



**TRIAL**  
International

# Universal Jurisdiction Annual Review

U J A R

2026

In collaboration with



The Center for  
Justice & Accountability



**FIDH** INTERNATIONAL  
FEDERATION FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS

**REDRESS**

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

Cover image: Artwork from a series of court sketches created by Augustin Guichot for TRIAL International, during the trial of former Congolese rebel leader Roger Lumbala, which took place in Paris from 12 November to 19 December 2025.

# Universal Jurisdiction Annual Review 2026

---

#UJAR



This publication was carried out by TRIAL International in collaboration with the Center for Justice and Accountability, Civitas Maxima, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights and REDRESS. It is produced as part of the “Global Initiative against Impunity for International Crimes and Serious Human Rights Violations: Making Justice Work” (GIAI). The GIAI is a global civil society-led programme, co-funded by the European Union, that promotes inclusive, integrated, comprehensive justice and accountability for serious human rights violations worldwide. UJAR 2026 has been researched and written by UpRights.

UpRights<sup>7</sup>



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Methodology and Acknowledgements</b>	8
<b>2025 Highlights in the Domestic Prosecution of International Crimes under Extraterritorial and Universal Jurisdiction</b>	9
<b>2025 Key Findings</b>	14
<b>Cases in 2025</b>	15
<b>ARGENTINA</b>	16
Investigation into genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed against the Uyghur people re-opened	16
Dismissal of case of 'false positives' against former Colombian president Álvaro Uribe Vélez under appeal	17
Arrest warrants issued for Aung San Suu Kyi and 24 other Myanmar officials	18
Hearings held on defence request to close investigation into Venezuelan officials for crimes against humanity	19
Follow-up on other cases	20
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	21
Australian soldier sent to trial for war crime in Afghanistan	21
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	22
Two former Syrian intelligence officers indicted for torture and other crimes	22
<b>BELGIUM</b>	24
Charges for war crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo requested against former Belgian diplomat	24
Investigation completed in case against alleged former Liberian armed group commander	25
Investigation into two alleged members of the Israel Defense Forces referred to the International Criminal Court	26
Investigation opened into Rwandan national for genocide and other international crimes committed in Nyamasheke	26
Investigation opened into Rwandan national for genocide and other international crimes committed in Nyamirambo	27
Trial dates set for Rwandan national suspected of war crimes allegedly committed in the context of the Rwandan genocide	27
Judgment against former member of the Interahamwe militia convicted of genocide and war crimes now final while another Rwandan national is awaiting trial	27
Former senior member of ISIS convicted in absentia of crimes against humanity and genocide committed against the Yazidi community	28
Follow-up on other cases	28
Ongoing structural investigation	28
<b>CANADA</b>	29
Trial scheduled of alleged former member of ISIS for war crimes committed in Iraq	29
Ongoing structural investigations	29
<b>FINLAND</b>	30
Russian citizen sentenced to life imprisonment for war crimes committed in Ukraine	30

<b>FRANCE</b> .....	<b>32</b>
Case dismissed against several multinational garment companies targeted for forced labour of Uyghurs.....	32
Landmark conviction of former Congolese minister and rebel leader for complicity in crimes against humanity.....	33
Case dismissed against alleged former member of ISIS suspected of war crimes in Iraq.....	34
Investigation into alleged former Liberian armed group commander moves forward as French authorities visit Liberia.....	35
Investigation completed in case against French economic actors for alleged complicity in torture in Libya.....	35
Investigation opened into French citizens for complicity in genocide in Gaza.....	36
Investigation opened into war crimes for the killing of two French children in Gaza.....	37
Investigation opened into Franco-Israeli soldier for alleged war crime committed against Palestinian detainees.....	37
Investigation into widow of former Rwandan President for her alleged role in the 1994 genocide against Tutsis dismissed.....	38
Former medical school dean in Rwanda indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity.....	39
Case against former general director of finance of the Rwandan Ministry of Defence dismissed.....	39
Former radio journalist detained over accusations of genocide in Rwanda.....	40
Investigation reopened into alleged role in the Rwandan genocide of former head of IT at the United Nations Development Programme in Kigali.....	41
Appeal trial dates set for Rwandan alleged former driver for the Interahamwe militia.....	41
Appeal trial dates set for former head of the Butare Centre of Public Health in Rwanda.....	42
Case closed after the passing of former Rwandan civil servant charged with genocide and crimes against humanity.....	43
Trial confirmed of Rwandan national charged with genocide and crimes against humanity.....	44
Dismissal of the case against Rwandan former priest charged with genocide and complicity in crimes against humanity under appeal.....	44
Referral to the Paris Criminal Court requested for former shareholder of the Rwandan Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines.....	45
Conviction of Butare doctor for genocide and crimes against humanity in Rwanda confirmed on appeal.....	45
Alleged former Syrian intelligence officer indicted for crimes against humanity.....	46
Investigation into crimes against humanity allegedly committed by Syrian intelligence services reservist completed.....	47
Denial of functional immunity to the former governor of the Syrian Central Bank confirmed by the Supreme Court.....	48
New arrest warrant issued for Bashar Al-Assad for 2013 chemical attacks after Supreme Court cancels previous arrest warrant.....	49
Investigation into war crimes allegedly committed in the Syrian city of Deraa completed and arrest warrant issued for Bashar al-Assad.....	50
Arrest warrants issued for Bashar al-Assad and six other former high-ranking Syrian officials for war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed against journalists in Homs in 2012.....	51
Multinational Lafarge and its former executives tried for financing terrorism in Syria, investigation into complicity in crimes against humanity continues.....	52
Investigation completed into French alleged former member of ISIS for complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity committed against Yazidis.....	55
Former spokesperson and senior official of Syrian armed group Jaysh al-Islam convicted for complicity in war crimes.....	55
French couple, alleged members of ISIS, to be tried for genocide and crimes against humanity committed against Yazidis.....	57
Investigation into war crimes opened following the death of French photojournalist in Ukraine.....	58
Follow-up on other cases.....	58
Ongoing structural investigations.....	58

<b>GERMANY</b> .....	59
Leader of a Syrian militia arrested for suspected crimes against humanity.....	59
Syrian national charged with crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Syrian General Intelligence Directorate's detention facility.....	59
Syrian doctor sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity and war crimes.....	60
Alleged former member of Hezbollah-backed militia sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity and war crimes in Syria.....	61
Four alleged members of a former Syrian regime-affiliated militia and one alleged Syrian intelligence officer on trial for crimes against humanity and war crimes.....	62
Updates on various proceedings against alleged former ISIS members.....	63
Follow-up on other cases.....	68
Ongoing structural investigations.....	68
<b>KOSOVO</b> .....	69
Former ISIS member convicted of crimes against humanity against the Yazidi community in Syria.....	69
<b>LITHUANIA</b> .....	70
Member of the Russian Armed Forces extradited to Lithuania for alleged war crimes committed in Ukraine.....	70
Follow-up on other cases.....	70
<b>NETHERLANDS</b> .....	71
Case closed after the passing of former Afghan prison commander.....	71
Conviction of Syrian armed group member for war crime and membership in a terrorist organisation confirmed on appeal.....	72
Acquittal of commander of armed group Ahrar Al-Sham for war crime in Syria confirmed by Supreme Court.....	73
First conviction in the Netherlands of a member of a former Syrian regime-affiliated militia confirmed on appeal.....	74
Investigations continue into first charges in the Netherlands for sexual violence as a crime against humanity brought against alleged former member of Syrian pro-regime paramilitary group.....	75
Follow-up on other cases .....	76
<b>PERU</b> .....	77
Investigation opened into member of Israeli Army Combat Engineering Corps for alleged crimes committed in Gaza.....	77
<b>POLAND</b> .....	78
Investigation opened into alleged complicity of Israeli arms companies in genocide and crimes against humanity in Gaza.....	78
<b>PORTUGAL</b> .....	79
Conviction of Iraqi brothers for membership in a terrorist organisation and war crimes now before the Supreme Court.....	79
<b>SPAIN</b> .....	80
Investigation opened into senior executives of company for alleged complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity for supplying steel to Israeli weapons manufacturer.....	80
Arrest warrant issued for former senior member of the Rwandan Patriotic Army for genocide and crimes against humanity.....	80
Investigation reopened into the alleged participation of a Spanish businessman in the illegal trade of blood diamonds during the civil war in Sierra Leone.....	81

<b>SWEDEN</b> .....	<b>83</b>
Trial continues of Swiss and Swedish oil businessmen for alleged complicity in Sudanese war crimes.....	83
Conviction of Swedish national for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against Yazidis in Syria confirmed on appeal.....	84
Conviction of former member of ISIS for war crimes for execution of Jordanian pilot in Syria confirmed on appeal .....	85
Swedish national on trial for war crimes committed in Syria.....	86
Follow-up on other cases.....	87
<b>SWITZERLAND</b> .....	<b>88</b>
Conviction of former Gambian minister of interior for crimes against humanity under appeal .....	88
Rwandan national under investigation in Switzerland for war crimes allegedly committed in the context of the Rwandan genocide.....	89
Decision pending to close case against former Syrian vice president.....	90
Swiss national under investigation for alleged war crimes in Ukraine.....	91
Follow-up on other cases.....	91
<b>TÜRKİYE</b> .....	<b>92</b>
Arrest warrants issued for Benjamin Netanyahu and 36 other senior Israeli officials for genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Gaza.....	92
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b> .....	<b>93</b>
Investigation closed into British national suspected of war crimes committed in Sri Lanka between 1984-1987 due to insufficient evidence.....	93
Case against five British soldiers suspected of war crimes in Syria closed without charges.....	93
Investigation closed into Zimbabwean national suspected of crimes against humanity and torture due to insufficient evidence.....	93
Follow-up on cases.....	94
Ongoing structural investigations.....	94
<b>UNITED STATES</b> .....	<b>95</b>
Alleged former member of the security forces of the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia acquitted of torturing prisoners.....	95
Former alleged member of a paramilitary death squad convicted of torture committed in The Gambia.....	96
Trial dates set for former head of Damascus Central Prison and governor of Deir ez-Zor charged with torture.....	97
Follow-up on other cases.....	98
<b>Table of Cases</b> .....	<b>99</b>
<b>Who We Are</b> .....	<b>110</b>

# Methodology and

# Acknowledgements

The present report reviews cases brought under three grounds of extraterritorial jurisdiction: the principle of universal jurisdiction and the principles of active and passive personality. Most cases included in this report have been launched under the principle of universal jurisdiction, hence the title of this report.

