



KOSOVO SPECIALIST CHAMBERS
DHOMAT E SPECIALIZUARA TË KOSOVËS
SPECIJALIZOVANA VEÇA KOSOVA

Outreach Programme

Kosovo Specialist Chambers



CONTENTS

1 - THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

2 - PRINCIPLES OF THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

3 - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

**4 - MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE KSC OUTREACH
PROGRAMME**

1-THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

The KSC Outreach Programme aims at cultivating a level of knowledge and awareness of KSC's mandate and mode of operations, at promoting access to and understanding of judicial proceedings, and at fostering realistic expectations about KSC's work. By addressing the concerns of affected communities and by countering misperceptions, the Outreach Programme encourages an active participation of civil society in the KSC's proceedings.

Through frequent consultations with partner organisations, information sessions with journalists, lectures and a visitor's programme for students, town hall meetings and roundtable discussions, as well as regular updates through newsletters, the Outreach Programme will disseminate timely information on the work of the KSC and foster dialogue about it. Specific important topics and procedures, e.g. De-

fence and Victims' Participation, are also explained in the KSC factsheets that are being distributed during public events or to journalists. By active engagement and communication with Kosovo non-governmental and other civil society organisations as well as various communities, the KSC aims to counteract some of the communication challenges associated with managing relocated proceedings. Supported by a generous grant over two years provided by the Swiss Government, the KSC in 2018 has substantially strengthened its activities and presence in Kosovo. The objective is to foster direct communication with Kosovo society through an information network reaching out to civil society, minorities, youth, legal professionals, media and others.

SHORT-TERM GOALS: make sure that the work and actions of the KSC are understood; actively reach out to different parts of society, in particular to the affected communities in the region, and especially to potential victims and witnesses; engage relevant communities in dialogue; manage expectations by providing accurate information; ensure that the KSC is perceived as an independent and impartial judicial institution.

LONG-TERM GOALS: ensure that the KSC's legacy will be perceived as credible and impartial; develop creative and efficient outreach mechanisms, which can also serve as a model for other international courts.

2- PRINCIPLES OF THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Impartiality and independence

The KSC has to focus on the dissemination of objective and accurate information about its mandate and work. It should not, under any circumstances, be perceived as part of the strategies of various court actors in the judicial process (Prosecution, Defence, etc.) or part of any political agenda (by EU, EULEX in particular, other international players, donors, Kosovo and Serbian authorities, etc.). While very complex in a highly politicized environment such as Kosovo, this principle is of fundamental importance for the continued viability of the institution and for its success.

Transparency and responsiveness

The KSC has to operate and be perceived as working in a transparent manner. To achieve this goal, it has to disseminate information about its mandate, proceedings and activities. To foster the perception of transparency it is essential to respond to media queries accurately and in a timely manner, including in relation to important (public) judicial decisions and the reasons for (limited) confidentiality.

Management of expectations

After the Law on the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office was adopted, management of expectations became essential. Any significant delay or complication can fuel conspiracy theories or create confusion, if not properly explained. It is, therefore, crucial to outline realistic timelines and explain the many stages of had been through (e.g. appointment of the

Registrar, selection of the judges and President of the Chambers, adoption of Rules of Procedure and Evidence, when indictments theoretically could be filed, etc.). In addition, it is important to carefully convey the message that the KSC has a limited mandate and cannot provide justice to all people in Kosovo, with the aim of avoiding unfounded presumptions and unrealistic expectations from potential victims.

Developing partnerships and ensure wider support

To establish a successful dialogue with people in Kosovo, Serbia and the region, the KSC needs the support of local stakeholders who are familiar with the communication needs and concerns of the local communities. Establishing close and strong partnerships with local stakeholders is, therefore, the essence of the KSC Outreach Programme. To this end, during the last two years the KSC has developed a core network of partners in Kosovo and Serbia, with 12 NGOs providing regular feedback on outreach needs, failures and successes, as well as concrete suggestions for future KSC outreach in the region. The NGO partners also contribute to multiplying KSC key messages together with media, embassies and donors. The involvement of each group of stakeholders is essential for the success of the KSC's outreach and communication and requires wide-ranging efforts and attention by the Public Information and Communication Unit.

Connection with the affected population

For the KSC's outreach to be efficient and for its messages to reach the intended audience, the KSC has to take into

consideration the cultural context and the different parts of society it intends to reach when planning its outreach and communication programme. Such cultural aspects can influence the choice of locations for meetings, the design or wording of information material including video clips as well as language and the way information is presented. Personal contact on a regular basis is essential to build trust and regular visits of KSC Principals to the region play an important role, as the population perceives such visits as a sign of respect and consideration.

