



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 trial of Hashim Thaçi, Bashkim Smakaj, Isni Kilaj, Fadil Fazliu and Hajredin Kuçi, the Single Trial Judge on 15 June granted a request by the Fazliu Defence team to extend the deadline to submit their final trial brief due to unforeseen personnel issues. For reasons of fairness, the Single Trial Judge extended the deadline for all Defence teams and ordered them to file their final trial briefs by 3 July or three working days after a pending interlocutory appeal by the Prosecution has been decided on. In case the evidentiary proceedings cannot be immediately closed following the decision on the pending interlocutory appeal, the parties will be consulted concerning the further conduct of proceedings.

This case is the sixth trial before the Specialist Chambers.

The first completed case was that of Hysni Gucati and Nasim Haradinaj, who were convicted of intimidation and other offences against the administration of justice in May 2022. They were conditionally released in 2023 and completed their sentences in 2024.

The second completed case involved Salih Mustafa, who was convicted of the war crimes of arbitrary detention, torture and murder in December 2022 and ordered to pay reparations to the victims, all of whom were Kosovo Albanians. Mr. Mustafa was initially sentenced to 26 years of imprisonment, and this was reduced on appeal to 15 years imprisonment with credit for time served.

The third case completed before the Specialist Chambers was that involving Pjetër Shala. Mr. Shala was convicted in July 2024 of the war crimes of arbitrary detention, torture and murder and ordered to pay reparations to the victims, predominantly Kosovo Albanians. Mr. Shala was initially sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment, and his sentence was reduced on appeal to 13 years imprisonment, with credit for time served.

The court's fourth case involved obstruction of justice. Sabit Januzi, Ismet Bahtijari and Haxhi Shala pleaded guilty to intimidation and other offences in December 2024. Mr. Januzi and Mr. Bahtijari were conditionally released in February 2025 and completed their sentences in October 2025. Haxhi Shala was conditionally released on 10 February 2026 following a modification of his sentence.

Finally, in another ongoing trial, Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi are facing charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. They have plead not guilty to all charges. The evidentiary phase of the trial has concluded, and the Trial Panel is currently deliberating and will issue a judgment in due course.





The Specialist Chambers continues this week with the publication of a series of explanatory videos, “Reflecting on the Specialist Chambers’ Mandate and Work.” In the first video, KSC President Ekaterina Trendafilova explained how the independence, impartiality and professionalism of Judges is ensured. This week’s videos provide detailed information on detention and provisional release at the KSC, humanitarian visits by detainees to Kosovo, and the application of international fair trial standards. Videos can be accessed in Albanian, English and Serbian on the website and on the KSC’s social media channels.

