



KOSOVO SPECIALIST CHAMBERS
DHOMAT E SPECIALIZUARA TË KOSOVËS
SPECIJALIZOVANA VEÇA 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

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Decision on Thaçi Defence Request for Amendment of the Contact Protocol

Specialist Prosecutor

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TRIAL PANEL II ("Panel"), pursuant to Articles 21(2) and (4), 23(1), and 40(2) and 40(6)(f) of Law No. 05/L-053 on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office ("Law") and Rules 80(1) and 116(4) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence Before the Kosovo Specialist Chambers ("Rules"), hereby renders this decision.

I. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

1. On 24 June 2022, the Pre-Trial Judge established the "Framework for the Handling of Confidential Information during Investigations and Contact between a Party or Participant and Witnesses of the Opposing Party or of a Participant" ("Case 06 Contact Protocol").¹

2. On 27 December 2022, the Court of Appeals Panel upheld the Case 06 Contact Protocol.²

3. On 25 January 2023, the Panel issued the Order on the Conduct of the Proceedings and incorporated the Case 06 Contact Protocol therein.³

4. On 27 November 2023, the Panel amended the Case 06 Contact Protocol by extending its application to post-testimony witness contacts ("Decision Amending the Case 06 Contact Protocol").⁴

5. On 18 September 2025, the Defence for Hashim Thaçi ("Mr Thaçi") ("Thaçi Defence") in KSC-BC-2020-06 ("Case 06") and in KSC-BC-2023-12

¹ F00854, Pre-Trial Judge, *Decision on Framework for the Handling of Confidential Information During Investigations and Contact Between a Party or Participant and Witnesses of the Opposing Party or of a Participant* ("Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol"), 24 June 2022, para. 212.

² IA024/F00019, Court of Appeals Panel, *Decision on Defence Appeals Against "Decision on Framework for the Handling of Confidential Information During Investigations and Contact Between a Party or Participant and Witnesses of the Opposing Party or of a Participant"* ("Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol"), 27 December 2022.

³ F01226/A01, Panel, *Annex 1 to Order on the Conduct of Proceedings*, 25 January 2023, para. 71.

⁴ F01960, Panel, *Decision on Specialist Prosecutor's Request Concerning Post-Testimony Witness Contact*, 27 November 2023.

("Case 12") filed a request for amendment of the Case 06 Contact Protocol ("Request").⁵

6. On 29 September 2025, the Specialist Prosecutor's Office ("SPO") and Victims' Counsel responded to the Request ("SPO Response"⁶ and "Victims' Counsel Response",⁷ respectively).

7. On 7 October 2025, the Thaçi Defence replied ("Reply").⁸

II. SUBMISSIONS

A. REQUEST

8. The Thaçi Defence requests that the Panel amend the Case 06 Contact Protocol so that it does not apply to some SPO witnesses who are both Case 06 and Case 12 witnesses ("Overlapping Witnesses"), including but not limited to those referred to in Annex 1 to the Request.⁹

9. The Thaci Defence argues that the Case 06 Contact Protocol sets out a considerably more onerous regime than that operating in Case 12 regarding contacts between a party and the witness of an opposing party, including after completion of the witnesses' testimony.¹⁰ It submits that, among the procedures imposed by the Case 06 Contact Protocol, but not by the Case 12 Protocol, are requirements: for providing ten days' notice for any witness; for the calling party to obtain informed consent from the witness; for the video-recording of all

⁵ F03488, Specialist Counsel, *Joint Thaçi Defence Request for Amendment of the Contact Protocol*, 18 September 2025, with Annex 1, confidential and *ex parte*.

⁶ F03499, Specialist Prosecutor, *Prosecution Response to 'Joint Thaçi Defence Request for Amendment of the Contact Protocol with Confidential and Ex Parte Annex 1'*, 29 September 2025.

⁷ F03500, Counsel for Victims, *Victims' Counsel Response to 'Joint Thaçi Defence Request for Amendment of the Contact Protocol with Confidential and Ex Parte Annex 1'*, 29 September 2025.

