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TITULLI	Absence of three defense lawyers prevents trial in absentia of 53 accused for the Meja massacre
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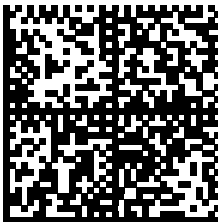
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ZINXHIRI I PROVËS

KJO HYRJE	bbab21dfbe585b8f16c314a78c7999322dae9877846cdc94726c541c9e7c0c5c
E MËPARSHMJA	—
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Absence of three defense lawyers prevents trial in absentia of 53 accused for the Meja massacre



The initial hearing at the Basic Court in Prishtina against 53 persons accused for the massacre in Meja and other villages of Gjakova, where 370 civilians were killed, could not be held due to the absence of three lawyers.

The presiding judge, Violeta Namani-Hajra, stated at today's session that after the case was returned for retrial, the Court had taken steps to invite the accused to appear in court. However, so far, none of them has appeared.

The case was returned for retrial by the Court of Appeals by its decision of 25 May 2026. By this decision, the decision of the Basic Court in Prishtina, which had confirmed the indictment of the Special Prosecution of the Republic of Kosovo, was returned for retrial.

Three ex officio appointed lawyers were not present at the session. For this reason, a break was initially given so that the Court could contact them and secure their participation.

According to Judge Namani-Hajra, lawyer Valon Hasani had informed the court that he had forgotten the date of today's session and, consequently, could not arrive quickly at the trial.

Lawyer Uresa Restelica also did not appear at the session, and it was said that her license is suspended.

Lawyer Laur Prenaj, meanwhile, had informed that he could not participate for health reasons, but that he could arrive quickly. The judge assessed that, because lawyer Restelica was also absent, the conditions for conducting the trial were not met.

The next session was scheduled to be held on 25 September 2026.

Present in the courtroom were prosecutor Fikrije Salihu-Fejzullahu and the defense lawyers of the other 50 accused, engaged ex officio.

të fundit /



Tomë Gashi për vendimin ndaj Thaçit, Veselit, Selimit e...



LSDM: Qeveria ka fonde për luksin, por jo për lehtësimin e jetës...



Dy fundjava të gjata i presin qytetarët e Maqedonisë deri në...



Maresca e nis bindshëm misionin për të pasuar Guardiola...



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Esim for Global | Esim for Europe | Esim for Caribbean | Esim for USA | Esim for Italy | Esim for Spain | Esim for Turkey | Esim for Germany | Esim for Greece | Esim for Asia | Esim for World Cup 2026 | Esim for Saudi Arabia | Esim for Egypt | Esim for United Arab Emirates | Esim for Balkans | Esim for Morocco | Esim for China | Esim for United Kingdom | Esim for Africa | Esim for Latin America | Esim for GCC Gulf Cooperation Council | Esim for Middle East | Esim for South America | Esim for Canada | Esim for Mexico | Esim for Japan | Esim for Albania | Esim for Kosovo | Esim for Switzerland | Esim for Tunisia | Esim for South Africa | Esim for Algeria | Esim for Portugal | Esim for Brazil | Esim for Argentina | Esim for Colombia | Esim for Hong Kong | Esim for Thailand | Esim for Macau | Esim for Malaysia | Esim for Vietnam | Esim for South Korea | Esim for Austria | Esim for Netherlands | Esim for Australia | Esim for Russia | Esim for India | Esim for Chile | Esim for Peru | Esim for Poland | Esim for North Macedonia | Esim for Sweden | Esim for Finland | Esim for Norway | Esim for Belgium

At the initial hearing held on 16 June 2025 at the Basic Court in Prishtina, prosecutor Ilir Morina had read the indictment. The Court had found that it was satisfied that efforts had been made to secure the presence of the accused and had decided that the judicial process would proceed in absentia.

The Special Prosecution of the Republic of Kosovo (SPRK) filed an indictment in absentia in December 2023 against 53 persons for the Meja massacre. This indictment was amended on 23 December 2024, while all the defendants continue to be at large.