Extraterritorial jurisdiction refers to cases in which crimes have been committed outside the territory of the prosecuting country. In such cases, universal jurisdiction applies when neither the suspects nor the victims are nationals of the prosecuting country, while active and passive personality apply, respectively, when suspects and victims are nationals of the prosecuting country. The term 'universal jurisdiction' is used in the report according to this definition, even when it is not labelled as such within the national legislation of the relevant prosecuting country.

The report covers public developments that occurred during the year 2025 and does not claim to be exhaustive as many cases are subject to the confidentiality of criminal investigations. It only reports cases where judges or prosecutors have initiated criminal investigations into international crimes, namely genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture and enforced disappearances. It does not, therefore, include complaints that victims, lawyers or NGOs filed under universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction that did not result in the opening of a judicial investigation or that have been dismissed by the relevant national authorities. Cases marked as 'new' are those in which an investigation was opened or made public in 2025.

A QR code has been added to the top of each country page, linking to the list of cases in this country of prosecution within our Universal Jurisdiction Interactive Map (UJIM). As the UJIM also includes closed cases and those with no developments in 2025, its figures might differ from those in the UJAR. The UJIM serves as a valuable, though not exhaustive, source of further information on proceedings under universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction.

The Universal Jurisdiction Annual Review is a project by TRIAL International, carried out in collaboration with the Center for Justice and Accountability, Civitas Maxima, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights and REDRESS. This report has been researched and written by UpRights on behalf of the above-mentioned organisations. This publication is part of the '[Global Initiative Against Impunity for International Crimes and Serious Human Rights Violations: Making Justice Work](#)' (GIAI), a global civil society-led programme funded and supported by the European Union, whose goal is to promote inclusive, integrated, comprehensive justice and accountability for serious human rights violations worldwide.

TRIAL International is grateful to all the civil society organisations, lawyers, prosecutors and investigating judges who assisted in collecting the information compiled in this report. While every attempt was made to ensure accuracy, information is subject to change without notice.

This publication benefited from the generous support of the European Union, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, the City of Geneva and the Oak Foundation.

**2025 Highlights**

**in the Domestic**

**Prosecution of**

**International**

**Crimes under**

**Extraterritorial**

**and Universal**

**Jurisdiction**

2025 saw significant expansion in the reach of extraterritorial accountability efforts, with authorities in four new States taking steps to exercise universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction over international crimes for the first time. In Kosovo, a former member of ISIS was convicted of committing crimes against humanity against the Yazidi community in Syria (see p. 69). In Peru, Poland and Türkiye, investigations were opened in relation to allegations of crimes committed in Gaza. Several cases in 2025 also constituted important firsts in the fight against impunity. The conviction of a Russian national in Finland for war crimes committed in 2014 in eastern Ukraine marks the first time that an individual has been brought to justice on the basis of universal jurisdiction for crimes committed in the context of the war in Ukraine (see p. 30). Sweden set an important jurisprudential precedent in the first conviction globally for genocide through the transfer of children to another group, which was handed down in the case of a Swedish woman convicted for her treatment of Yazidi women and girls in Syria (see p. 84). The trial of several members of a former Syrian regime-affiliated militia, which opened in Germany in November 2025, also breaks new ground as the first case in which the war crime of starvation has been brought to trial, setting a valuable precedent for judicial authorities to investigate and prosecute the use of starvation as a method of warfare (see p. 62). In France, the conviction of Roger Lumbala (see p. 33) for crimes against humanity committed as leader of an armed group during the Second Congo War (1998-2003) is a watershed moment in being the first trial before domestic courts to address crimes committed during this period in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, breaking longstanding impunity.

## ATTACKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

2025 was a year characterised by unprecedented attacks on and wider undermining of international criminal justice. Following the issuance of arrest warrants in relation to the situation in Palestine, the United States imposed sanctions against judges and prosecutors of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories and several leading Palestinian human rights NGOs: Al Haq, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and Adameer. These measures constitute direct attempts to shield US and US-allied actors, specifically Israel, from accountability and more generally to directly target actors who play a central role in documenting international crimes perpetrated in Palestine. In a similar retaliatory gesture against the Court's arrest warrants for

President Vladimir Putin and other Russian officials, a Russian court sentenced nine ICC officials, including the Prosecutor, to jail terms *in absentia*. The threat of additional US sanctions on the ICC as an institution also continues to loom over the Court's work, and, if realised, has the potential to deprive many victims of their last resort for justice.

Threats have not only taken the form of direct interference in the work of accountability actors. A wider erosion of States' commitment to universal accountability norms is evident in the 2025 announcements by Hungary, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Venezuela that they intend to withdraw from the ICC. To date, however, only Hungary has formally deposited a notification of withdrawal with the UN Secretary-General. A waning commitment to obligations under the Rome Statute is also apparent in the failure by certain States Parties to uphold their obligations to cooperate with the Court, particularly with respect to the arrest and surrender of individuals subject to ICC arrest warrants present on their territories. In January 2025, Italy arrested but declined to surrender a senior Libyan officer wanted by the ICC, instead returning him to Libya. Despite outstanding ICC arrest warrants, in April 2025, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu conducted a State visit to Hungary, while in 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin was welcomed by the authorities in Mongolia. The ICC subsequently found that both Hungary and Mongolia had failed to comply with their Rome Statute obligations to arrest and surrender individuals sought by the ICC.

The differing responses of States Parties to ICC arrest warrants – particularly the contrast between the largely robust reactions to the ICC arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin and the more hesitant, or non-compliant, responses to the arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – have further undermined the principle of equality before the law. The invocation of immunity claims, political considerations or practical impediments to justify non-cooperation risks entrenching double standards and eroding the credibility and legitimacy of the entire international criminal justice system.

States that directly threaten or interfere in the work of the Court and its partners, as well as those that fail to uphold their cooperation obligations or apply the latter selectively, contribute to the weakening of accountability norms and the erosion of the international rule of law. In the face of mounting attacks and a broader retreat from the international legal order, the need to stand together in protecting the ICC and the international criminal justice system as a whole is crucial. Without such resolve, hard-

fought progress in the fight against impunity risks being reversed, with significant consequences for victims of international crimes.

### **UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION IS MORE IMPORTANT AND MEANINGFUL THAN EVER, BUT NOT A PANACEA**

Amid mounting pressure on the ICC and given its role as a court of last resort, with States bearing primary responsibility to investigate core international crimes, efforts to pursue accountability through domestic jurisdictions become even more important. While pursuing justice through universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction is not without challenges, it continues to successfully fill widening accountability gaps. This report indeed shows that, in 2025, over 160 matters were under investigation or in different stages of judicial proceedings. 2025 also saw 34 new cases opened or made public and 23 convictions entered, underscoring the unique impact of universal jurisdiction within the international criminal justice ecosystem, both in the number of cases and perpetrators held accountable, and in the concrete access to justice it provides for victims.

Many of the achievements in 2025 have reaffirmed the centrality of coordination and cooperation in ensuring that domestic courts can fulfil their role in the fight against impunity on the basis of universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction. Several cases demonstrate how effective coordination and cooperation between States, international investigating mechanisms and civil society bears fruit. In this respect, the essential contribution of civil society organisations in collecting information and evidence, supporting victims and survivors and engaging with prosecuting authorities has been critical, as publicly reported involvement shows that at least 70 of the over 150 open cases in 2025 involve civil society organisations.

Close cooperation within the framework of a joint investigation team between the Ukrainian authorities, Europol, Eurojust, the ICC and the national authorities in Finland and Lithuania has been central in the prosecution of a Russian national in Finland (see p. 30) and the extradition of a member of the Russian Armed Forces to face trial in Lithuania (see p. 70), both for alleged war crimes committed in Ukraine. The investigation and conviction of a Swedish woman for crimes committed against members of the Yazidi community in Syria (see p. 84) was the product of extensive cooperation between Sweden, France, the Netherlands and Belgium, within the framework of the joint investigation team established in 2022 to examine crimes against the Yazidi community. Victims

and survivors in the case were also identified through cooperation with the United Nations Investigating Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD). The recent indictment of a former Syrian intelligence officer in France (see p. 46) also involved effective international cooperation during the course of the investigation with authorities in Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Norway and the Netherlands. In Portugal, the investigation into two members of ISIS in Iraq was conducted in close cooperation with UNITAD and judicial authorities in Iraq. Several members of a former Syrian regime-affiliated militia will also stand trial in Sweden (see p. 86) and Germany (see p. 62) as a result of arrests coordinated through Europol and Eurojust, as part of the joint investigation team 'Caesar'.

These synergies between different actors are increasingly important in an environment where other accountability avenues are under significant strain. In this context it is notable that, by August 2025, one State had ratified while 40 States had signed the Ljubljana–The Hague Convention, whose entry into force among a large number of States would strengthen frameworks for international cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of core international crimes.

