



## 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 *Thaçi et al.* trial, the Trial Panel made public a decision that it issued in January regarding a number of individuals who resubmitted their applications to be admitted as victims following the Trial Panel's order for additional information. The Trial Panel decided to admit nine applicants that it had initially rejected because their applications were submitted after the deadline set by the Trial Panel.

In their January decision, the Judges determined for eight of the applicants that it had not been practically possible for them to apply prior to the deadline, and that it was in the interests of justice to consider the merits of the ninth applicant. The Trial Panel was satisfied that the nine applicants were victims of crimes allegedly committed at locations identified in the indictment during the relevant time period.

The nine applicants which were admitted have different backgrounds, reside in different areas and speak different languages. At the same time, since they were subjected to similar alleged types of crimes in generally similar circumstances, they were deemed to share a common interest in participating in the proceedings and pursuing their rights.

Accordingly, the applicants have joined the existing group of participating victims and are represented by the same Counsel.

On 1 May, the Trial Panel granted a request by the Prosecution that all parties in the *Thaçi et al.* case get access to the confidential versions of the trial and appeal judgments in the case of Salih Mustafa. Considering that the two cases overlap significantly, the Panel found that there is a legitimate forensic purpose to seek access to these judgements. Based on the request by the Prosecution and upon





consultations with the Trial Panel and Appeals Panel in the Mustafa case, the Panel also found that granting the request would not impact applicable protective measures and would pose no risk to victims and witnesses. The Panel however reminded the parties and participants of the confidential classification of these versions of the judgements, and that their confidential parts shall not be disclosed to the public.

Hearings in the trial of Hashim Thaçi and his co-accused resumed on Monday, 29 April. On the same day, the 58<sup>th</sup> witness called by the Prosecution testified.

The 59th witness, Nuredin Abazi, commenced his testimony on Monday and he testified mainly in open session. As per the summary presented by the Prosecution, the witness was a member of a KLA battalion in Budakovo, later serving as a legal adviser in the Pashtrik zone. Mr Abazi was questioned by the Prosecution, the Defence teams and the Judges.

On Tuesday, the 60<sup>th</sup> witness called by the Prosecution testified. Following their testimony, the trial was adjourned for the week on Wednesday and will resume on Monday, 6 May at 9:00 in the morning.

In the case of Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari and Haxhi Shala the Pre-Trial Judge on 30 April, upon request by the Defence, extended the time limit within which Mr. Bahtijari has to submit the forms and supporting documents to request legal aid before the KSC. The new deadline is 3 May. The Judge based his decision on the progress made in completing the relevant documents.

## Journalist Questions

There were no questions asked.