⁸ F03508, Specialist Counsel, *Reply to SPO and Victims' Counsel's Responses to Joint Thaçi Defence Request for Amendment of the Contact Protocol*, 7 October 2025, confidential (a public redacted version was filed on the same day F03508/RED).

⁹ Request, paras 17-18.

¹⁰ Request, para. 20.

interactions with the witness; for that video-recording to be shared with the other parties and the Panel.¹¹ The Thaçi Defence submits that the Case 06 Contact Protocol would apply to most contacts between Mr Thaçi's Case 12 counsel and Case 12 SPO witnesses.¹²

10. The Thaçi Defence submits that the other Case 12 Defence teams, and the SPO, are bound by the less stringent framework established by the Pre-Trial Judge in Case 12 ("Case 12 Contact Protocol"),¹³ while the Thaçi Defence team is bound by the more stringent Case 06 Contact Protocol in respect of the Overlapping Witnesses.¹⁴ The Thaçi Defence argues that this creates fair trial issues for Mr Thaçi in Case 12, in particular an equality of arms issue between the Thaçi Defence team in Case 12 and the other Case 12 Parties.¹⁵ The Thaçi Defence submits that the close of the SPO Case in Case 06, the existence of two conflicting protocols, and the potential oversight available in Case 12 constitute a material change in circumstances warranting an amendment of the Case 06 Contact Protocol.¹⁶

11. The Thaçi Defence therefore requests that the Panel amend the Case 06 Contact Protocol such that contacts between the Thaçi Defence team in Case 12 and the Overlapping Witnesses identified in Annex 1¹⁷ be regulated only by the Case 12 Contact Protocol ("Requested Amendments").¹⁸ According to the Thaçi Defence, the Panel in Case 06 is the appropriate forum for this Request given

¹¹ Request, para. 20.

¹² Request, para. 20.

¹³ Request, para. 19.

¹⁴ Request, para. 20.

¹⁵ Request, paras 20-28.

¹⁶ Request, paras 33-35, 41.

¹⁷ The Panel notes that: (i) Annex 1 relates only to some Overlapping Witnesses; and (ii) Annex 1 has not been shared with the SPO because Annex 1 reveals the focus of possible Defence investigations. The Panel notes also that the Thaçi Defence anticipates that it may file similar additional requests as its investigation proceeds (*see* Request, paras 42, 43).

¹⁸ Request, paras 36-41, 44.

that it may amend the Case 06 Protocol, can consider the fair trial impact of its decisions, and it is the last available remedy for Mr Thaçi.¹⁹

B. SPO RESPONSE

12. The SPO objects to the Request.²⁰ It submits that the Requested Amendments are not warranted because: (i) the Court of Appeals Panel has already determined that the Case 06 Contact Protocol does not disproportionately burden the Thaçi Defence;²¹ (ii) while the Thaçi Defence laments equality of arms issues, it mainly complains about Mr Thaçi's position *vis-à-vis* his co-Accused in Case 12;²² (iii) the Panel has previously determined that the Case 06 Contact Protocol shall apply to *all* Case 06 witnesses;²³ and (iv) the SPO's Case 12 evidence primarily consists of documentary evidence that goes beyond the testimonies of the Overlapping Witnesses.²⁴

13. Furthermore, the SPO asserts that: (i) the Thaçi Defence team in Case 12 is not prevented from conducting its investigations within the parameters of the Case 06 Contact Protocol;²⁵ (ii) the Thaçi Defence's right to interview the witnesses of an opposing party is not unlimited;²⁶ and (iii) in the circumstances of the case, the Requested Amendments are neither appropriate nor necessary.²⁷

C. VICTIMS' COUNSEL RESPONSE

14. Victims' Counsel also objects to the Request.²⁸ Victims' Counsel argues that the Requested Amendments could impact dual status witnesses/victims

¹⁹ Request, paras 29-32.

²⁰ SPO Response, paras 1, 14.

²¹ SPO Response, paras 2-3.

²² SPO Response, paras 2, 4.

²³ SPO Response, paras 2, 5.

²⁴ SPO Response, paras 2, 6.