At the same time, universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction cannot serve on their own as the solution to the wider challenges currently affecting the international criminal justice architecture. Their ability to fill accountability gaps faces inherent limitations, is constrained by the same power dynamics that affect international criminal justice more broadly and is heavily dependent on the existence of specialised prosecution units and the resources available to them. As with broader international efforts to fight impunity, the exercise of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction has, until now, only rarely succeeded in holding the most powerful actors – such as high-ranking officials and key political leaders, members of Western or Western-allied armies, or economic and financial actors – to account. In order to ensure that efforts by domestic tribunals can strive to effectively fill gaps when international criminal justice mechanisms are under significant strain, there is an ever-greater need, on the one hand, to reinforce universal jurisdiction laws and specialised prosecution and investigation units and, on the other hand, to work collectively to prevent the unequal application of the law and the perception of double standards.

## THE ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION IN THESE COMPLEX TIMES

The differing levels of engagement and the priority and resources accorded to the responses to the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza have given rise to accusations of double standards and serious risks to the perceived legitimacy of international criminal justice (discussed in [UJAR 2025](#)). Significant political will was evident in many States' initial response to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which was reflected in the opening of structural investigations and the establishment of various cooperation mechanisms (discussed in [UJAR 2023](#)). But for the notable exceptions in Finland and Lithuania, noted above, the initial mobilisation to combat impunity for crimes committed in Ukraine through extraterritorial jurisdiction has not yielded concrete results. Confronted by a lack of access to perpetrators, many States appear to be focussing primarily on passive personality cases for crimes committed against their own citizens and are limiting their investigating activities in relation to Ukraine to collecting testimonies from refugees and others within their territories.

The very limited action in relation to Gaza by a number of States commonly most active in exercising universal jurisdiction has continued in 2025. In contrast to the opening of structural investigations on Syria and Ukraine in States such as Belgium, France and Germany, these States have not yet announced structural investigations to secure and share evidence in relation to Gaza, including to support ICC investigations. This reflects a continuing lack of prioritisation and coordinated efforts, despite the scale of international crimes documented and reported in the context of the Israeli military operation in Gaza.

On the other hand, 2025 saw a small number of States take welcome initial steps to support accountability efforts for crimes committed in Gaza. In Canada and the United Kingdom, authorities announced the existence of structural investigations while authorities in Spain established a working group to gather and preserve evidence related to violations of international law in Gaza, to cooperate with the ongoing investigation by the ICC. Following complaints by civil society organisations, authorities in Belgium (see p. 26), France (see p. 36-37), Peru (see p. 77), Poland (see p. 78) and Spain (see p. 80) opened investigations into crimes alleged to have been committed in Gaza by their nationals or by individuals present on their territories. The authorities in Türkiye also took steps to exercise universal jurisdiction for the first time in issuing arrest warrants against Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and 36 other

senior Israeli officials for the alleged commission of genocide and crimes against humanity in Gaza (see p. 92).

Significant mobilisation by civil society continues to be central in driving efforts to seek accountability through universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction in relation to crimes committed in Gaza. All but one of the investigations opened into crimes committed during the war in Gaza since 7 October 2023 included in this year's report arose from a criminal complaint by civil society organisations, or with civil society playing a key role in the investigation. Criminal complaints for alleged involvement in the summary executions of civilians in Gaza have also been submitted by NGOs in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and South Africa against members of an Israeli Defence Forces sniper unit known as the 'Ghost Unit', most of them against dual nationals. In addition to those mentioned above, civil society, in particular the Hind Rajab Foundation, is driving forward efforts to engage authorities in new jurisdictions on investigating crimes committed in Gaza, with complaints submitted in jurisdictions including [South Korea](#), [Ecuador](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Thailand](#), [Chile](#), [Romania](#), [Greece](#), the [Czech Republic](#) and [Brazil](#).

While not all these initiatives have yielded concrete results in terms of the opening of investigations, it is notable that authorities in some new jurisdictions have taken initial steps in this direction. Such efforts to expand the scope of States' engagement in investigation and prosecution of international crimes on the basis of universal jurisdiction are particularly important in these complex times for international criminal justice. Together with other legal initiatives, such as the Genocide Convention case filed by South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice, and supported by the members of The Hague Group of States, these efforts speak to potential sources of resilience of the system of international criminal justice in the face of contemporary threats.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the numerous other contexts where international crimes continue to be committed on a mass scale that have been largely missing in universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction practice so far. From Sudan to Afghanistan, from Yemen to Ethiopia and from Iran to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the potential of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction has yet to translate into significant progress for many victims and survivors.

At a time when international criminal justice is under mounting pressure, all States committed to the international rule of law have the responsibility to strengthen their capacity to exercise universal and

other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction to help fill accountability gaps. States should demonstrate stronger political will to hold all actors to account, including powerful ones; adopt or strengthen their legal frameworks; strengthen victims' rights frameworks and practices, particularly with regard to witness protection and security; and ensure that domestic judicial authorities have adequate training and resources to conduct effective, independent and survivor-centred investigations and prosecutions to ensure that victims and survivors of international crimes across all situations have access to justice when other avenues for seeking accountability are not available.

## LANDMARK DECISIONS ON IMMUNITIES IN FRANCE

Universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction continue to consolidate existing law and provide incremental achievements that serve to strengthen the system and pave the way for expanding the scope for accountability in the future. A recent decision by a French tribunal on immunities, for example, has helped consolidate existing principles and reinforce avenues for accountability.

In July 2025, France's highest court issued an important decision in the *Mayaleh* case, confirming that functional immunity does not apply in cases of international crimes (see p. 48). Adib Mayaleh, the former governor of the Syrian Central Bank, had challenged his indictment, issued by a French judge in 2022, for complicity in crimes against humanity and war crimes in Syria, arguing that functional immunity for acts undertaken in his official capacity as a former foreign State official precluded any proceedings against him. The Court confirmed that customary international law has evolved to recognise an exception to the principle of functional immunity for agents of a foreign State in cases of international crimes, endorsing arguments submitted by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM). The Court emphasised in its decision that 'this evolution in customary international law, to which the Supreme Court intends to contribute, defines a new balance between immunities and the fight against impunity.'

In a disappointing decision issued on the same day, the same court on the other hand refused to waive the personal immunity as head of State of former Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, for whom an arrest warrant had been issued in 2023, while he was still in office, concerning his role in chemical attacks in 2013 (see p. 49). Unlike its conclusions on functional immunity, the Court determined that there

had been no evolution in customary international law in favour of exceptions to personal immunity of head of States before foreign criminal courts in cases of international crimes. While this decision sends the unfortunate message that personal immunity may still be invoked to shield high level perpetrators of serious crimes from justice, in this case the setback was only temporary, as the Court invited a request for a new arrest warrant against al-Assad since he was no longer head of State. The new arrest warrant was subsequently issued on 29 July 2025.

The French Supreme Court's decision in the *Mayaleh* case nevertheless constitutes a significant step forward in the consolidation of customary international law on functional immunities, building on important precedents recognising an exception to functional immunity in cases of international crimes set on the basis of universal jurisdiction, such as the *Pinochet* and the *Kumar Lama* cases in the United Kingdom, the *Khaled Nezzar* case in Switzerland, and the *Ahmad Zaheer D.* and *Ahmad H.* cases in Germany. As the multiple cases moving forward against State officials documented in this report demonstrate, functional immunity cannot serve as a basis for shielding State officials from accountability for international crimes. Together with the International Law Commission's 2022 Draft Articles on the Immunity of State Officials from Foreign Criminal Jurisdiction, which removes functional immunity with respect to core international crimes, and domestic legislative reforms, such as those implemented in Germany in 2024 explicitly incorporating into national legislation an exception to functional immunity in international crimes cases, these developments demonstrate how incremental progress in eroding barriers to accountability can be built and consolidated over time.

While not entirely removing the issue of immunities as an obstacle to accountability, these developments reflect the important role that domestic tribunals can play in eroding obstacles to victims and survivors' access to justice and reparation through legal precedents. By demonstrating that even entrenched barriers can be tested and gradually overcome, the decisions of national courts in universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction cases contribute to shifting the landscape towards a stronger and more consistent stand against impunity.

# 2025

## Key Findings



**35**

countries of  
commission



**20**

countries of  
prosecution



**34**

new cases



**338**

suspects at least  
(21 women)



**82**

war crimes  
charges



**157**

crimes against  
humanity charges



**88**

genocide  
charges



**42**

sexual violence  
charges



**35**

suspects are  
economic actors  
(business people or  
companies)



**23**

convictions in 2025  
(first instance  
or appeal)

**Cases in**

**2025**

# ARGENTINA



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Argentina

## INVESTIGATION INTO GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED AGAINST THE UYGHUR PEOPLE RE-OPENED

Unknown members of the Chinese authorities

### Country of commission

China

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspects

Unknown members of the Chinese authorities

### Country of residence of suspects

Unknown

### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspects have not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on genocide and crimes against humanity.

### Current status

Under investigation

### Facts

Since at least 2014, the Chinese government has engaged in what it describes as a campaign to combat terrorist threats in Xinjiang province, which it has linked to 'extremism' and separatism in the province. This campaign has primarily targeted the Uyghur ethnic group and other predominantly Muslim communities, who have been subjected to large-scale arrests and detention in so-called 're-education' camps, where cultural and religious persecution,

torture and other forms of ill-treatment, including forced labour, sexual violence and violations of reproductive rights, are reported to have taken place.

In 2022, the [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) concluded that serious human rights violations have been committed against Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim communities in Xinjiang, which may amount to crimes against humanity.