Under indictment in this case are: Momir Stojanović, Sreten Čamović, Nikola Miqunović, Milovan Kovačević, Sergej Perović, Verolub Zhivković, Milan Kotur, Radomir Čolić, Dragutin Josifović, Franko Simatović, Momčilo Stanojević, Vlatko Vuković, Ilija Todorov, Stevo Kaponja, Dragan Zhivanović, Millosh Gjoshan, Danilo Zečević, Dimitrije Rashović, Millosh Shćepanović, Predrag Stojanović, Aleksandar Peković, Zhivko Vuksanović, Millutin Novaković, Sokol Abazi, Novica Stanković, Misho Popović, Millan Noviqević, Nenad Rajčević, Muharrem Ibraj, Millan Slavković, Dragan Isailović, Sasha Antić, Zlatko Odak, Savo Lekić, Dragan Racić, Milladin Novaković, Dragan Peković, Njegosh Prashqević, Dushan Prashqević, Ranko Vukadinović, Momčilo Stijović, Dushan Nedović, Gjikica Mihajlović, Mirash Gegović, Zoran Mirković, Aleksandar Miqunović, L Lazar Drashković, Mihill Abazi, Momčilo Novaković, Marko Abramović, Smajl Beqiri, Momčilo Pantić and Predrag Miqunović.

The indictment alleges that during the war, in the period 1998-1999, the defendants acted in co-perpetration, as part of a Joint Criminal Enterprise, and committed the offenses they are charged with in the villages of the Municipality of Gjakova.

According to the roles described in the indictment, Momir Stojanović was chief of the Command Security Department in the Pristina Corps; Sreten Čamović was chief of the State Security Department (UDB); Nikola Miqunović was commander of the Reserve Units; Milovan Kovačević was chief of the Secretariat for Internal Affairs in Gjakova; and Sergej Perović was chief of Security in the 52nd Air Defense Artillery and Rocket Brigade in the Gjakova Garrison, Pristina Corps – Third Army.

Also according to the indictment, Verolub Zhivković held the position of commander of the Forward Command Post and chief of Staff of the Pristina Corps; Milan Kotur was chief of Infantry in the Command of the Pristina Corps; Radomir Čolić was commander of the "Posebne Jednice Policije" (PJP) Police Units in Gjakova; Dragutin Josifović commanded the Police Station in the village of Ponoševc, Gjakova; Franko Simatović was commander of the Paramilitary Station "Jedinica za Spedijalne Operacije" (JSO); Momčilo Stanojević directed the Territorial Defense; Vlatko Vuković was commander of the Second Battalion of the Motorized Brigade; and Ilija Todorov was commander of the 63rd Parachute Brigade.

Further, the indictment presents Stevo Kaponja as commander of the 52nd Military Police Battalion; Dragan Zhivanović as commander of the 52nd Rocket Artillery Brigade; Millosh Gjoshan as commander of the 52nd Rocket Artillery Brigade; Danilo Zečević as deputy commander of the PJP company in Gjakova during the war; Dimitrije Rashović and Millosh Shćepanović as police officers at the Police Station in Gjakova; and Predrag Stojanović, Aleksandar Peković and Zhivko Vuksanović as police officers.

Millutin Novaković is described as a police officer at the Police Station in Gjakova; Sokol Abazi as a member of the territorial defense; Novica Stanković as deputy commander of the 52nd Artillery Brigade; Misho Popović as deputy commander for operational affairs in the 113th Territorial Defense Detachment; Millan Noviqević as a reserve police officer; Nenad Rajčević as a security worker at the Post in Gjakova; Muharrem Ibraj as a member of the territorial defense; and Millan Slavković as chief of the Department of Foreigners' Borders and Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in Gjakova.

Dragan Isailović appears as an electricity distribution worker; Sasha Antić as a unit commander in the 52nd Military Police Battalion; Zlatko Odak as a member of the 52nd Rocket Artillery Brigade; Savo Lekić and Dragan Racić as police officers; Milladin Novaković as commander of the Police Station in Junik; Dragan Peković as a member of the territorial defense; Njegosh Prashqević as a police officer; Dushan Prashqević as a reserve of the Yugoslav Army (UJ); Ranko Vukadinović as a firefighter; while Momčilo Stijović, Dushan Nedović, Gjikica Mihajlović, Mirash Gegović, Zoran Mirković, Aleksandar Miqunović and L Lazar Drashković as police officers.

According to the same description, Mihill Abazi was a police officer and member of the territorial defense; Momčilo Novaković and Marko Abramović were police officers; and then Smajl Beqiri, Momčilo Pantić as police officer and Predrag Miqunović as police officer are listed.

All these persons are accused of grave breaches of international law, specifically common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the additional protocols. The acts attributed to them include murder, torture, inhuman treatment, intimidation, destruction of property, mass expulsion and ethnic cleansing of the civilian population of Albanian nationality.

Regarding the part related to the killings, the indictment states that from 27 April 1999 to 29 April 1999, Serbian police and military forces, under the command of the mentioned defendants, carried out a widespread and systematic attack against the Albanian civilian population in the Municipality of Gjakova.

