



KOSOVO SPECIALIST CHAMBERS
DHOMAT E SPECIALIZUARA TË KOSOVËS
SPECIJALIZOVANA VEĆA KOSOVA

In: KSC-BC-2020-06

The Specialist Prosecutor v. Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi, and Jakup Krasniqi

Before: Trial Panel II

Judge Charles L. Smith III, Presiding Judge

Judge Christoph Barthe

Judge Guénaél Mettraux

Judge Fergal Gaynor, Reserve Judge

Registrar: Fidelma Donlon

Date: 15 April 2024

Language: English

Classification: Public

Decision on Periodic Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi

Specialist Prosecutor's Office

Kimberly P. West

Counsel for Victims

Simon Laws

Counsel for Hashim Thaçi

Luka Mišetić

Counsel for Kadri Veseli

Ben Emmerson

Counsel for Rexhep Selimi

Geoffrey Roberts

Counsel for Jakup Krasniqi

Venkateswari Alagendra

TRIAL PANEL II of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (“Panel”), pursuant to Article 41(2), (6), (10), and (12) of Law No. 05/L-053 on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office (“Law”) and Rules 56(2) and 57(2) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence Before the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (“Rules”), hereby renders this decision.

I. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

1. The procedural background concerning the periodic review of the detention of Hashim Thaçi (“Mr Thaçi”) has been set out extensively in previous decisions. Relevant events since the last periodic review (“Thirteenth Decision on Detention”)¹ include the following.
2. On 21 March 2024, the Specialist Prosecutor’s Office (“SPO”) filed its submissions on the review of Mr Thaçi’s detention (“SPO Submissions”).²
3. The Defence for Mr Thaçi did not respond to the SPO Submissions.
4. The trial against Mr Thaçi and his co-accused continues to progress.

II. SUBMISSIONS

5. The SPO submits that Mr Thaçi’s detention continues to be justified.³ According to the SPO, since the last decision on review of Mr Thaçi’s detention, there has been no material change in circumstances that warrants a different conclusion.⁴ The SPO avers that no conditions short of detention in the detention

¹ F02125, Trial Panel, *Decision on Periodic Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi*, 15 February 2024.

² F02192, Specialist Prosecutor, *Prosecution Submission Pertaining to Periodic Detention Review of Hashim Thaçi*, 21 March 2024.

³ SPO Submissions, paras 1, 8-21.

⁴ SPO Submissions, paras 1, 6.

facility would be sufficient to minimise the risks enumerated under Article 41,⁵ and that detention remains proportional.⁶

III. APPLICABLE LAW

6. The law applicable to deciding the present matter is set out primarily in Article 41 and Rules 56 and 57, and has been laid out extensively in earlier decisions.⁷ The Panel will apply these standards to the present decision.

IV. DISCUSSION

7. The purpose of reviewing detention every two months pursuant to Article 41(10) is for the Panel to determine whether the reasons for detention on remand still exist.⁸ A change in circumstances, while not determinative, shall be taken into consideration if raised before the relevant panel or *proprio motu*.⁹ In the present review, the SPO asserts that no change in circumstances has occurred which would support interim release from detention.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the Panel will proceed to review the factors under Article 41(6) to satisfy itself that the circumstances underpinning Mr Thaçi's detention continue to exist, justifying the continued detention of Mr Thaçi.

⁵ SPO Submissions, paras 1, 22-26.

⁶ SPO Submissions, paras 27-29.

⁷ See e.g. F00994, Pre-Trial Judge, *Decision on Periodic Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi*, 29 September 2022, confidential, paras 18-21. A public redacted version was issued on 6 October 2022, F00994/RED.

⁸ IA022/F00005, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Hashim Thaçi's Appeal Against Decision on Periodic Review of Detention*, 22 August 2022, confidential, para. 37. A public redacted version was issued on the same date, IA022/F00005/RED.

⁹ IA010/F00008, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Hashim Thaçi's Appeal Against Decision on Review of Detention*, 27 October 2021, confidential, para. 19. A public redacted version was issued on the same date, IA010/F00008/RED.

¹⁰ SPO Submissions, paras 1, 6.

