would undermine the integrity of the sentence, diminish the public confidence in the administration of justice and would call into question the seriousness of the offences for which the sentence was imposed. The President reminded Mr Shala that he is to abide by the conditions imposed on him following his release to Kosovo for the remainder of his sentence.