²⁵ SPO Response, para. 7.

²⁶ SPO Response, para. 7.

²⁷ SPO Response, paras 8-13.

²⁸ Victims' Counsel Response, para. 25.

represented by Victims' Counsel in Case 06.²⁹ In this context, it submits that: (i) the underlying needs justifying the Case 06 Contact Protocol are not altered by the fact that Mr Thaçi is involved in Case 12;³⁰ and (ii) the Case 06 Panel is not responsible for safeguarding Mr Thaçi's fair trial rights in Case 12.³¹ Victims' Counsel asserts that the Requested Amendments are not warranted and the Case 06 Contact Protocol remains necessary and appropriate.³²

D. REPLY

15. The Thaçi Defence reiterates that circumstances have changed since the Court of Appeals Panel upheld the Case 06 Contact Protocol and the present Panel is the right forum for the Request.³³ It adds that: (i) the SPO does not address the fact that the Case 06 Contact Protocol established two different sets of rules governing witness contacts between the SPO and the Thaçi Defence in Case 12;³⁴ (ii) neither the SPO nor Victims' Counsel explain why the Thaçi Defence team in Case 12 poses a threat and the other Accused's counsels in Case 12 do not;³⁵ (iii) while the SPO minimizes the importance of evidence from the Overlapping Witnesses, at least one of these witnesses stated that it was not contacted by the Case 12 co-Accused;³⁶ (iv) neither the SPO nor Victims' Counsel address the fact that the Pre-Trial Judge has assessed that the Case 06 Contact Protocol measures are not necessary to protect the Overlapping Witnesses when contact occurs through counsel and for the purpose of Case 12 investigations;³⁷ and (v) the Overlapping Witnesses are not victims

²⁹ Victims' Counsel Response, paras 1-3.

³⁰ Victims' Counsel Response, paras 12-19.

³¹ Victims' Counsel Response, para. 10.

³² Victims' Counsel Response, para. 24.

³³ Reply, paras 10, 17-19.

³⁴ Reply, paras 3-4.

³⁵ Reply, paras 5-7.

³⁶ Reply, paras 8-9.

³⁷ Reply, paras 11-16.

participating in Case 12 proceedings, and the Victims' Counsel only represents the victims for the purposes of Case 06, not for Case 12.³⁸

III. APPLICABLE LAW

16. The relevant provisions of the Case 06 Contact Protocol, upheld by the Court of Appeals Panel provide as follows:³⁹

II. Contact between a Party or Participant and Witnesses of the Opposing Party or of a Participant

[...]

- b. If an opposing Party or participant wishes to interview a witness of another Party or participant, it shall notify the calling Party, the Court Management Unit ("CMU") and, in relation to dual status witnesses, Victims' Counsel at least ten days prior to the intended interview. The calling Party shall ascertain in good faith if the witness consents to being interviewed by the opposing Party and shall also inform the witness of the possibility of having a representative of the calling Party, a legal representative of the witness, Victims' Counsel in relation to dual status witnesses and/or a WPSO representative present during the interview. In exceptional circumstances, a Party or participant may, after having consulted sufficiently in advance with the Registry, apply to the Panel to additionally require the presence of Registry representatives. The calling Party shall inform the opposing Party whether the witness consents. In addition, where the calling Party believes that the safety and security of a witness may be at stake, or for other legitimate reason, it may request the Panel to permit it to attend any meeting between the opposing Party and the witness, regardless of the witness's expressed preferences. If the calling Party seizes the Panel or indicates to the opposing Party that it shall do so, the opposing Party shall refrain from interviewing the witness until the Panel has issued its decision. The procedure in this section shall not apply to an interview conducted by the SPO with an opposing Party witness concerning other cases unless the SPO plans to ask questions at that interview that are relevant to the charges in this case.

[...]

- d. [the interviewing Party shall]:

³⁸ Reply, paras 20-24.