### Procedure

In August 2022, a complaint involving allegations of genocide and crimes against humanity against unknown members of the Chinese authorities was filed in Buenos Aires by lawyers acting on behalf of the World Uyghur Congress, the Uyghur Human Rights Project and Lawyers for Uyghur Rights. This complaint was dismissed by the prosecutor on the basis of reports of a similar complaint filed by Uyghur victims in Türkiye.

In December 2023, the Court of Appeal of Buenos Aires rejected an appeal by the victims against the prosecutor's decision to dismiss the case.

On 11 July 2024, the Argentinian Federal Court of Criminal Cassation overturned the decision of the Court of Appeal, finding that it had been wrong to agree with the prosecutor's decision to dismiss the complaint. The Court of Cassation therefore ordered the prosecutor to open an investigation and granted the victims civil party status, enabling them to participate in the proceedings.

Following the decision of the Court of Cassation, the case was remitted to the Court of Appeal. However, the Court of Appeal refused to re-open the investigation. In November 2024, the plaintiffs requested a further ruling from the Court of Cassation to re-open the investigation.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 18 June 2025, the Federal Court of Criminal Cassation ruled in favour of the plaintiffs, concluding that there are no legal impediments to the opening of the case and that the case should be opened. The Court of Cassation further ordered that a reconstituted Court of Appeal implement this decision.

## DISMISSAL OF CASE OF 'FALSE POSITIVES' AGAINST FORMER COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT ÁLVARO URIBE VÉLEZ UNDER APPEAL

Álvaro Uribe Vélez

**Country of commission**  
Colombia

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Álvaro Uribe Vélez, Colombian national, former president of Colombia (2002-2010)

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Colombia

**Charges**  
The suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focused on the crimes against humanity of murder and enforced disappearances and the war crime of murder.

**Current status**  
Case dismissed; under appeal

**Facts**  
Between 2002 and 2008, the armed conflict in Colombia (1958-2016) was characterised by an increase in militarisation, an escalation of paramilitary violence and attacks against the civilian population. During this period, State agents, in particular members of the national army, executed and enforced the disappearances of at least 6 402 civilians and other persons protected under international humanitarian law. Victims were mostly young men from modest backgrounds who were lured with promises of work and then executed by soldiers. They were later dressed in guerrilla fatigues and/or had weapons placed in their hands and were illegitimately presented as combatants of the leftist guerrillas killed during fighting.

These crimes were committed with the aim of boosting statistics and creating the impression that the army was winning the war.

These crimes, publicly known as 'false positives' were allegedly committed in 31 of Colombia's 32 departments, by all army divisions, with the same *modus operandi*. They allegedly involved a wide range of members of the armed forces, including the lower, middle and high command.

Álvaro Uribe Vélez was president of the Republic of Colombia from 2002 to 2010. As the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, he implemented a 'Democratic Security' aimed at an increased militarisation of the country to confront guerrilla groups, thus pressuring armed forces to boost their operational results. Uribe is suspected of having had knowledge of the criminal practice of false positives, but having failed to prevent, investigate or punish those crimes. He also allegedly dismissed numerous complaints that were filed against these crimes and continued to pressure his troops to report a significant number of kills in combat, despite reportedly knowing that the victims were civilians.

The *Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz* (Special Jurisdiction for Peace), a transitional tribunal established in 2017 to judge crimes committed during the internal armed conflict, has so far indicted 173 members of the Colombian armed forces, including 17 retired generals, for war crimes and crimes against humanity, primarily related to the false positives, and convicted so far 12 former military officials for these crimes. It does not, however, have jurisdiction over former presidents.

A preliminary examination of the situation in Colombia by the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) focused on false positive crimes since 2012. However, the examination was closed in 2021 after a cooperation agreement was reached with the Colombian government.

**Procedure**  
On 7 November 2023, 11 victims and three Colombian NGOs – the *Comité de Solidaridad con los Presos Políticos (CSPP)*, the *Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo (CAJAR)* and the *Corporación Jurídica Libertad (CJL)* – filed a complaint against the former Colombian president for the false positive crimes as war crimes and crimes against humanity before the Argentinian prosecuting authorities.

The case was assigned to an investigating judge of Federal Criminal Chamber 2 in Buenos Aires and a federal prosecutor. On 9 November 2023, the judge asked the ICC to share with the Argentinian authorities information on any investigations into the crimes denounced.

On 19 December 2023, the prosecutor assigned to the case announced the opening of an investigation and requested several additional acts of mutual assistance from Colombia.

In June 2024, the investigating judge received a response from the ICC stating that it had no active proceedings against Uribe.

On 1 July 2024, the investigating judge granted standing as civil parties to the 11 Colombian victims and the three Colombian organisations, CSPP, CAJAR and CJL. As civil parties, they were granted standing to participate in the proceedings, request evidence, and request an indictment if the prosecution does not do so.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 9 October 2025, the investigating judge Sebastian Ramos decided to dismiss the case, based on the ICC's previous decision to close its preliminary investigation on Colombia.

The civil parties filed an appeal on 15 October 2025, requesting a revision of the decision and a re-opening of the investigation.

## ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR AUNG SAN SUU KYI AND 24 OTHER MYANMAR OFFICIALS

Aung San Suu Kyi and others

**Country of commission**  
Myanmar

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

### Suspects

Three civilian and 22 military leaders, including former State counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, acting president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces Min Aung Hlaing, former president of Myanmar Htin Kyaw and chairman of a village in Rakhine State Aung San Mya

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Myanmar

**Charges**  
Genocide and crimes against humanity, including sexual violence

**Current status**  
Under investigation; arrest warrants issued

### Facts

On 25 August 2017, a military crackdown started in Myanmar against the Rohingya people after militants allegedly attacked police posts in Rakhine State. The violent repression forced more than 740 000 civilians to flee massacres, extrajudicial executions and sexual violence. The United Nations' Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar concluded that soldiers systematically used rape, gang rape and other violent and forced sexual acts against women, girls, boys and men.

The United Nations investigators qualified this severe crackdown as genocide and declared that the generals at the head of the country's army must answer charges of

genocide in northern Rakhine State as well as crimes against humanity and war crimes in the states of Rakhine, Kachin and Shan.

### Procedure

On 13 November 2019, the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK) filed a complaint to the Argentinian authorities for alleged genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Rohingya people, including mass killings allegedly committed in August 2017. The complaint outlined the responsibility of military and civilian officials, religious leaders, individuals who disseminated hate speech and corporations suspected of aiding and abetting crimes committed against the Rohingya people.

The prosecutor and investigating judge dismissed the complaint on the grounds that Argentinian courts were not the appropriate forum for such an investigation considering that an investigation into the situation in Myanmar was ongoing at the International Criminal Court (ICC), that there was no connection between Myanmar and Argentina and that, in the future, courts in Myanmar may be able to adjudicate these crimes.

The plaintiff appealed the dismissal, including on the grounds that the complaint, which focused on genocide, addressed different crimes to those within the scope of the investigation by the ICC.

On 29 May 2020, Argentina's Federal Criminal Chamber 1 reversed the decision by the prosecutor and the investigating judge to dismiss the complaint, requesting that they engage with the ICC as to the scope of its investigation. The ICC Prosecutor confirmed that its investigation was not focused on the crime of genocide and offered no objection to the opening of an investigation by the Argentinian authorities.

On 12 July 2021, the Argentinian lower court again dismissed the case.

The plaintiff filed a further appeal against this decision. During the appeal hearings in August 2021, six female Rohingya survivors appeared remotely before the Federal Appeals Court to speak about their experiences.

On 26 November 2021, the Federal Criminal Chamber 1 ordered the investigating judge to open an investigation into crimes against humanity and genocide allegedly committed against the Rohingya people. On the basis of Article 118 of the Constitution of Argentina, the court stated that the nature of such crimes creates an obligation for all States, under peremptory norms of international law, to conduct a preliminary investigation into harmful acts that violate the peace, security and welfare of mankind.

The court underlined that the existence of the Independent Investigating Mechanism for Myanmar for the collection of evidence would facilitate the complex task of collecting evidence in this case.

In June 2023, seven Rohingya survivors of an attack on one village during the 2017 ethnic cleansing operation in Rakhine State travelled to Argentina to provide testimony during a week of hearings before the court.

In December 2023, the plaintiff, BROUK, submitted a request to the Federal Criminal Chamber for arrest warrants against multiple individuals within the military chain of command.

On 28 June 2024, the federal prosecutor submitted a request to the Federal Criminal Chamber to issue arrest warrants and Interpol Red Notices for 25 officials, military personnel and police officers, including former State counsellor

Aung San Suu Kyi, acting president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces Min Aung Hlaing, former president of Myanmar Htin Kyaw and chairman of a village in Rakhine State Aung San Mya.

On 27 November 2024, the Prosecutor of the ICC filed an application to the pre-trial chamber for a warrant of arrest for crimes against humanity for acting president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces Min Aung Hlaing.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 14 February 2025, the Federal Criminal Chamber of Argentina issued arrest warrants for 22 military and three civilian leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, Min Aung Hlaing, Htin Kyaw and Aung San Mya, for alleged genocide and crimes against humanity. The court is engaging with Interpol on issuing Red Notices for the same individuals.

## HEARINGS HELD ON DEFENCE REQUEST TO CLOSE INVESTIGATION INTO VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Nicolás Maduro, Diosdado Cabello and 14 other officials

**Country of commission**  
Venezuela

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspects**  
Nicolás Maduro, former president of Venezuela, Diosdado Cabello, minister of the interior of Venezuela and 14 other Venezuelan officials

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Venezuela

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity, including murder, torture, enforced disappearance and persecution

**Current status**  
Under investigation; arrest warrants issued

**Facts**  
An ongoing political and economic crisis in Venezuela led to protests in February 2014 against the Maduro regime. Venezuelan authorities violently repressed individuals associated or perceived to be associated with the government's political opposition. The United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela documented extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence. It concluded in 2022 that crimes against humanity were committed in Venezuela to suppress dissent.

