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Information on the final phase in the trial for dissemination of confidential information and documents: concluding statements by the counsels for the defence

Vatican City, 6 July 2016 – This afternoon the director of the Holy See Press Office, Fr. Federico Lombardi, S.J., provided further information on the hearing in the ongoing trial for dissemination of confidential information and documents, which took place in Vatican City State Tribunal today at 3.30 p.m. It was attended by the members of the Tribunal (Professors Giuseppe Dalla Torre, Piero Antonio Bonnet, Paolo Papanti-Pelletier and Venerando Marano), the Promoter of Justice (Professors Giampiero Milano and Roberto Zannotti), and the defendants, Ángel Lucio Vallejo Balda, Nicola Maio, Gianluigi Nuzzi and Emiliano Fittipaldi. The defendant Francesca Immacolata Chaouqui was absent. All five respective legal representatives were present: Emanuela Bellardini, Laura Sgrò, Rita Claudia Baffioni, Lucia Teresa Musso and Roberto Palombi.

The hearing was dedicated primarily to the closing statement by the counsel for the defence of Nicola Maio, Rita Claudia Baffioni, which concluded with the request, in the first instance, for acquittal from the charge of criminal association on the grounds that there is no case to answer since the offence was not committed, and from the charges of dissemination and complicity on the grounds that the defendant did not commit the offence and was not complicit; alternatively, acquittal on the grounds of insufficient evidence for all the charges and, as a further alternative, the minimum penalty in view of mitigating factors, with legal benefits. This was followed by the closing statement by Roberto Palombi, counsel for the defence of Gianluigi Nuzzi, which concluded with the request for acknowledgement by the Tribunal of lack of jurisdiction and full acquittal from the charges of complicity in the dissemination of confidential information. The closing statement by Lucia Teresa Musso, counsel for the defence of Emiliano Fittipaldi, concluded with a request for full acquittal from the charge of complicity in dissemination of confidential information on the grounds that there is no case to answer and, alternatively, for lack of evidence.

Brief responses were then given by the Promoter of Justice and the lawyers Bellardini, Sgrò, Palombi and Baffioni.

The Office of the Promoter of Justice, upon concluding its response, wished to repeat emphatically, for the purposes of clarification, that the current trial is not in any way opposed to the freedom of the press, as the charges against the journalists related to complicity in supporting the dissemination of confidential documents by the main defendants.

The session terminated at around 6.40 p.m. The final hearing will take place tomorrow, Thursday 7 July, at 11.30 a.m., with the concluding declarations by the defendants, to be followed by the Chamber of Counsel. It is expected that the judgement will be passed during the afternoon.
