



## 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.

The trial of Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari, and Haxhi Shala will start next Thursday, 14 November at 09:30, with the opening statements of the Prosecution and two of the Defence teams. During opening statements, the parties lay out their case, including the evidence they intend to submit that supports this.

At the start of next Thursday's hearing, the indictment will be read out and the Presiding Judge will inform the accused of their rights, ask if they understand the charges against them and give them the opportunity to confirm their initial pleas of not-guilty.

Once the charges in the indictment have been read out, the Prosecution will have two hours to make its opening statement, followed by the Januzi Defence, which has been allocated one hour, and the Haxhi Shala Defence, which has been allocated 30 minutes. These timings were determined by the Trial Panel on the basis of the parties' requests.

In line with the rules, the Bahtijari Defence has said they would prefer to make their opening statement after the Prosecution has presented its case and called its witnesses.

The indictment alleges that between 5 April 2023 and 12 April 2023, Mr. Januzi and Mr. Bahtijari at Mr. Shala's direction, met separately with a witness on two occasions to induce him to withdraw evidence or refrain from providing evidence in official proceedings before the KSC, including by use of serious threat and the promise of a gift or other form of benefit.

The Accused are charged with obstructing official persons in performing official duties and intimidation during criminal proceedings.

The opening of the trial next Thursday, 14 November, can be followed in Albanian, Serbian or English through the streaming page of the KSC website with a 45-minute delay, or from the public gallery at the premises of the court.

In the same case, on 5 November, the Trial Panel rejected a Prosecution request to admit into evidence the written testimony of two witnesses, because the Prosecution had filed the request after the deadline for doing so had passed.

In the trial of Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi, the 103<sup>rd</sup> witness has been testifying over the course of this week. The witness, Shukri Buja, testified mostly in public session, although parts of the hearings were closed.





In the same case, on 1 November, the Prosecution notified the Trial Panel that it no longer intends to call 12 witnesses from its earlier list and that it intends to present the statements of eight witnesses in written form instead of via live testimony in court.

In the same filing the Prosecution noted that following these changes, the number of witnesses remaining to testify in court as part of the Prosecution case is reduced to 43.

The Prosecution also said that it anticipates that it will be in a position to notify the Trial Panel of additional changes to its witness list by the upcoming judicial recess in December.

The next hearing in the *Thaçi et al.* trial is scheduled for Monday, 18 November, starting at 09:00 in the morning.