A. ARTICLE 41 CRITERIA

1. Grounded Suspicion

8. The SPO submits that there remains a grounded suspicion that Mr Thaçi has committed a crime within the jurisdiction of the Specialist Chambers (“SC”).¹¹

9. Regarding the threshold for continued detention, Article 41(6)(a) requires a grounded suspicion that the detained person has committed a crime within the jurisdiction of the SC. This is a condition *sine qua non* for the validity of the detained person’s continued detention.¹²

10. The Panel notes that the Pre-Trial Judge determined that, pursuant to Article 39(2), there was a well-grounded suspicion that Mr Thaçi is criminally liable for a number of crimes against humanity (persecution, imprisonment, other inhumane acts, torture, murder and enforced disappearance) and war crimes (arbitrary detention, cruel treatment, torture and murder) under Articles 13, 14(1)(c) and 16(1)(a).¹³ Moreover, the Pre-Trial Judge also found that a well-grounded suspicion was established with regard to new charges brought by the SPO against Mr Thaçi.¹⁴ These findings were made on the basis of a standard

¹¹ SPO Submissions, para. 7.

¹² See ECtHR, *Merabishvili v. Georgia* [GC], no. 72508/13, [Judgment](#), 28 November 2017, para. 222.

¹³ F00026, Pre-Trial Judge, *Decision on the Confirmation of the Indictment Against Hashim Thaçi, Kadri Veseli, Rexhep Selimi and Jakup Krasniqi*, 26 October 2020, strictly confidential and *ex parte*, para. 521(a). A confidential redacted version was filed on 19 November 2020, F00026/CONF/RED. A public redacted version was filed on 30 November 2020, F00026/RED. The Specialist Prosecutor submitted the confirmed indictment in F00034, Specialist Prosecutor, *Submission of Confirmed Indictment and Related Requests*, 30 October 2020, confidential, with Annex 1, strictly confidential and *ex parte*, and Annexes 2-3, confidential; F00045/A03, Specialist Prosecutor, *Further Redacted Indictment*, 4 November 2020; F00134, Specialist Prosecutor, *Lesser Redacted Version of Redacted Indictment*, KSC-BC-2020-06/F00045/A02, 4 November 2020, 11 December 2020, confidential. A further corrected confirmed indictment was submitted on 3 September 2021, strictly confidential and *ex parte* (F00455/A01), with confidential redacted (F00455/CONF/RED/A01) and public redacted (F00455/RED/A01) versions. On 17 January 2022, the Specialist Prosecutor submitted a confidential, corrected, and lesser redacted version of the confirmed Indictment, F00647/A01.

¹⁴ F00777, Pre-Trial Judge, *Decision on the Confirmation of Amendments to the Indictment*, 22 April 2022, strictly confidential and *ex parte*, para. 183. A confidential redacted version, F00777/CONF/RED, a public redacted version, F00777/RED, and a confidential lesser redacted version, F00777/CONF/RED2, were filed on 22 April 2022, 6 May 2022 and 16 May 2022, respectively. The requested amendments are

exceeding the grounded suspicion threshold required for the purposes of Article 41(6)(a).¹⁵

11. Absent any new material circumstances affecting the above findings, the Panel finds that there continues to be a grounded suspicion that Mr Thaçi has committed crimes within the subject-matter jurisdiction of the SC for the purposes of Article 41(6)(a) and (10).

2. Necessity of Detention

12. With respect to the grounds for continued detention, Article 41(6)(b) sets out three alternative bases (risks) on which detention may be found to be necessary: (i) risk of flight; (ii) risk of obstruction of the proceedings; or (iii) risk of the further commission of crimes.¹⁶ Detention shall be maintained if there are articulable grounds to believe that one or more of these risks will materialise.¹⁷ “Articulable” in this context means specified in detail by reference to the relevant information or evidence.¹⁸ In determining whether any of the grounds under Article 41(6)(b)

detailed at para. 11. A confirmed amended indictment was then filed by the SPO on 29 April 2022 (“Confirmed Indictment”), strictly confidential and *ex parte* (F00789/A01), with confidential redacted (F00789/A02) and public redacted (F00789/A05) versions. A further confidential amended Confirmed Indictment was filed on 30 September 2022, (F00999/A01) and public redacted version (F00999/A03). A public lesser redacted version of the Confirmed Indictment was filed on 15 February 2023 (F01296/A03) and on 27 February 2023 (F01323/A01).