³⁹ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 106.

iii. refrain from talking to the witness outside the timeframe of the interview and the video-recording, so that all statements and utterances made are duly recorded;

[...]

j. During the interview, the interviewing Party shall:

[...]

iv. ensure that the interview is audio-video-recorded;

[...]

n. Following the completion of the interview, the interviewing Party shall prepare:

[...]

ii. the audio-video recording of the session and submit copies thereof to the Parties and to the Panel.

17. The Case 06 Contact Protocol continues to apply after a witness has already testified, or a witness's statement has been admitted pursuant to Rule 153 or 155, in Case 06.⁴⁰

18. The relevant provisions of the Case 12 Contact Protocol⁴¹ state:

Section II: Contacts between a Party and Witnesses of the Opposing Party

- a. The Accused shall refrain from any contact or communication, direct or indirect (through any other person, except Counsel), of any kind and through any means, with any witness or victim, whose identity has been notified to the Defence, in the present case or any other case before the SC.
- b. The above order does not extend to any other witnesses and victims of any other cases before the SC, whose identity has not been notified to the Defence.
- c. Counsel shall notify the SPO and the Witnesses Protection and Support Office ("WPSO") at least ten days in advance if the Defence wishes to contact and/or interview any Group B Witness, as identified in F00172, para. 43(e). Upon notification, the SPO, in consultation with WPSO, shall provide Counsel with any information concerning whether the witness has any special needs as defined in Rule 146 of the Rules or requires special measures as listed in Rule 80(4)(c) of the Rules, or with any other relevant information.

⁴⁰ Decision Amending the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 26(b).

⁴¹ KSC-BC-2023-12, F00295/RED, Pre-Trial Judge, *Public Redacted Version of Second Decision on Protective Measures and the Handling of Confidential Information and Witness Contacts*, 12 May 2025, para. 46.

IV. DISCUSSION

19. Preliminarily, the Panel observes that the Pre-Trial Judge, and the Panel to be appointed to the trial proceedings in Case 12, have responsibility in respect of the effective protection of Mr Thaçi's fundamental rights in Case 12. That being said, insofar as the Request concerns the application of the Case 06 Contact Protocol, the Panel considers that the Thaçi Defence appropriately brought the Request before this Panel.

20. Regarding the scope of the Request, the Thaçi Defence argues that, insofar as the Overlapping Witnesses are alleged to have been interfered with by Mr Thaçi and his Case 12 co-Accused, these witnesses may be able to provide evidence relevant to Mr Thaçi's defence in Case 12. The SPO, however, asserts that the evidence it will likely put forward in the Case 12 trial comprises, to a significant extent, of recordings of Mr Thaçi's conversations in the Detention Facilities of the Specialist Chambers ("SC"), and other material seized from Mr Thaçi and his Case 12 co-Accused.⁴² Nonetheless, noting the Thaçi Defence's submission that at least one Overlapping Witness stated they were not contacted by the Case 12 co-Accused for obstruction-related matters,⁴³ the Panel considers that the Requested Amendments are supported by some legitimate forensic interest. This is without prejudice to the question of whether such information would be relevant to the Case 12 case and, if so, for what purpose. These questions are for the Case 12 Panel to decide.

21. Regarding the purported equality of arms issues *vis-à-vis* the SPO, the Panel recalls the Court of Appeals Panel's finding that the Case 06 Contact Protocol does

⁴² See Case 12 Confirmation Decision. See also, F03216, Panel, *Decision on Prosecution Motion for Admission of Obstruction Related Materials*, 29 May 2025, confidential (a public redacted version was issued on 26 August 2025, F03216/RED).

⁴³ Reply, para. 9.

not disproportionately burden the Defence as it applies equally to both Parties.⁴⁴ The Panel considers that the fact that the SPO may be able to contact witnesses to be called by the Thaçi Defence team in Case 12 outside the parameters of the Case 06 Contact Protocol does not impinge on those findings.⁴⁵ What matters is that both Parties are in principle subject to the same restrictions and conditions regarding their contact with Case 06 witnesses under the relevant Protocol⁴⁶ so that equality of arms is maintained as far as this case is concerned.