Tailor-made communication

The different parts of society in Kosovo, Serbia and the region as well as the international audience have diverse views on the KSC and, as such, should be approached from different angles and with tailored messages. Full respect for linguistic and cultural subtleties must be the general rule when shaping messages intended for local communities. Nevertheless, the overall focus should always be on the dissemination of information describing the mandate and work of the court, the rights of the accused and the victims, and the protection of witnesses.

Two-way communication

Establishing a dialogue with the affected population in Kosovo, Serbia and the region is an essential part of the KSC Outreach Programme. While the dissemination of information is pivotal, it is even more important to receive feedback from the concerned population that alerts the KSC on misunderstandings and misinformation. Such feedback also helps determine which approach is best placed to reach people and what concerns should be addressed first.

3- IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

The first step in the implementation of the KSC Outreach Programme was to establish a Court Information Network (CIN), i.e. a network of NGOs that support the KSC, provide feedback, and volunteer their knowledge of the affected communities and their communication expertise when determining the best outreach approaches. While this network is not static, the NGOs that have been part of the network so far build the core group. In June 2018, the CIN came together to participate in an outreach workshop at the KSC, provide feedback of past outreach activities and concrete suggestions for future outreach initiatives in the region. The outline of the KSC Outreach Programme is based on this feedback and suggestions.

Now that the basics, such as the core partners, have been established, all NGOs agreed that the presence of the KSC in Kosovo and Serbia has to be increased. To achieve that goal, the KSC's outreach team has defined short term and long-term goals in cooperation with the CIN.

Short-term goals are as follows:

- Continue with one to three monthly outreach events in different parts of Kosovo;
- Continue with consultations in Serbia with an aim to establish bi-monthly outreach activities in the country;
- Develop video clips explaining the mandate and proceedings of the court, the Victims' Participation Programme and the role of the Ombudsperson in all relevant languages, and broadcast those

video clips regularly in Kosovo, Serbia and other parts of the region;

- Establish an interactive approach that gives the general public an opportunity to ask questions;
- Increase regular engagement with journalists in Kosovo and Serbia for wider reach;
- Develop a long-term outreach plan;
- Expand target audiences to include war veterans and victims associations;
- Develop a special approach for Roma communities.

Long-term goals are as follows:

- Continue with monthly outreach meetings in Kosovo;
- Continue with bi-monthly outreach meetings in Serbia;
- Include the approach for Roma communities into the long-term outreach plan;
- Organise yearly meetings of the CIN;
- Organise regular media briefings;
- Establish physical presence in Kosovo in the form of an office, if necessary;
- Set up a bi-monthly newsletter once court proceedings start;
- Reach out to religious leaders, especially in Serbian communities.

Overall the KSC and CIN have agreed on using different approaches to Serbian and Alba

nian communities and on developing standard presentations for different occasions that take into consideration the cultural backgrounds as well as different views and needs of the participants. It was also agreed that the cultural background should be taken into consideration when developing the video clips. The content of those clips has to be purely informative to avoid any perception of bias or propaganda, which, as a consequence, would cause resistance in all parts of the population. sequence, would cause resistance in all parts of the population.

4- MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE KSC OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Currently the KSC has two mechanisms in place to evaluate the impact and efficiency of its Outreach Programme:

- i) Regular feedback from NGOs on the ground provides qualitative feedback from their respective target audience and helps the KSC shape messages and outreach events in accordance with peoples' needs;
- ii) Yearly opinion polls on knowledge of and attitude towards the KSC carried out in Kosovo and Serbia provide an idea of the reach and impact of the KSC Outreach Programme.

Feedback from NGOs has highlighted the need for increasing the presence of the KSC in Kosovo as well as considering the cultural context of the target audience, and as such tailor messages and events. Both Kosovo Serb and Serbian NGOs reported the extremely critical attitude of the target audiences towards the KSC, and alerted that building trust will take a long time and might only be possible if the

“proves itself” through indictments.

The latest opinion poll carried out in May 2018 shows an increase in knowledge or awareness of the KSC in Serbia in comparison to the survey done in 2017, although substantial gaps remain with regard to the knowledge of the actual mandate. The first opinion poll in Kosovo was done in 2018. It showed a surprisingly high amount of people supporting the KSC, albeit this support seems to be limited to the group of ethnic Albanians. The outcome of the opinion poll suggests the need for a wider reach with specific information on the mandate of the KSC, which the court is planning to cover through broadcasting video clips on Kosovo and Serbian TV. The lack of support from Serbian communities also highlights the need for increased outreach activities involving those communities and in general the most critical audiences.

