



## 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 Salih Mustafa, the Appeals Panel on 10 September imposed a new sentence of 15 years of imprisonment, with credit for time served, as a result of his conviction for arbitrary detention, torture and murder as war crimes. The Appeals Panel reiterated that its new determination on the sentence does not detract from the gravity of the crimes Mr. Mustafa is convicted of. The Appeals Panel's decision was issued as a result of the decision by the Supreme Court Panel of 29 July, in which it granted Mr Mustafa's request for protection of legality, in part, and annulled the appeal judgment insofar as it concerned Mr Mustafa's sentence of 22 years, and returned the matter to the Appeals Panel.

In the *Thaçi et al.* case, the Trial Panel on 5 September granted a request by the Prosecution, to allow for parts of a witness testimony to be submitted into evidence in written form and to allow the witness to testify via video conference. The Panel noted that the Defence did not oppose the request and found that testimony via video conference would be more conducive to the well-being of the witness and might help expedite proceedings.

On the same day, the Trial Panel granted the Prosecution's request for two more witnesses to testify via video conference as it would be conducive for their health and well-being. The Panel was satisfied that the testimony via video conference will cause no prejudice to the Accused and is compatible with the effective protection of their rights.

On 10 September, the Trial Panel admitted into evidence the testimony and associated exhibits of 9 witnesses in writing. The Panel denied the request in regards to a 10<sup>th</sup> witness, without prejudice to an application by the Prosecution to call the witness to testify in court.

The next hearing in this case is scheduled for Monday, 16 September, starting at 9:00 in the morning.

After President Trendafilova on 3 September assigned Trial Panel I to the case of the Specialist Prosecutor v. Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari and Haxhi Shala, the Trial Panel on 5 September notified that they have unanimously elected Judge Mappie Veldt-Foglia as the Presiding Judge of the Panel for the trial.

On 9 September 2024, the Supreme Court Panel, consisting of Judges Ekaterina Trendafilova, Christine van den Wyngaert and Daniel Fransen, rejected Haxhi Shala's request for protection of legality concerning his detention. The Panel concluded that there was no substantial violation of the procedures on the part of the Pre-Trial Judge, who initially ordered the accused's continued detention, or by the Appeals Panel that upheld the decision.





In the Pjetër Shala case, a pre-appeal conference is scheduled for Friday, 20 September. During the hearing, the parties are expected to make submissions and the Panel will ask for an update on the progress made with the translation of the trial judgment into Albanian. The Specialist Chambers translate all public documents and filings into the three languages of the court, Albanian, Serbian and English, as rapidly as possible.