22. The Panel observes in this respect that the Case 06 Contact Protocol does not apply to contacts by the Thaçi Defence with SPO witnesses in Case 12 who are not also Case 06 witnesses. Any contact between the Thaçi Defence and those witnesses would not be bound by the Case 06 Contact Protocol. Furthermore, the fact that the Thaçi Defence's Case 06 witnesses are of no relevance to Case 12 is not a ground for claiming an equality of arms violation. Equality of arms does not rest on the number of relevant witnesses falling inside or outside a particular protocol. Equality of arms is premised on each party having a reasonable opportunity to present its case without substantial disadvantage vis-à-vis its opponent.⁴⁷ In this regard, the Panel observes that the Thaçi Defence does not claim to be prevented from conducting its investigations in Case 12 in relation to the Overlapping Witnesses within the parameters of the Case 06 Contact Protocol. The Panel recalls the Court of Appeals Panel's finding, when upholding the Case 06 Contact Protocol, that the right to interview an opposing party's witness

⁴⁴ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 77. *See also* Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 120. Decision Amending the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 21.

⁴⁵ Request, para. 24.

⁴⁶ *See* Case 06 Contact Protocol, Section II(b), "[...] The procedure in this section shall not apply to an interview conducted by the SPO with an opposing Party witness concerning other cases *unless the SPO plans to ask questions at that interview that are relevant to the charges in this case.*", as cited above in para. 16.

⁴⁷ *See* Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 77. *See also*, ECtHR, *Foucher v. France*, no. 22209/93, *Judgment*, 18 March 1997, para. 34; *See similarly*, KSC-CC-PR-2017-01/F00004, Constitutional Court Panel, [*Judgment on the Referral of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence Pursuant to Article 19\(5\) of the Law*](#) ("Constitutional Court Panel Decision"), 26 April 2017, para. 27.

is not unlimited.⁴⁸ The Panel considers that the finding of the Court of Appeals Panel that the Case 06 Contact Protocol does not disproportionately burden the Defence⁴⁹ remains unaffected.

23. Concerning the purported inequality of arms *vis-à-vis* other Case 12 Defence teams, the Panel observes that the equality of arms principle is a fundamental guarantee that applies between opposing parties.⁵⁰ It is not to be measured, therefore, in respect of co-accused or their defence teams. Furthermore, there is no indication before this Panel that any of the other Defence teams have sought to contact any Case 06 witnesses. The Panel concludes that no violation of the principle of equality of arms has been established, and any future adverse impact on the Thaci Defence's ability to conduct its investigations is hypothetical and speculative at this point.

24. The Panel notes that the Thaci Defence: (i) considers that "circumstances have changed in a material way since the Court of Appeals Panel's Decision so as to affect the basis on which that decision was taken"; and (ii) has sought appropriate relief from the Panel, as envisaged by in paragraph 71 of the Order on the Conduct of the Proceedings. In this context, the Panel recalls that, when the Court of Appeals Panel upheld the Case 06 Contact Protocol,⁵¹ it took into consideration, *inter alia*, the preventative nature of this framework,⁵² which the Court of Appeals Panel considered to be an important factor justifying the Case 06 Contact Protocol, regardless of any concrete incident of witness

⁴⁸ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 79.

⁴⁹ See *above*, para. 21.

⁵⁰ See Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 77, with references. See similarly, Constitutional Court Panel Decision, para. 27. See also ECtHR, *Gregačević v. Croatia*, Case no. 58331/09, [Judgment](#), 10 July 2012, para. 50; ECtHR, *Wynen v. Belgium*, Case no. 32576/96, [Judgment](#), para. 32; ECtHR, *Kress v. France*, Case no. 39594/98, [Judgment](#), para. 72; ICTY, *The Prosecutor v. Duško Tadić*, Case no. IT-94-1-A, [Appeals Judgment](#), 17 July 1999, para. 44; ICTR, *The Prosecutor v. Clément Kayishema et al.*, Case no. ICTR-95-1-A, [Judgment](#).

⁵¹ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, paras 31-35, 43-49, 54-60, 65-70, 77-86, 95-101.