The attack, according to the indictment, included the villages of Meja, Korenica, Junik, Vogova, Deva, Zhub, Batusha, Koshare, Molliq, Brovina, Nivokaz, Morina, Berjaha, Ponošec, Pacaj, Dobrosh, Sheremet, Dallashaj, Rracaj, Stublla, Nec, Smolica, Popoc, Shishman, Babaj Boka, Ramoc, Rrypaj, Madanaj, Orize, Duzhnja, Guska and Brekoc.

The indictment states that, after the killing of police officer Millutin Prashqević and four other police officers in Meja during April 1999, the defendants held a secret meeting in a private house in Gjakova. This meeting, according to the allegations, was attended by leaders of military, police and state security formations of the former Yugoslavia: Momir Stojanović, Nikolla Miqunović, Sreten Čamović, Milovan Kovačević and Sergej Perović.

Under the pretext of clearing the terrain of KLA forces, they allegedly drafted the plan for the ethnic cleansing of the Albanian population, called "Reka e Keqe", in the Caragoj area. The plan, according to the indictment, envisaged the killing of more than 100 persons and the burning of all houses, as revenge for the killing of five police officers by the KLA.

For the implementation of this plan, Serbian forces allegedly first surrounded the mentioned villages with military and police vehicles. Participating in the operation were the 63rd Parachute Brigade, deployed in the eastern part; the 52nd Military Police Battalion, positioned in the middle of the Caragoj valley; the 125th Motorized Brigade, deployed in the Smolica area; the 52nd Rocket Artillery Brigade, positioned on the hill of "Qabrat" near "Osek Hyla"; and the 549th Motorized Brigade – Second Motorized Battalion.

After that, according to the indictment, heavy artillery shelling began toward the villages. Every village and every house was bombed, and finally infantry forces entered all the mentioned settlements.

The indictment alleges that the forces went from house to house and, through the threat of weapons, force and intimidation, forced civilians to abandon their homes. Residents were gathered at specific points and the columns of the expelled then set off toward Albania.

Along the way, civilians were forced to pass through three checkpoints set up in Meja, Korenica and Orize. At these checks, Serbian forces separated men from women and children. Women and children were ordered under threat to continue toward Albania, while men were executed in the most barbaric manner in different locations.

According to the balance presented in the indictment, 283 civilians were killed in Meja, 66 in Korenica, 1 in Pacaj, three in Dobrosh, 3 in Rracaj, 2 in Nec, 5 in Ramoc and 7 civilians in Bishtazhin. The total number was 370 civilians of Albanian nationality, whose bodies were found in eight mass graves in Batajnica, Serbia.

Another part of the indictment deals with the expulsion of the population, destruction and looting of property. According to it, at the time, place and manner described in the first point, Serbian police and military forces participated in the forced removal of civilians from their homes during the implementation of the "Reka e Keqe" plan. Among them were also the defendants, whether due to their commanding positions or as direct perpetrators.

The indictment alleges that, through systematic and widespread violence, the forces first surrounded the villages and then hit them with heavy artillery. After the infantry entered, they moved from house to house and, under the threat of weapons, forced the residents to leave and form columns toward Albania.

During the passage through the checkpoints in Meja, Korenica and Orize, civilians were stripped of their identification documents, money and other valuables. They were also insulted and physically mistreated.

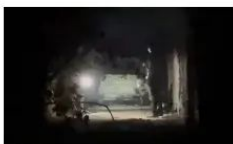
It is further stated that most of the men were separated from the column. Meanwhile, more than 20 thousand residents, mainly women and children, were deported under police escort toward Albania, through two border points at Qafë Prush and Morina.

The residents' property was looted, while houses and accompanying residential buildings were burned. As a result, the entire household economy of these villages was completely destroyed and great material damages were caused.

All 53 accused are charged with, in co-perpetration, having committed the criminal offense "War crime against the civilian population", sanctioned by Article 142, in conjunction with Article 22 of the Criminal Law of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This offense is currently incriminated as "Crimes against humanity", under Article 143, paragraph 1, subparagraphs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8 and 1.9, sub-subparagraphs 1.4, 1.6 and 1.7, in conjunction with Article 31 of the Criminal Code No. 06/L-074 of the Republic of Kosovo.

Shtuar më 15.09.2026 11:00

Tags: [failed](#), [hearing](#), [Kosovo](#), [Meja massacre](#)



Stolen SUV found burned inside tunnel in Vlorë, suspected of being used in the 1998-1999 conflict



Diaspora heads to The Hague ahead of verdict for the liberators



First verdict in The Hague to be announced in 24 hours: Scenarios for The Hague



Schuebel meets Hargreaves: International support for Kosovo will be crucial



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"Revenge" case/ From Durim Bami to Aldo Avdyli and Altin Morina, GJKKO...



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