¹⁵ See e.g. IA008/F00004, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Kadri Veseli’s Appeal Against Decision on Review of Detention*, 1 October 2021, confidential, para. 21. A public redacted version was issued on the same date, IA008/F00004/RED.

¹⁶ See ECtHR, *Buzadji v. the Republic of Moldova* [GC], no. 23755/07, [Judgment](#), 5 July 2016, para. 88; ECtHR, *Zohlandt v. the Netherlands*, no. 69491/16, Judgment, 9 February 2021, para. 50; ECtHR, *Grubnyk v. Ukraine*, no. 58444/15, Judgment, 17 September 2020, para. 115; ECtHR, *Korban v. Ukraine*, no. 26744/16, Judgment, 4 July 2019, para. 155.

¹⁷ IA004/F00005, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Hashim Thaçi’s Appeal Against Decision on Interim Release (“First Appeal Decision on Detention”)*, 30 April 2021, confidential, para. 19. A public redacted version was issued on the same date, IA004/F00005/RED.

¹⁸ Article 19.1.31 of the Kosovo Criminal Procedure Code 2022, Law No. 08/L-032 defines “articulable” as: “the party offering the information or evidence must specify in detail the information or evidence being relied upon”.

allowing for a person's detention exist, the standard to be applied is less than certainty, but more than a mere possibility of a risk materialising.¹⁹

(a) Risk of Flight

13. The SPO asserts that Mr Thaçi's knowledge and understanding of the charges and the evidence against him has increased pursuant to recent disclosures and the ongoing trial.²⁰ The SPO claims that Mr Thaçi is now aware that powerful evidence has been obtained by the SPO regarding his alleged attempts to obstruct proceedings and commit further crimes.²¹ The SPO alleges that these circumstances heighten Mr Thaçi's motivation to flee, creating a sufficiently real possibility that he will abscond.²² The SPO submits that the evidence of obstruction may also negate prior conclusions that Mr Thaçi has cooperated with authorities.²³ Finally, the SPO avers that recent developments permitting Kosovo citizens to travel within the EU without a visa further heighten the risk of Mr Thaçi absconding.²⁴

14. To the extent that the SPO argues that Mr Thaçi's knowledge and understanding of the charges and of the evidence against him has increased as a result of recent disclosures associated with the ongoing trial, the Panel reiterates²⁵ that the SPO is making substantially the same arguments as were considered and rejected by the Panel in previous decisions.²⁶ In this regard, the Panel recalls the finding of the Court of Appeals Panel that the Pre-Trial Judge should not be expected to entertain submissions that merely repeat arguments that have already

¹⁹ First Appeal Decision on Detention, para. 22.

²⁰ SPO Submissions, para. 9.

²¹ SPO Submissions, para. 9.

²² SPO Submissions, para. 9.

²³ SPO Submissions, para. 9.

²⁴ SPO Submissions, para. 9.

²⁵ See Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 14.

²⁶ Compare SPO Submissions, para. 9 with F01956, Specialist Prosecutor, *Prosecution Submission Pertaining to Periodic Detention Review of Hashim Thaçi*, 24 November 2023, confidential, para. 22; F01813, Specialist Prosecutor, *Prosecution Submission Pertaining to Periodic Detention Review of Hashim Thaçi*, 25 September 2023, confidential, para. 9, with Annex 1, confidential.

been addressed in previous review decisions.²⁷ The Panel considers that this principle applies equally to this Panel and to the current stage of the proceedings.²⁸ Consistent with its previous findings,²⁹ the Panel finds that the SPO's general argument that the risk of flight increases pursuant to the Accused's increased knowledge of the case and the evidence against him is unpersuasive.