**Procedure**  
In January 2023, the *Foro Argentino por la Defensa de la Democracia* (FADD) filed a criminal complaint

before the Federal Court of Argentina against then-president of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro and Diosdado Cabello, the minister of the interior, for crimes against humanity.

In June 2023, the Clooney Foundation for Justice filed a complaint before the Argentine federal justice system, representing family members of two victims of indiscriminate violence and killings in Venezuela in 2014. The complaint named 14 Bolivarian National Guard officers for their alleged role in the killing of protesters and relied on over 15 000 pages of evidence of crimes against humanity alleged to have taken place in Venezuela. Since September 2025, InterJust, an NGO focused on the investigation and prosecution of international crimes, has taken over the case with the same team of lawyers.

Both complaints were allocated to the same court, while maintaining separate judicial files.

In July 2023, the federal prosecutor opened an investigation into crimes against humanity allegedly committed by Venezuelan security forces. Following the prosecutor's request, the court ordered a series of measures, including requests to the Venezuelan justice system to send copies of judicial proceedings and to the hospitals where the victims were treated in order to access medical records, a list of professionals who treated them and death certificates. It also called for documents to be requested from the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the International Criminal Court (ICC), which opened an investigation into the situation in Venezuela in November 2021.

In February 2024, the FADD submitted an extension of its initial complaint to the Office of the Federal Prosecutor. The extension included, among others, the case

of human rights defender Rocío San Miguel, who was allegedly arbitrarily detained by agents of the Bolivarian Intelligence Service on 9 February 2024 at the Maiquetía International Airport in Venezuela, and subsequently imprisoned at the El Helicoide detention centre.

Also in February 2024, Amnesty International submitted an *amicus curiae* brief supporting the June 2023 complaint. The *amicus curiae* brief submitted that the Argentine justice system is fully competent to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of crimes against humanity committed in Venezuela on the basis of universal jurisdiction. It argued that the principle of subsidiarity provided for in Argentine domestic law and the principle of complementarity of the applicable international criminal law does not prevent the prosecution of the case by the Argentine criminal justice system.

In March 2024, the federal judge ordered that the case be dismissed, on the basis that an investigation by the ICC into crimes committed in Venezuela is ongoing. The judge ordered that the records of the investigation and the testimonies of victims be sent to the ICC.

In April 2024, Federal Criminal Chamber 1 overturned the decision to dismiss the investigation and ordered its re-opening.

In June 2024, three victims testified against the alleged perpetrators before the Federal Court (investigating chamber) of Buenos Aires. Two former Venezuelan prosecutors subsequently also provided testimony to the court.

In September 2024, the Federal Criminal Chamber 1 issued arrest warrants against then-president Maduro, the minister of the interior Cabello, and 14 other officials for alleged crimes against humanity.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In February 2025, the defence lawyer for one of the officials for whom an international arrest warrant had been issued, former Bolivarian National Guard of Venezuela commander Justo José Noguera Pietri, submitted a request to the Federal Court of Buenos Aires to annul the case on jurisdictional grounds, lift the arrest warrant against Noguera Pietri and grant him access to the full case file.

In August 2025, the cassation chamber ordered the investigating chamber to hold hearings on the defence's arguments, which took place later in 2025.

## Follow-up on other cases

- Daniel Ortega and 15 other officials (UJAR 2025, p. 18): the investigation is ongoing.
- Mohammed bin Salman (UJAR 2024, p. 22): the investigation is ongoing.
- Rodolfo Martín Villa (UJAR 2023, p. 19): the investigation is ongoing.

# AUSTRALIA



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Australia

## AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER SENT TO TRIAL FOR WAR CRIME IN AFGHANISTAN

Oliver Schulz

### Country of commission

Afghanistan

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Oliver Schulz, Australian national, former member of the Australian Defence Force

### Country of residence of suspect

Australia

### Charges

War crime of murder

### Current status

Indicted; awaiting trial

### Facts

In 2012, Oliver Schulz was deployed in Afghanistan with the Australian Defence Force. He is accused of shooting an Afghan civilian in the head and the heart while the civilian was lying on the ground in a wheat field, after being mauled by a dog in the Afghan province of Uruzgan.

Schulz was awarded the Commendation for Gallantry for his service in Afghanistan.

In March 2020, ABC News released footage of the Afghan civilian being shot by an Australian soldier in a wheat field in Uruzgan.

### Procedure

In 2016, the inspector-general of the Australian Defence Force started an inquiry regarding alleged war crimes by Australian forces in Afghanistan.

In November 2020, the inspector-general released his report (known as the Brereton Report), which found credible information that members of the Australian Special Forces had committed war crimes during their operations in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016. In particular, it recommended that 19 current or ex-special forces soldiers be investigated by police over killings of prisoners or civilians from 2009 to 2013.

These accusations led to the establishment in 2021 of the Office of the Special Investigator, responsible for reviewing the potential criminal matters raised in the Brereton Report and investigating together with the Australian Federal Police any breaches of the laws of armed conflict by members of the Australian Defence Force in Afghanistan from 2005 to 2016.

In March 2023, the Office of the Special Investigator announced that a joint investigation with the police resulted in Schulz being charged with the war crime of murder. Investigators arrested him in New South Wales, and he was initially remanded in custody. On 28 March 2023, Schulz was granted bail.

During a hearing on 14 May 2024, additional evidence was submitted to the magistrate, resulting in adjournment until September. At the September 2024 hearing, prosecutors informed the local court that they would file an application for witnesses to be called for the case's committal stage, during which the magistrate would determine whether the defendant should be committed to trial.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In April and May 2025, committal hearings took place at the local court in Sydney. On 20 August 2025, the magistrate committed Schulz to trial at the Supreme Court of New South Wales on the charge of murder as a war crime.

On 3 October 2025, a hearing took place at the Supreme Court of New South Wales during which Schulz pleaded not guilty.

The trial is not expected to begin until 2027.

# AUSTRIA



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Austria

## TWO FORMER SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS INDICTED FOR TORTURE AND OTHER CRIMES

Khaled H. and Musab A. R.

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspects

Khaled H., Syrian national, former head of the General Intelligence Branch 335 in Raqqa, Syria; Musab A. R., Syrian national, former head of investigations of the Criminal Security Branch in Raqqa, Syria

### Country of residence of suspects

Austria

### Charges

Torture; grievous bodily harm, sexual coercion, and serious coercion

### Current status

Indicted; Khaled H. detained; Musab A. R. released from detention subject to less restrictive measures

### Facts

During the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, the intelligence services of the former Syrian regime (Military Intelligence, Air Force Intelligence and General Intelligence Services) reportedly systematically arrested, tortured and killed persons who opposed or were suspected of opposing the regime. The former government's aim was to stop the protest movement at the earliest possible stage through the intimidation of the population.

In their roles as head of the General Intelligence Branch 335 and head of investigations of the Criminal Security Branch, Khaled H. and Musab A. R. are suspected of having committed crimes against civilians in detention facilities under their command between 2011 and 2013 in Raqqa, Syria. They are alleged to have orchestrated and to have personally participated in the torture and abuse of detainees, as part of efforts to suppress protests against former president Bashar al-Assad. Former detainees are reported to have experienced beatings, electric shocks and the use of primitive instruments to inflict suffering at detention facilities under their control.

In 2014, Khaled H. travelled to France where he requested asylum. His asylum request was not granted by French asylum authorities and he relocated to Austria.

Musab A. R. is also reported to have claimed asylum in Austria in 2015. He is reported to have been identified after being recognised in a refugee camp by one of his alleged victims, who reported him to the camp administration.

### Procedure

In 2016, the Austrian prosecutorial authorities initiated an investigation into the crimes allegedly committed by Khaled H., following the submission of evidence by the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA). The investigation into the crimes allegedly committed by Musab A. R. was initiated in 2016.

In November 2020, the Austrian investigating newspaper *Kurier* alleged that in 2015, the Austrian Office for the Protection of the Constitution (the Office) assisted Khaled H. in relocating from France to Austria and in being granted asylum there.

In September 2021, *The New Yorker* and the German magazine *Der Spiegel* reported in depth about how the Office assisted the suspect in moving from France to Austria, reportedly as a favour to the national intelligence agency of Israel, *Mossad*. Investigations against officers of the Austrian migration authority and the Office for suspicions of corruption and/or abuse of authority were commenced in 2018 following a motion by the prosecutor in charge of the investigation.

In October 2022, former leading personnel of these Austrian authorities were indicted in Vienna for manipulating the national asylum-procedure to hide Khaled H. in Austria.

In summer 2023, four high level members of the Austrian secret service that had facilitated Khaled H.'s entry into the country were acquitted in a trial in which they had been charged with the misuse of executive powers. The court did not find enough evidence to prove that the defendants had intentionally misused their powers to the detriment of the Republic of Austria.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 12 November 2025, the Vienna Public Prosecutor's Office announced that it had filed charges against Khaled H. and Musab A. R. for serious crimes against civilians in custody, namely torture, grievous bodily harm, sexual coercion and serious coercion. Twenty-one victims have joined the proceedings as private plaintiffs.

Khaled H. is reported to have been in the custody of the Austrian authorities since December 2024.

Musab A. R., who is reported to have been arrested shortly after Khaled H. in December 2024, appealed against his detention to the Higher Regional Court of Vienna. In January 2025, his appeal was granted and he was released from detention subject to less restrictive measures.

