



**Highlights of the Press Conference of President of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers,
Judge Ekaterina Trendafilova**

Judge Ekaterina Trendafilova today addressed the media in The Hague, at her first press conference since she assumed office as President of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers on 12 January 2017. She conveyed her vision and priorities in relation to the establishment of the Specialist Chambers as well as achieved results and future time-lines.

Judge Trendafilova emphasized that since her appointment, her top priority and main focus has been on the establishment of a functional legal framework for the Specialist Chambers.

“In all my undertakings so far, I am driven by the strong motivation that our institution abide by the highest standards in the legal field, that we establish best practices, provide high-quality judicial decisions and perform our functions with utmost professionalism and integrity,” President Trendafilova stated.

She expressed her satisfaction with the progress made so far by the Specialist Chambers, which was conducted with ambitious time-lines and without any delays.

Following a vigorous and stringent selection process leading to the appointment of International Judges to the Roster, these Judges adopted vital documents necessary for the conduct of proceedings before the Specialist Chambers: the Rules of Procedure and Evidence (regulating conduct of criminal proceedings before all levels of the Specialist Chambers), the Rules on Assignment of Judges (setting criteria upon which the President assigns Judges from the Roster to particular proceedings) and the Code of Judicial Ethics (establishing professional standards applicable to Judges). President Trendafilova highlighted a number of innovative notions within the adopted documents.

“By adopting the [Rules of Procedure and Evidence](#) less than two months after their appointment, the Judges have demonstrated their professionalism, outstanding knowledge and relentless commitment to efficient and fair proceedings before the Specialist Chambers,” President Trendafilova said.

In relation to the [decision rendered by the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court](#) on 26 April, which found that 9 out of 208 provisions of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence needed further revision by the Plenary, she commented: “The review by the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court and its findings in no way diminished the quality of the work performed by the Plenary. It is not unusual that legislative documents are subject to a

strict scrutiny and thereby strengthened. This is another proof and assurance of the professionalism, independence and impartiality with which the proceedings before the KSC will be conducted.” She also addressed all nine provisions in question explaining in detail the contentious issues.

As for the next steps, President Trendafilova announced that she is already in the process of convening the second Plenary of Judges. The expectation is that through expeditious work, by the end of May 2017, the necessary revisions of these Rules will be adopted. Afterwards, they will again be reviewed by the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court.

Seven days after the determination of their constitutional compatibility, the Rules of Procedure and Evidence will come into force. This will mark the time when the Specialist Chambers will be in a position to receive filings and to conduct criminal proceedings.

President Trendafilova also underlined the importance of professional and accurate media reporting and the need for regular and transparent information from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers.

Finally, she highlighted: “I am honoured that the leadership of this task was entrusted to me to ensure that the Specialist Chambers will efficiently, expeditiously and economically dispense justice, independent from any interference, while safeguarding the security and safety of witnesses and the fundamental rights of accused persons.”

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Note: All adopted documents, including the current version of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence are available at the website of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers in three official languages.

For more information on the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Judges of the Specialist Chambers, visit: www.scp-ks.org.

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