15. Regarding the SPO's argument that the risk of flight is heightened given that Mr Thaçi is now aware that the SPO has gathered evidence against him of obstruction, the Panel notes that Mr Thaçi already faces charges relating to core international crimes, and the new evidence which allegedly relates to obstruction does not constitute a significant change in circumstances justifying a different finding on risk of flight. The Panel notes that the SPO has previously made this argument in respect of Mr Thaçi,³⁰ and the Panel has already rejected it.³¹

16. The Panel does not find the SPO's argument regarding Mr Thaçi's lack of cooperation to be convincing. Cooperation with the SPO and the Specialist Chambers are relevant factors to consider when assessing the risk of flight,³² and the Panel has credited Mr Thaçi with cooperation because when he was informed of his arrest warrant, he resigned from the position of President of Kosovo and subjected himself voluntarily to the jurisdiction of the Specialist Chambers.³³ The Panel, however, finds that evidence of Mr Thaçi's alleged attempts at witness

²⁷ KSC-BC-2020-04, IA003/F00005, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Pjetër Shala's Appeal Against Decision on Review of Detention* ("Shala Appeal Decision"), 11 February 2022, para. 18.

²⁸ See also *Shala Appeal Decision*, para. 18, holding that a panel may refer to findings in prior decisions if it is satisfied that the evidence or information underpinning those decisions still supports the findings made at the time of the review.

²⁹ See e.g. F02012, Trial Panel, *Decision on Periodic Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi*, 15 December 2023, paras 14-16; Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 14.

³⁰ See F02086, Specialist Prosecutor, *Prosecution Submission Pertaining to Periodic Detention Review of Hashim Thaçi*, 29 January 2024, para. 9.

³¹ See Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 15.

³² See e.g. F00177, Pre-Trial Judge, *Decision on Hashim Thaçi's Application for Interim Release* ("Initial Decision on Interim Release"), 22 January 2021, para. 32. A public redacted version was issued on 26 January 2021, F00177/RED

³³ See e.g. Initial Decision on Interim Release, para. 32.

interference while in custody are irrelevant to an assessment of the risk of flight. These circumstances are more appropriately considered with regard to whether Mr Thaçi is likely to obstruct proceedings, addressed below.³⁴

17. The Panel finds that the SPO's submissions about recent changes to visa requirements do not support the suggestion that the risk of flight has increased. The SPO has failed to provide support for the notion that obtaining custody of Mr Thaçi within the EU would pose challenges greater than those which existed previously – i.e. circumstances which may further incentivise Mr Thaçi to flee, should he be released.

18. The Panel has examined the SPO's arguments in light of the current stage of the proceedings, and while the risk of flight can never be completely ruled out, the Panel reaffirms that it does not find any additional factor sufficiently compelling to persuade the Panel to change its previous finding regarding any risk of flight. The Panel considers that the SPO has failed to establish its claim of a "sufficiently real possibility" that the Accused will abscond if released based on the stage of the proceedings.³⁵ The Panel therefore finds that Mr Thaçi's continued detention is not justified at this time based on the risk of flight pursuant to Article 41(6)(b)(i).

(b) Risk of Obstructing the Progress of SC Proceedings

19. With reference to this Panel's previous findings, the SPO submits that Mr Thaçi continues to present a risk of obstructing the proceedings.³⁶ The SPO notes that this Panel has previously determined that Mr Thaçi has: (i) the interest and ability to interfere with the proceedings; (ii) attempted to undermine the KSC and offered benefits to persons summoned by the SPO; (iii) a position of influence in Kosovo which could allow him to elicit the support of sympathisers; and

³⁴ See below, paras 19-25.

³⁵ See First Appeal Decision on Detention, para. 24.

³⁶ SPO Submissions, paras 10-11 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 23).