# BELGIUM



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Belgium

## CHARGES FOR WAR CRIMES IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO REQUESTED AGAINST FORMER BELGIAN DIPLOMAT

Etienne Davignon and Jacques  
Brassinne de la Buisnière

### Country of commission

Democratic Republic of the Congo  
(DRC)

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspects

Etienne Davignon, Belgian national,  
former Belgian diplomat and former  
vice president of the European  
Commission, and Jacques Brassinne  
de la Buisnière, Belgian national,  
former Belgian senior civil servant

### Country of residence of suspects

Belgium

### Charges

War crimes, including humiliating  
and degrading treatment, unlawful  
detention and transfer of a prisoner  
of war, and denying a prisoner of  
war the right to a fair and impartial  
trial

### Current status

Etienne Davignon indicted; awaiting  
confirmation of charges; Jacques  
Brassinne de la Buisnière passed  
away

### Facts

On 30 June 1960, the DRC gained its  
independence from Belgium. Patrice  
Lumumba, an important figure in the  
DRC's struggle for independence,  
was appointed as the first prime  
minister after winning the elections.  
The new government faced an army

mutiny and a Belgian-supported  
movement of secession in the  
strategic mineral-rich province of  
Katanga.

In December 1960, Lumumba  
was arrested by the military.  
On 17 January 1961, he was  
transferred to the Katanga region,  
where he was beaten allegedly by  
both Belgian and Congolese forces.  
He was murdered on the same day  
and his body dissolved in acid.

### Procedure

In 2010, a Belgian parliamentary  
commission of inquiry was set up  
to investigate Lumumba's murder.  
After 18 months of investigation,  
the commission revealed that the  
Belgian government supported  
Lumumba's arrest and transfer to  
the Katanga region. It stated that,  
while there is no evidence that the  
Belgian government gave the order  
to physically eliminate Lumumba,  
Belgium bears responsibility for  
not having taken action to prevent  
the murder. The Commission  
therefore concluded that *'by not  
considering the possible risks of the  
transfer, not asking guarantees for  
his physical safety or insisting on  
humane treatment and a trial, the  
Belgian government and especially  
the Minister of African Affairs  
showed a lack of forethought and a  
lack of respect for the constitutional  
state.'*

In 2011, Lumumba's son filed  
a complaint for the murder of  
his father. He argued that an  
international armed conflict was  
going on between Belgium and the  
DRC, and that this targeted killing  
was constitutive of a war crime.

In 2012, a criminal investigation  
was opened.

On 6 October 2022, the Brussels  
Criminal Chamber decided to add  
the parliamentary commission of  
inquiry's findings on Lumumba's  
death to the investigation file.  
All the testimonies collected by  
the commission were therefore  
included, except the transcript of  
the interviews of the two suspects,  
due to the fact that they had not  
been heard in the presence of their  
lawyers.

On 31 January 2024, Jacques  
Brassinne de la Buisnière passed  
away at the age of 93.

In 2024, the Federal Prosecutor's  
Office completed the investigation  
into Etienne Davignon.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 17 June 2025, the Brussels  
Council Chamber held a hearing  
on the request by the Federal  
Prosecutor's Office to refer  
Davignon to trial at the Court  
of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*) for  
the war crimes of humiliating  
and degrading treatment,  
unlawful detention and denying  
a prisoner of war the right to  
a fair and impartial trial. The  
Council Chamber postponed  
the decision on the request,  
scheduling a new hearing for  
20 January 2026.

## **INVESTIGATION COMPLETED IN CASE AGAINST ALLEGED FORMER LIBERIAN ARMED GROUP COMMANDER**

Martina Johnson

### **Country of commission**

Liberia

### **Jurisdictional basis**

Universal jurisdiction

### **Suspect**

Martina Johnson, Liberian national, alleged former commander of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)

### **Country of residence of suspect**

Belgium

### **Charges**

The suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focused on war crimes and crimes against humanity, including wilful killing, persecution and causing grievous bodily harm.

### **Current status**

Investigation completed; awaiting confirmation of the charges; on conditional release

### **Facts**

The NPFL was an armed group active during the First Liberian Civil War between 1989 and 1996. In October 1992, the NPFL, under the direction of Charles Taylor, was involved in 'Operation Octopus', a four-month long attack on Liberia's capital Monrovia, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians, many of whom were targeted for ethnic reasons.

Martina Johnson was allegedly Taylor's chief of artillery during 'Operation Octopus' and was instrumental in the planning and execution of the operation. Johnson is also suspected of killing, torturing and maiming several people at a military checkpoint on the edge of the city.

Johnson has resided in Belgium since 2003.

### **Procedure**

In 2012, three Liberian victims, assisted by the NGOs Civitas Maxima and its Liberian sister organisation the Global Justice and Research Project, filed a complaint in Belgium against Johnson for her alleged direct participation in mutilations and mass killings during Operation Octopus in October 1992.

Johnson was arrested on 17 September 2014 in Ghent, Belgium based on documentation collected by the two NGOs. She was released on 4 May 2015 and placed under house arrest. Since then, several procedural acts were undertaken during the investigation.

In 2024, the investigation was completed with a decision by the Federal Prosecutor's Office to pursue charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

## **DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025**

On 30 September 2025, a hearing was held before the Pre-Trial Chamber (*Chambre du Conseil*) of the court of first instance in Ghent to determine whether the investigation by the Belgian authorities, which began in 2012, yielded sufficient evidence to refer the case to trial.

In October 2025, the Pre-Trial Chamber (*Chambre du Conseil*) released its decision closing the investigation and referring the case to the Indictment Chamber (*Chambre de mises en accusation*), which will conduct a hearing and make the final determination to refer the case to trial. The Federal Prosecutor's Office will petition the Indictment Chamber to refer the case to the Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*).

The Federal Prosecutor's Office intends to pursue charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including wilful killing, persecution and causing grievous bodily harm. Up to 10 victims were identified during the investigation, many others remain unidentified.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION INTO TWO ALLEGED MEMBERS OF THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES REFERRED TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Two Israeli nationals

#### Country of commission

Palestine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspects

Two Israeli nationals, alleged members of the Givati Brigade of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

#### Country of residence of suspects

Israel

#### Charges

As the case was at the investigation stage and was referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the suspects were not formally charged. The investigation focused on war crimes.

#### Current status

Case referred to the ICC

#### Facts

In July 2025, the Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF) and the Global Legal Action Network (GLAN) filed two criminal complaints with the Federal Prosecutor's Office alleging that two members of the IDF responsible for war crimes committed in Gaza were present in Belgium.

The complaints were submitted after the two men were identified among a group of young Israeli men reportedly seen waving the flag of the Givati Brigade, an IDF unit active in Gaza, at the Tomorrowland music festival near the city of Antwerp.

#### Procedure

On 18 and 19 July 2025, the Federal Prosecutor's Office received the two criminal complaints from the HRF and GLAN.

According to the Federal Prosecutor's Office, the two suspects were identified and arrested at the Tomorrowland music festival. After being taken into custody, they were questioned about their alleged involvement in serious violations of international humanitarian law in Gaza and subsequently released.

On 30 July 2025, the Federal Prosecutor's Office announced that it had referred the complaints against the two men to the ICC.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO RWANDAN NATIONAL FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL CRIMES COMMITTED IN NYAMASHEKE

A.S.

#### Country of commission

Rwanda

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

A.S., Rwandan national

#### Country of residence of suspect

Belgium

#### Charges

Genocide and other international crimes

#### Current status

Charged while under investigation; detained

#### Facts

During the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, A.S. was reportedly working as a driver and businessman in Kagano, Nyamasheke sector, prefecture of Cyangugu. He is alleged to have participated in attacks on the church in Nyamasheke in which several Tutsi were killed. He was also allegedly involved in transporting members of the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide, and refugees, bringing petrol cans and planning meetings.

A.S. has reportedly been previously convicted for this conduct by the community-based Gacaca court in Nyamasheke.

#### Procedure

Following preliminary investigation, an investigating judge was appointed to the case in 2025. A.S. has been charged while under investigation with the crime of genocide and other international crimes, and was placed in pre-trial detention under electronic tag.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO RWANDAN NATIONAL FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL CRIMES COMMITTED IN NYAMIRAMBO

R.G.

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
R.G., Rwandan national, alleged to have been linked to the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Belgium

**Charges**  
Genocide and other international crimes

**Current status**  
Charged while under investigation; detained

**Facts**  
During the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, R.G. was reportedly living in Nyamirambo, Kigali as a student. He is alleged to have been linked to the *Interahamwe* militia and to have been involved in massacres in Nyamirambo. He was allegedly active at roadblocks, involved in several murders and acts of sexual violence and participated in attacks, including by planning and organising them.

**Procedure**  
Following preliminary investigation, an investigating judge was appointed to the case in 2025. R.G. has been charged while under investigation with the crime of genocide and other international crimes, and was placed in pre-trial detention.

### TRIAL DATES SET FOR RWANDAN NATIONAL SUSPECTED OF WAR CRIMES ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

E.K.

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
E.K., Rwandan national

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Belgium

**Charges**  
War crimes

**Current status**  
Indicted; awaiting trial; detained

**Facts**  
E.K. is suspected of having participated in the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi in Kibuye, Rwanda.

**Procedure**  
On 26 January 2024, an arrest warrant was issued for E.K. He was placed in pre-trial detention under electronic tag. During 2024, the investigation was completed.

On 21 November 2024, the Pre-Trial Chamber issued an arrest order (*ordonnance de prise de corps*) and referred the case to the Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*).

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

The trial has been scheduled to begin on 4 May 2026.

