



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.

In the case of Pjetër Shala, an appeals hearing started this afternoon and is expected to continue through tomorrow morning.

Pjetër Shala was convicted by the Trial Panel of the war crimes of arbitrary detention and murder on 16 July 2024 and sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment, with credit for the time served. He has appealed both the judgment and the sentence, as well as the order granting reparations to the eight participating victims in this case.

During Mr. Shala's appeals hearing today and tomorrow, the Defence is expected to present to the judges of the Appeals Panel the reasons why they are challenging the decision of Trial Panel judges. The Prosecution and Victims' Counsel also have the opportunity to make oral submissions.

The Kosovo Specialist Chambers upholds the fair trial rights guaranteed under the Kosovo constitution and international human rights law. If a defendant disagrees with a court decision, they can appeal. A whole new panel of different Specialist Chambers judges will review the case independently. The Court of Appeals Panel may affirm, reverse, or revise the Judgments by the Trial Panel. Defendants before the Specialist Chambers have previously made regular use of these legal protections. This robust system of checks and balances ensures fair and impartial justice.

In the trial of Hashim Thaci, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi, the Trial Panel decided on 13 May on a request by the Prosecution to admit a group of Dukagjin Operational Zone documents into evidence. The Trial Panel rejected some of the proposed documents and admitted others, applying the legal standard contained in





the KSC rules, which states that the judges shall admit evidence if it is relevant and authentic, and if its probative value is not outweighed by its prejudicial effect.

As a reminder, the Prosecution in this case completed the calling of witnesses and the presentation of their case in April 2025, after which the Defence teams notified the Trial Panel of their intention to file motions to dismiss some or all of the charges in the indictment.

Kosovo Specialist Chambers President Ekaterina Trendafilova visited Kosovo this week to conduct Outreach activities and meet with KSC stakeholders. During her three-day visit, she met with law students to discuss the legal framework of the KSC, its mandate and operation. She also visited the Documentation Center of the Humanitarian Law Center in Kosovo.

In line with the KSC's commitment to transparency, the KSC President had also scheduled a press conference with journalists to answer their questions, but she was prevented from doing so, due to protests by war veterans and others involving smoke bombs. The event was cancelled in the interest of public safety and on the basis of the advice of the Kosovo Police.

The KSC remains committed to informing the Kosovo public and journalists transparently about the course of the court proceedings in The Hague.