(iv) given the ongoing trial, increased knowledge of the evidence underpinning the serious charges against him.³⁷ The SPO notes that a general climate of witness interference persists in Kosovo regarding this case and others before the SC,³⁸ which, as held by the Court of Appeals, is a relevant contextual consideration.³⁹ The SPO notes that Mr Thaçi has received, and will continue to receive, information concerning the witnesses that the SPO intends to call.⁴⁰ The SPO submits that the risk of obstruction increases as the remaining delayed disclosure witnesses have their identities lifted in the course of trial.⁴¹ According to the SPO, this continues to amplify the risk of sensitive information pertaining to witnesses becoming known to members of the public before the witnesses in question testify.⁴²

20. The SPO asserts that Mr Thaçi has recently demonstrated these risks by: (i) providing visitors with information elicited during the testimony of protected witnesses; and (ii) passing instructions intended for future SPO witnesses regarding the form and content of their upcoming testimony.⁴³

21. The Panel has previously determined that Mr Thaçi has: (i) the interest and ability to interfere with the proceedings; (ii) attempted to undermine the SC and offered benefits to persons summoned by the SPO; (iii) a position of influence in Kosovo which could allow him to elicit the support of sympathisers; and (iv) increased knowledge of the evidence underpinning the serious charges

³⁷ SPO Submissions, para. 11 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 19).

³⁸ SPO Submissions, para. 12 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 22).

³⁹ SPO Submissions, para. 12 (*citing, inter alia*, IA017/F00011, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Hashim Thaçi's Appeal Against Decision on Review of Detention* ("Third Appeal Decision on Detention"), 5 April 2022, confidential, paras 41-48. A public redacted version was issued on the same date, IA017/F00011/RED.

⁴⁰ SPO Submissions, para. 13.

⁴¹ SPO Submissions, para. 13.

⁴² SPO Submissions, para. 14 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 20).

⁴³ SPO Submissions, para. 15 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 21).

against him.⁴⁴ The Panel maintains this view given that no change in circumstances has occurred which would support a different finding.

22. In light of the ongoing trial proceedings, the names and personal details of certain highly sensitive SPO witnesses have now, and will continue to be disclosed to the Thaçi Defence,⁴⁵ and have or will therefore become known to a broader range of people, including to Mr Thaçi. This, in turn, increases the risk of sensitive information pertaining to witnesses becoming known to members of the public before the witnesses in question give evidence. In this context, the release of an accused with sensitive information in his possession would not be conducive to the effective protection of witnesses who have yet to testify.

23. Regarding the actions of Mr Thaçi in the Detention Centre recited above,⁴⁶ the Panel recalls its previous findings that it appears that Mr Thaçi provided visitors with information elicited during the testimony of protected witnesses.⁴⁷ Moreover, the record suggests that he passed on to an unprivileged visitor instructions pertaining to a future SPO witness regarding the form and content of that witness's upcoming testimony.⁴⁸ Such conduct supports and reinforces the Panel's finding that the Accused's release would create a risk of obstruction with the progress of SC proceedings.

24. Moreover, such a risk exists within a persistent climate of intimidation of witnesses and interference with criminal proceedings against former Kosovo Liberation Army ("KLA") members in Kosovo which protective measures alone cannot overcome.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 19; Initial Decision on Interim Release, para. 41.

⁴⁵ See Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 20.

⁴⁶ See above, para. 20.

⁴⁷ See F01977, Trial Panel, *Further Decision on Prosecution Urgent Request for Modification of Detention Conditions* ("Decision on Detention Conditions"), 1 December 2023, para. 35; Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 23.

⁴⁸ Decision on Detention Conditions, para. 38; Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 21.

⁴⁹ Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 22. See also KSC-BC-2020-05, F00494/RED, Trial Panel, *Trial Judgment*, 19 January 2023, para. 57. A corrected version was filed on 8 June 2023, F00494/RED3/COR.

25. Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the risk that Mr Thaçi will obstruct the progress of SC proceedings continues to exist.

(c) Risk of Committing Further Crimes

26. The SPO refers to the Panel's findings in its Thirteenth Decision on Detention, and submits that Mr Thaçi continues to present a risk of committing further crimes.⁵⁰ Additionally, the SPO asserts that those circumstances relevant to assessing the risk of obstructing the progress of SC proceedings, as provided above,⁵¹ are equally applicable in this context, and accordingly incorporates them.⁵²

27. The Panel recalls its finding in the Thirteenth Decision on Detention that the risk of Mr Thaçi committing further crimes continues to exist.⁵³ The Panel finds that the same factors that were taken into account in relation to the risk of obstruction are relevant to the analysis of the risk of Mr Thaçi committing further crimes.⁵⁴ The Panel also notes that no new circumstances have arisen since the last detention review⁵⁵ that would justify a different finding in respect of this matter.