### JUDGMENT AGAINST FORMER MEMBER OF THE INTERAHAMWE MILITIA CONVICTED OF GENOCIDE AND WAR CRIMES NOW FINAL WHILE ANOTHER RWANDAN NATIONAL IS AWAITING TRIAL

Ernest Gakwaya and Emmanuel Nkunduwimye

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspects**  
Ernest Gakwaya and Emmanuel Nkunduwimye, Rwandan nationals, alleged members of the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Belgium

**Charges**  
Genocide and war crimes, including murder and rape

**Current status**  
Emmanuel Nkunduwimye convicted; sentenced to 25 years in prison; appeal before the Supreme Court rejected; detained

Ernest Gakwaya indicted; awaiting trial; detained

**Facts**  
Gakwaya and Nkunduwimye were allegedly members of the *Interahamwe* militia. They allegedly participated in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda by murdering and raping Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

**Procedure**  
Gakwaya and Nkunduwimye were arrested in March 2011 in Brussels.

On 9 October 2019, the Criminal Court decided to sever the cases against Gakwaya and Nkunduwimye from the case against another accused, Fabien Neretsé (see [UJAR 2021](#),

p. 21), considering that there was no connection between the offences.

On 8 April 2024, Nkunduwimye's trial began before the Brussels Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*).

During the trial, approximately one third of the witnesses withdrew or were unable to testify, including key witnesses Paul Rusesabagina and former *Interhamwe* leaders Eugène Mbarushimana and Dieudonné Niyitegeka. Other witnesses had died in the period between the dispatch of summons and the beginning of the trial, while some elderly witnesses were unable to testify due to frail health. The Belgian prosecutor requested a sentence of 30 years, while the defence requested acquittal on the basis of unreliable evidence.

On 10 June, the court convicted Nkunduwimye of genocide and war crimes, including murder and rape. He was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment.

Nkunduwimye appealed the decision to the Court of Cassation.

Ernest Gakwaya had been expected to participate in the same trial. However, having previously been convicted and detained in Burundi for falsifying papers, he was not released and transferred to Belgium in time for the beginning of the trial. Since then, Gakwaya has been transferred to Belgium.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, Nkunduwimye's appeal before the Court of Cassation was rejected. The judgment against him is now final. Gakwaya is awaiting trial.

## FORMER SENIOR MEMBER OF ISIS CONVICTED IN ABSENTIA OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND GENOCIDE COMMITTED AGAINST THE YAZIDI COMMUNITY

Sammy Djedou

### Countries of commission

Syria and Iraq

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Sammy Djedou, Belgian national, former senior officer in ISIS's external operations unit

### Country of residence of suspect

Unknown

### Charges

Genocide; crimes against humanity of sexual violence, rape and enslavement, including sexual slavery

### Current status

Convicted *in absentia*; sentenced to life imprisonment; current location unknown, presumed dead

### Facts

Between 2014 and 2017, ISIS committed genocide against the Yazidi community in Iraq and Syria. ISIS committed multiple massacres, killing thousands of Yazidis, enslaving more than 6 000 women and children and displacing hundreds of thousands.

Sammy Djedou was identified during the ongoing structural investigation in Belgium into the crime of genocide committed against the Yazidis in Syria and Iraq. He is presumed, but not confirmed, to have been killed in an airstrike in Raqqa, Syria in 2016.

### Procedure

In 2024, the Federal Prosecutor's Office made its final submission with a view to referring Djedou's case to the Brussels Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*). The Brussels Pre-Trial Chamber issued an order *in absentia* for Djedou to be taken into custody.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 30 September 2025, a preliminary hearing took place before the Brussels Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*). The trial, on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity, including for the rape and sexual enslavement of three Yazidi women, was confirmed to take place *in absentia* before the Brussels Court of Assizes (*Cour d'assises*). The trial started on 3 November 2025.

On 13 November 2025, the Brussels Court of Assizes convicted Djedou *in absentia* of genocide for his role in the ISIS campaign against the Yazidi community in Syria and Iraq and of crimes against humanity for sexual violence, rape and enslavement, including sexual slavery, inflicted on three Yazidi victims aged 16, 17 and 18 between 2014 and 2018. On 14 November 2025, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

## Follow-up on other cases

- A.B. (UJAR 2025, p. 24): the investigation is ongoing.
- Christophe Ndangali (UJAR 2023, p. 25): the investigation is ongoing.
- Hossin A. (UJAR 2025, p. 26): the investigation is ongoing.
- O.Y.T. (UJAR 2024, p. 30): the investigation is ongoing.
- S.M. (UJAR 2025, p. 29): the investigation is ongoing.
- T.K. and M.B. (UJAR 2019, p. 18): no date has been set yet for the opening of their trial.
- V.K. (UJAR 2025, p. 29): the investigation is ongoing.
- Name withheld – Syrian national, alleged former member of ISIS (UJAR 2024, p. 35): the investigation is ongoing.

## Ongoing structural investigation

- Structural investigation regarding the crimes of genocide committed against the Yazidis by Belgian nationals



## TRIAL SCHEDULED OF ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF ISIS FOR WAR CRIMES COMMITTED IN IRAQ

Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi

### Country of commission

Iraq

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi, Canadian national, alleged former member of ISIS

### Country of residence of suspect

Canada

### Charges

War crimes of murder, torture, mutilation and outrages upon personal dignity; conspiracy to commit murder; terrorism offences

### Current status

Indicted; awaiting trial; detained

### Facts

Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi is alleged to have been a member of ISIS in Iraq during its peak in 2014 and 2015. He is suspected of being the individual who appeared in a propaganda video released by the ISIS branch in northwest Iraq in June 2015. The video shows a person suspended from a cross being dismembered by a man wearing a black robe and a cap bearing the ISIS logo.

In February 2018, Eldidi travelled to Canada and claimed asylum. In May 2024, he received Canadian citizenship.

### Procedure

On 28 July 2024, Eldidi and his 26-year-old son were arrested for allegedly plotting an ISIS attack in Toronto. Eldidi and his son were charged with several terrorism offences, while Eldidi was also charged with aggravated assault in a foreign country for his alleged involvement in the dismembering of a person in Iraq in 2015.

Following investigation by the Integrated National Security Enforcement Team in Greater Toronto, in December 2024, Eldidi was further indicted for the war crimes of murder, torture, mutilation and outrages upon personal dignity for the same incident.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 20 June 2025, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice scheduled a trial on the terrorism charges to begin on 8 September 2026 and a separate trial on the charges of war crimes to begin on 9 November 2026.

### Ongoing structural investigations

- Structural investigation into the Israel-Hamas armed conflict
- Structural investigation into crimes committed against the Yazidi population by ISIS
- Structural investigation into crimes committed in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine

# FINLAND



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Finland

## RUSSIAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR WAR CRIMES COMMITTED IN UKRAINE

Yan Petrovsky

**Country of commission**  
Ukraine

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Yan Petrovsky, also known as Vojislav Torden, Russian national, alleged former commander of 'Task Force Rusich', a far-right paramilitary unit linked to Russian combat operations in Ukraine

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Finland

### Charges

War crimes of wilful killing, causing great suffering and mutilation, outrages upon personal dignity, denying quarter and making improper use of a flag

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; under appeal

### Facts

Task Force Rusich is a Russian far-right paramilitary unit, established in 2014. It fought with pro-Russian separatist forces in the Donbas region of Ukraine in the first phase of the Russo-Ukrainian war and has subsequently been linked to Russian combat operations since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The unit has developed a reputation for particular brutality and links to neo-Nazi ideology. It has reportedly been implicated

in the commission of multiple war crimes, including abuses inflicted on captured and deceased Ukrainian soldiers, which have been filmed and shared on social media.

Yan Petrovsky is alleged to have served as a co-founder and commander of the unit and to have been responsible for the commission of several war crimes in the autumn of 2014 in eastern Ukraine. In 2022, he was added to the European Union and United States sanctions lists for his role in the unit.

Petrovsky initially entered Finland in August 2022. Having returned to Russia a few days later, he entered Finland again in July 2023. He is reported to have been granted a one-year residence permit, based on family ties, under the name Vojislav Torden.

### Procedure

In July 2023, Petrovsky was arrested at the Helsinki airport, suspected of having violated European Union sanctions by entering the country under the name Vojislav Torden. The District Court of Helsinki ordered his detention at an immigration detention centre on the basis of the Aliens Act. A procedure was also initiated to cancel his residence permit.

In August 2023, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine requested Petrovsky's extradition on charges of participation in a terrorist organisation. To ensure possible extradition, the District Court of Eastern Uusimaa extended his detention.

In December 2023, the Supreme Court of Finland decided that Petrovsky could not be extradited to Ukraine due to the risk of inhumane prison conditions. Since the conditions for maintaining his detention for possible extradition were therefore no longer applicable, the Supreme Court ordered his immediate release. On the same day, the Finnish Border Guard took him back into custody on the basis of the Aliens Act.

On 15 December 2023, the Deputy Prosecutor General announced the opening of an investigation into Petrovsky's alleged involvement in the commission of war crimes in eastern Ukraine during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015. On 18 December, the District Court of Helsinki ordered his detention while the investigation took place.

In February 2024, the District Court of Kymenlaakso sentenced Petrovsky to a 40-day suspended prison sentence for two violations of an entry ban.

In October 2024, the National Bureau of Investigation announced that it had completed its investigation into Petrovsky's alleged involvement in war crimes in Ukraine. The investigation involved close cooperation with the Ukrainian authorities, Europol, Eurojust and the International Criminal Court.