⁵² Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, paras 34, 45.

interference.⁵³ The Panel recalls its previous findings that the present proceedings have been conducted in a climate of witness interference and intimidation, and the risk of interference with Case 06 witnesses, or of witnesses recanting their testimony, cannot be entirely eliminated, even after the witnesses have testified.⁵⁴

25. The Panel also notes that, since the Court of Appeals Panel's decision: (i) Mr Thaçi was charged with interference-related offences against Case 06 witnesses and proceedings, particularly with respect to the Overlapping Witnesses; (ii) the proceedings in Case 06 are still ongoing; and (iii) the Overlapping Witnesses, like any other witness, may be subject to an application by the SPO to give evidence in rebuttal. The Panel determines that the need to provide the safeguards and protection built into the Case 06 Contact Protocol continues to exist and to apply in this case.

26. As for the Thaçi Defence's assurances with respect to Counsel's obligations under national and SC ethics codes,⁵⁵ the Panel notes that this argument was dismissed by the Court of Appeals Panel.⁵⁶ Furthermore, it does not materially affect any of the findings made above.

⁵³ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, paras 34, 45.

⁵⁴ Amongst many other decisions, Decision Amending Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 20; F03514, Panel, *Decision on Periodic Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi*, 10 October 2025, paras 20-23. See also, IA035/F00005/RED, Court of Appeals Panel, *Public Redacted Version of Decision on Jakup Krasniqi's Appeal Against Consolidated Decision on Request for Provisional Release and on Review of Detention*, 14 August 2025, para. 34; KSC-BC-2023-12, F00382/COR/RED, Pre-Trial Judge, *Public Redacted Version of Corrected Version of Decision on Specialist Prosecutor's Request for Modification of Hashim Thaçi's Detention Conditions*, 18 July 2025, paras 28-29; KSC-BC-2023-12, F00476, *Fifth Decision on Review of Detention of Hashim Thaçi*, 3 October 2025, para. 19, where the Pre-Trial Judge found that the risk of obstruction continues to exist despite the closure of the SPO's case in Case 06 as: (i) the proceedings remain ongoing, (ii) the Panel may, under exceptional circumstances, hear additional evidence after the closing of the case under Rule 136 of the Rules; and (iii) witnesses who have already testified may be retaliated against or incentivised to recant.

⁵⁵ See above, para. 15.

⁵⁶ Appeals Decision on the Case 06 Contact Protocol, para. 33.

27. The Panel notes that the Pre-Trial Judge appears to have inferred that contact by counsel in Case 12 would pose no risks for the Overlapping Witnesses.⁵⁷ However, the Panel notes that the Pre-Trial Judge came to such a view having regard to: (i) the elements presented before her by the SPO in respect of Case 12; (ii) the stage of those proceedings; and (iii) in respect of those proceedings of which the Pre-Trial Judge is responsible (i.e., Case 12).⁵⁸ It is the responsibility of this Panel, not that of the Pre-Trial Judge, to ensure the safety and security of Case 06 witnesses in the context of those proceedings. The Panel cannot delegate those responsibilities to another Judge, nor does it understand the Pre-Trial Judge to have suggested otherwise.

28. Having regard to its findings in paragraphs 24-26, the Panel considers that there has been no material change in circumstances that would undermine the Court of Appeals Panel's finding that the safeguards stipulated in the Case 06 Contact Protocol are necessary beyond the obligations already set out in national and SC ethics codes.

29. For these reasons, the Panel declines to amend the Case 06 Contact Protocol as requested by the Thaçi Defence.

V. DISPOSITION

30. For the above-mentioned reasons, the Panel hereby **REJECTS** the Request.

⁵⁷ See Reply, paras 11-14, the Panel infers that those referred as "Group B" witnesses comprise or are the "Overlapping Witnesses."

⁵⁸ See Reply, para. 12, referring to KSC-BC-2023-12/F00295/RED, *Public Redacted Version of Second Decision on Protective Measures and the Handling of Confidential Information and Witness Contacts*, 12 May 2025, para. 38.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles L. Smith, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Judge Charles L. Smith, III
Presiding Judge

Dated this Thursday, 23 October 2025

At The Hague, the Netherlands.