28. The Panel highlights the fact that the trial in this case is ongoing, that the identities of sensitive witnesses have been disclosed to Mr Thaçi, and that any risk of the further commission of crimes must be avoided.

29. The Panel considers that, taking all factors together, there continues to be a risk that Mr Thaçi will commit further crimes as set out in Article 41(6)(b)(iii).

⁵⁰ SPO Submissions, para. 17 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 29).

⁵¹ *See above*, paras 17-22.

⁵² SPO Submissions, para. 18 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention para. 25).

⁵³ Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 25.

⁵⁴ *See* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 25.

⁵⁵ SPO Submissions, paras 1, 6.

3. Conclusion

30. The Panel concludes that at this time there continues to be insufficient information before it justifying a finding that Mr Thaçi may abscond from justice. However, the Panel is satisfied, based on the relevant standard, that there is a sufficient risk that Mr Thaçi will obstruct the progress of SC proceedings and that he will commit further crimes against those perceived as being opposed to the KLA, including witnesses who have provided or could provide evidence in the case and/or are due to appear before the SC. The Panel will assess below whether these risks can be adequately addressed by any conditions for his release.

B. MEASURES ALTERNATIVE TO DETENTION

31. Referencing this Panel's previous findings, the SPO submits that: (i) the relevant risks can only be effectively managed at the detention facility;⁵⁶ (ii) none of the proposed conditions, nor any additional measures foreseen in Article 41(12), could sufficiently mitigate the existing risks;⁵⁷ (iii) it is only through the communication monitoring framework applicable at the detention facility that Mr Thaçi's communications can be restricted in a manner that would sufficiently mitigate the risks of obstruction and commission of further crimes;⁵⁸ (iv) nothing has occurred since the Thirteenth Decision on Detention warranting a different assessment on conditions, either generally or for a discrete period of time;⁵⁹ and (v) Mr Thaçi's conduct now represents such an extraordinarily heightened risk that even the standard communications restrictions and monitoring of the Detention Centre are insufficient.⁶⁰ Therefore, in light of the ongoing disclosure of

⁵⁶ SPO Submissions, para. 22 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 33).

⁵⁷ SPO Submissions, para. 23 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 31).

⁵⁸ SPO Submissions, para. 25 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 32).

⁵⁹ SPO Submissions, para. 26.

⁶⁰ SPO Submissions, para. 26.

sensitive witness information associated with current trial proceedings, the underlying risks continue to exist.⁶¹

32. When deciding whether a person should be released or detained, the Panel must consider alternative measures to prevent the risks provided in Article 41(6)(b).⁶² Article 41(12) sets out a number of options to be considered in order to ensure the accused's presence at trial, to prevent reoffending and to ensure successful conduct of proceedings. In this respect, the Panel recalls that detention should only be continued if there are no alternative, more lenient measures reasonably available that could sufficiently mitigate the risks set out in Article 41(6)(b).⁶³ The Panel must therefore consider all reasonable alternative measures that could be imposed, not only those raised by the Parties.⁶⁴

33. Regarding the risks of obstructing the progress of SC proceedings and committing further crimes, the Panel finds that none of the formerly proposed conditions, nor any additional measures foreseen in Article 41(12), could sufficiently mitigate the existing risks.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the Panel finds that the measures in place at the detention facility, viewed as a whole, provide robust assurances against unmonitored visits and communications with family members and pre-approved visitors with a view to minimising the risks of obstruction and

⁶¹ SPO Submissions, para. 26.

⁶² Regarding the obligation to consider "alternative measures", see KSC-CC-PR-2017-01, F00004, Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court, *Judgment on the Referral of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence Adopted by Plenary on 17 March 2017 to the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court Pursuant to Article 19(5) of Law No. 05/L-053 on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office* ("SCCC 26 April 2017 Judgment"), 26 April 2017, para. 114. See also ECtHR, *Buzadji v. the Republic of Moldova [GC]*, para. 87 *in fine*; ECtHR, *Idalov v. Russia [GC]*, no. 5826/03, *Judgment*, 22 May 2012, para. 140 *in fine*.

