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## **KOSOVO'S PRESIDENT WILL GO TO HAGUE COURT, IF SUMMONED**

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Kosovo's president on Monday said he would respond positively if summoned by a European Union-funded court investigating crimes against ethnic Serbs during and after the 1998-99 independence war with Serbia.

At a news conference, Hashim Thaci said that "if there is any invitation at any moment I will respond with full transparency," and urged others to do the same.

The Kosovo Specialist Chambers was set up four years after a 2011 report by the Council of Europe, the continent's top human rights body, which catalogued allegations of widespread crimes committed by ethnic Albanian members of the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Last week the court, based in The Hague, Netherlands, started questioning some former Kosovo fighters. Thaci was the KLA commander during the war.

Thaci also criticized his government's decision last year to impose a 100-percent tax on Serb imports until Belgrade recognizes its sovereignty and stops preventing it from joining international organizations.

The president said such a move has damaged ties with the United States and the European Union, which have called on Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj to revoke the tax.

Serbia won't continue normalizing talks with Kosovo until Pristina lifts the tariff that is causing millions of euros of damage to its businesses.

"Kosovo should not create obstacles and difficulties to the dialogue. We should produce positive arguments. We should not let Serbia get unnecessary favors in the dialogue," said Thaci.

Since 2011 Brussels has been facilitating a Kosovo-Serbia dialogue to normalize their ties, a precondition before joining the bloc, into which both countries are at different stages of integration.

Kosovo's 1998-99 war ended with a 78-day NATO air campaign. Its 2008 independence has not been recognized by Serbia.

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