With a view to receiving a more direct feedback on the quality of outreach events in the future, the KSC will develop feedback forms for participants of round tables or panel discussions so they can assess whether the information received was useful and provide suggestions for improvement.

Results of the Kosovo survey

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 1600 Kosovars from different communities: Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs, and other groups (Kosovo Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Turk, Bosnian, Gorani).

An overall 60% of the respondents declare that they are somewhat informed about the KSC and SPO; however, misinformation about the two institutions and

their location remains widespread.

61% of the respondents declare support for the KSC to some extent. The main reason to support the KSC is that it will bring the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity to justice (51%) and improve the Rule of Law in Kosovo (37%). Those who do not express support believe that the court will provide one-sided justice (35%), that not all the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity will be brought to justice (25%), or that the court is just an international game (24%). Interestingly, Kosovo Serbs represent the higher portion of non-supporters of the work of the KSC and SPO (75%).

While 74% of the respondents - mostly Kosovo Albanians - think it is important to have international judges, prosecutors and staff at the KSC, 21% disagree (of which some 82% are Kosovo Serbs).

In terms of expectations, 58% of the respondents declare a certain degree of belief that the KSC and SPO will act solely based on facts, stay independent and work without political interference, whereas 35% disagree.

62% of the respondents think the KSC will try war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the members of the KLA, while 44% by Yugoslav and Serbian state actors. 34% think the KSC will try crimes committed or commenced in Kosovo that are related to the Council of Europe Assembly Report.

Only 2% of ethnic Serbs trust that KSC and SPO's work would have a legitimate outcome, in comparison to 51% Albanians and

57% of other communities. One third of the respondents are of the opinion that the work of the KSC and SPO will not have an impact at all on the future of Kosovo and the region, another third believe in a positive impact, while 15% think that the impact will be negative.

As regards the sources of information on the KSC and SPO, most of the people in Kosovo (58%) prefer traditional media sources like television, radio and newspapers, while a smaller percentage (27%) browse the internet for information. Media is considered a more trustworthy source than the KSC and SPO themselves with regard to their work (36% and 22%, respectively), with RTK TV channel as the most common and reliable source, followed by Klan Kosova TV channel, KTV and RTV 21.

Results of the Serbia survey

This survey conducted in May 2018, was the second round of interviews conducted in Serbia (the first was done in May 2017). It involved face-to-face interviews with 1429 respondents in both urban and rural areas of Serbia.

In 2018, the level of awareness about the existence and work of the KSC and the SPO slightly increased compared to the previous year (41% compared to 24% in 2017); nevertheless, the majority of the citizens is still not aware of KSC's existence, its role and representatives. Furthermore, negative attitudes still prevail.

In terms of attitude toward the KSC, neutral or negative feelings prevail. Negative attitudes come from the belief that the KSC is biased against the Serbs and siding with the Albanians. People fear this will increase hos-

tility among nations.

More than half of the population in Serbia (54%) mainly or completely believe that because the KSC is located outside of Kosovo it is not subject to political influence. Similarly, the majority of citizens (61%) believe it is important for the KSC to employ international judges, prosecutors and other staff.

Compared to last year, the expectations and level of confidence in the KSC is higher (28% compared to 17% in 2017). Despite that, the majority of citizens (59%) still do not expect the KSC to be able to ensure secure, impartial, fair and efficient trials. There is indeed a general lack of confidence when it comes to the impartiality of the KSC.

The opinion that the KSC is a court for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Yugoslav and Serbian state actors prevails (42%), while one third of the population (29%) think the KSC will try war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by KLA members.

Almost half of the citizens believe that the work of the KSC will not contribute much to providing a sense of justice for victims or a sense of trust in criminal justice in general. Furthermore, 49% of the respondents do not believe in a legitimate outcome from the work of the KSC and SPO (a legitimate outcome is expected only by 22% of the population).

As regards the sources of information, the most common source for the majority of citizens (76%) is television, especially among middle aged and senior citizens with lower income. Younger citizens inform

themselves through the press, internet portals, social media and websites. The top three sources to find reliable information are all public TV channels: Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), followed by TV Pink and TV Prva. The fourth source of information is the newspaper Blic.