⁶³ SCCC 26 April 2017 Judgment, para. 114; KSC-CC-PR-2020-09, F00006, Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court, *Judgment on the Referral of Amendments to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence Adopted by the Plenary on 29 and 30 April 2020*, 22 May 2020, para. 70. See also ECtHR, *Idalov v. Russia [GC]*, para. 140.

⁶⁴ IA003/F00005, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Rexhep Selimi's Appeal Against Decision on Interim Release*, 30 April 2021, confidential, para. 86. A public redacted version was filed on 11 February 2022, IA003/F00005/RED; KSC-BC-2020-05, F00127, Trial Panel I, *Fourth Decision on Review of Detention*, 25 May 2021, para. 24.

⁶⁵ See Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 31.

commission of further crimes.⁶⁶ Moreover, they offer a controlled environment where a potential breach of confidentiality could be more easily identified and/or prevented.⁶⁷

34. The Panel further maintains that it is only through the communication monitoring framework provided at the detention facility, including those measures recently ordered by the Panel,⁶⁸ that Mr Thaçi's communications can be restricted in a manner that would sufficiently mitigate the risks of obstruction and commission of further crimes.⁶⁹

35. In light of the foregoing, the Panel finds that the risks of obstructing the proceedings and committing further offences can only be effectively managed at the Detention Centre. In these circumstances, the Panel finds that Mr Thaçi's continued detention is necessary in order to avert the risks in Article 41(6)(b)(ii) and (iii).

C. REASONABLENESS OF DETENTION

36. The SPO submits that Mr Thaçi's detention remains proportional, citing this Panel's previous findings, and noting that trial progress continues to be made.⁷⁰

37. The Panel recalls that the reasonableness of an accused's continued detention must be assessed on the facts of each case and according to its special features.⁷¹ The special features in this case include: (i) Mr Thaçi's influence and authority; (ii) his knowledge of the charges and the evidence against him, and a possibly lengthy prison sentence; (iii) the risk that Mr Thaçi would obstruct SC proceedings; (iv) the risk of committing, instigating, or assisting further crimes;

⁶⁶ See Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 31.

⁶⁷ Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 31.

⁶⁸ See Decision on Detention Conditions, para. 84.

⁶⁹ Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 32.

⁷⁰ SPO Submissions, para. 27 (*citing* Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 34).

⁷¹ Third Appeal Decision on Detention, para. 65.

(v) the fact that restrictive measures on release are not sufficient to mitigate risks; (vi) the gravity and the complexity of the charges against Mr Taçi; and (vii) the fact that the trial is underway, demonstrating reasonable progression of proceedings.⁷²

38. In light of the circumstances discussed above, and the fact that risks of obstructing the proceedings and of committing further crimes continue to exist – neither of which can be sufficiently mitigated by the application of reasonable alternative measures – the Panel finds that Mr Taçi’s detention for a further two months is necessary and reasonable under the specific circumstances of the case.

39. The Panel notes, however, that Mr Taçi has already been in detention for a significant period of time, and the trial in this case is lengthy. As the Panel previously indicated, this will require the Panel as well as all Parties to be particularly mindful of the need to ensure that the trial proceeds as expeditiously as possible. The Panel will continue to monitor at every stage in these proceedings whether continued detention is necessary and reasonable.

⁷² Thirteenth Decision on Detention, para. 35.

VI. DISPOSITION

40. For the above-mentioned reasons, the Panel hereby:

- (a) **ORDERS** Mr Thaçi's continued detention; and
- (b) **ORDERS** the SPO to file submissions on the next review of Mr Thaçi's detention by no later than Friday, 24 May 2024 at 16:00, with the response and reply following the timeline set out in Rule 76.



Judge Charles L. Smith, III
Presiding Judge

Dated this Monday, 15 April 2024

At The Hague, the Netherlands.