On 31 October 2024, the Deputy Prosecutor General charged Petrovsky with five counts of war crimes. The charges relate to his alleged activities as deputy-head of the Russian paramilitary unit Task Force Rusich. According to the indictment, he was involved in

the unlawful killing of 22 Ukrainian soldiers and the serious wounding of four. He is further suspected of unlawful conduct amounting to war crimes with respect to acts concerning the conduct of hostilities and the treatment of wounded and killed soldiers. The trial started on 5 December 2024.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 14 March 2025, the Helsinki District Court convicted Petrovsky of four counts of war crimes and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The Court established that Petrovsky was deputy commander of the unit Task Force Rusich, which participated in an attack on soldiers of the Aidar Battalion of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine on 5 September 2014. Petrovsky was convicted of the war crimes of wilful killing, for participating in the killing of a wounded Ukrainian soldier, of causing great suffering and mutilation for failing to prevent, as deputy commander of the unit, the cutting of the unit's emblem into the cheek of another soldier, of outrages upon personal dignity for distributing degrading photos of a deceased soldier and of denying quarter, for posting on social media that the unit would take no prisoners and grant no mercy. He was acquitted of the charge of making improper use of a flag for allegedly having led the operation in which the unit carried out an ambush and attack resulting in the deaths of 21 Ukrainian soldiers and the wounding of four others by using the Ukrainian flag as a decoy. The Court determined that there was insufficient evidence to conclude that the unit was specifically responsible for organising and carrying out the ambush, finding that several other groups and individuals were also present.

Petrovsky was ordered to pay compensation in the amount of EUR 4 000 to the mother and EUR 3 000 to the sister of the soldier of whose killing he was found responsible.

Due to the dismissal of the charge of making improper use of a flag during an attack in which 21 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and four others were wounded, civil claims for damages brought by the four injured survivors and the families of the 21 soldiers who were killed failed.

On 19 March 2025, the Deputy Prosecutor General filed an appeal against the dismissal of the fifth charge on the basis that the unit Task Force Rusich operated closely with or was part of the larger 'Batman' Battalion, which was involved in organising the ambush resulting in the deaths of 21 Ukrainian soldiers and the injury of four others. Petrovsky has also appealed the conviction.



## CASE DISMISSED AGAINST SEVERAL MULTINATIONAL GARMENT COMPANIES TARGETED FOR FORCED LABOUR OF UYGHURS

Several multinational garment companies

### Country of commission

China

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspects

Several multinational garment companies

### Countries of residence of suspects

European Union member States and other countries

### Charges

The suspects were not formally charged. The investigation focused on charges of concealment of crimes against humanity.

### Current status

Case dismissed

### Facts

Since at least 2019, journalists and researchers had highlighted the existence of systematic forced labour in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by the Chinese government, where nearly 20 per cent of the world's cotton is produced. However, according to public information available to date, the companies Inditex (including the brands Zara, Bershka, Pull and Bear, Massimo Dutti etc.), Uniqlo, SCMP (including Sandro, Maje, Claudie Pierlot and De Fursac) and Skechers, as well as many

other transnational companies, had continued to subcontract part of their production to or to market goods using cotton produced in the region.

### Procedure

On 9 April 2021, Sherpa, the *Collectif Ethique sur l'Étiquette*, the Uyghur Institute of Europe and a Uyghur survivor filed a criminal complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office in Paris against several multinational garment companies.

On 1 July 2021, the French judiciary announced that it opened a preliminary investigation into the crime of concealment of crimes against humanity.

In September 2021, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) filed a similar criminal complaint with the German Federal Public Prosecutor against several German textile brands and retailers.

In October 2021, the Public Prosecutor decided to initiate a monitoring process regarding the situation in Xinjiang. However, no formal investigations were opened.

In April 2023, the prosecutor of the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes argued that French courts lacked jurisdiction in this case and requested the case to be dismissed and the investigation discontinued.

The investigating judges followed this request and dismissed the case.

The plaintiffs appealed the judges' decision.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 5 February 2025, the Paris Court of Appeal upheld the dismissal of the case.

## LANDMARK CONVICTION OF FORMER CONGOLESE MINISTER AND REBEL LEADER FOR COMPLICITY IN CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Roger Lumbala Tshitenga

### Country of commission

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Roger Lumbala Tshitenga, Congolese national, former leader of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie – National* (RCD-N), former minister for foreign trade in the transitional government of the DRC (2003–2005), former member of parliament and senator until 2013

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Complicity in and conspiracy to commit the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, rape, pillage as other inhumane acts, enslavement and sexual slavery

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 30 years in prison; detained

### Facts

From 1998 to 2003, Congolese forces supported by Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe fought a variety of rebel armed groups backed by Rwanda and Uganda in what is known as the Second Congo War. In this context, the armed group RCD-N was created in 2000 to fight Congolese public forces and forged an alliance with the *Mouvement pour la libération du Congo*, led by Jean-Pierre Bemba, in an attempt to take control of resource-rich areas in the eastern part of the DRC. In 2003, the United Nations published a [report](#) implicating the RCD-N in the perpetration of crimes against

humanity, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, summary executions, torture, mutilation and cannibalism.

Roger Lumbala Tshitenga was the leader of the RCD-N. He was accused of participating in crimes that took place between 1 July 2002 and the end of December 2003 in the provinces of Ituri and Haut Uélé (northeastern DRC), in particular during a military operation labelled *Effacer le tableau* (Erase the Board).

In April 2003, he became minister for foreign trade in the transitional government following the inter-Congolese dialogue, until January 2005. He then became a member of parliament and a senator until 2013.

### Procedure

In 2016, the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes opened an investigation into Lumbala Tshitenga, after the rejection of his asylum application. Lumbala Tshitenga was arrested on 2 January 2021 in Paris and the case was referred to three investigating judges within the specialised unit.

On 2 January 2021, Lumbala Tshitenga was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for his alleged participation in a group formed with a view to prepare the commission of crimes against humanity committed in the DRC between 2002 and 2003.

In the course of the investigation that lasted from 2021 to 2023, more than thirty Congolese victims and witnesses were heard by the justice authorities in Paris. Several eyewitnesses and expert witnesses were heard on the functioning and hierarchical structure of the RCD-N and on Lumbala Tshitenga's alleged role in the preparation and perpetration of the crimes. The investigation shed light on the crimes committed during the military operation in the Beni-Mambasa-Bunia area by the

alliance of the RCD-N and other armed groups toward the end of 2002. Evidence and testimonies were also gathered on crimes committed in Bafwasende and Isiro, areas controlled by the RCD-N in those years.

TRIAL International, the Clooney Foundation for Justice, Minority Rights Group, and the DRC-based NGO Justice Plus, all admitted as civil parties to the procedure, collaborated throughout the investigation to identify and support Congolese communities, victims, and survivors who provided evidence and shared their account with French judicial authorities.

In October 2023, the Paris Court of Appeal rejected a motion introduced by Lumbala Tshitenga's counsel seeking the dismissal of the proceedings on the basis of the judges' supposed violation of the procedural requirement to verify that no extradition request had been issued regarding the suspect.

On 6 November 2023, the investigating judges indicted Lumbala Tshitenga for his alleged complicity in and conspiracy to commit crimes against humanity including murder, torture, rape, pillage and enslavement, including sexual slavery, in the DRC between 2002 and 2003. On 28 February 2024 the Paris Court of Appeal confirmed the charges in full.

Lumbala Tshitenga's counsel filed two appeals before the Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*), one on the indictment and the second one on the rejection of the defendant's motion to dismiss the proceedings for violation of the no extradition requirement. On 4 June 2024, the French Supreme Court joined the two appeals and rejected them both.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

The trial of Lumbala Tshitenga opened before the Paris Criminal Court (*cour d'assises*) on 12 November 2025. Throughout the proceedings, the accused largely refused to participate in the hearings and contested the jurisdiction of the French courts. On 21 November 2025, the Court rejected the defendant's challenge to its jurisdiction and confirmed that it had the authority to try the case under the principle of universal jurisdiction, allowing the trial to move forward with the hearing of witnesses and civil parties.

Over the course of five weeks of hearings, the Court heard extensive testimony from more than 60 people, in particular more than 20 Congolese survivors and victims, several representatives of non-governmental organisations that were civil parties and more than 30 witnesses, including United Nations investigators, journalists, experts, former members of the RCD-N, etc. The hearings focused on the structure and functioning of the RCD-N, the role allegedly played by Lumbala Tshitenga in the preparation and execution of military operations, and the commission of crimes against civilian populations in Ituri and Haut-Uélé between 2002 and 2003.

On 15 December 2025, the Court delivered its judgment, finding Roger Lumbala Tshitenga guilty of complicity in and conspiracy to commit crimes against humanity, namely murder, torture, rape, enslavement including sexual slavery and pillage as other inhumane acts, committed in the DRC between July 2002 and December 2003. The Court sentenced him to 30 years' imprisonment and issued a permanent ban on his presence in French territory.

## CASE DISMISSED AGAINST ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF ISIS SUSPECTED OF WAR CRIMES IN IRAQ

Ahmed Hamdane El Aswadi

**Country of commission**  
Iraq

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Ahmed Hamdane El Aswadi, Iraqi national, alleged former member of ISIS

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
War crimes; criminal conspiracy; murder in connection with a terrorist enterprise

**Current status**  
Case dismissed

**Facts**  
Ahmed Hamdane El Aswadi was suspected of having participated in the massacre at Camp Speicher, a military base near Tikrit, Iraq. In June 2014, armed men allegedly abducted and executed hundreds of young army recruits, mainly Shiites, killing up to 1 700 people. Based on the testimony of other suspects, the Iraqi authorities claimed that El Aswadi personally executed 103 soldiers. The suspect denied all involvement in the alleged crimes.

El Aswadi arrived in France in the summer of 2016. He was granted refugee status in June 2017.

**Procedure**  
In the summer of 2017, the French intelligence services identified El Aswadi as an alleged ISIS member and reported his presence to the judicial authorities.

In November 2017, the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes requested the opening of an investigation against El Aswadi.

On 6 March 2018, El Aswadi was arrested in Lisieux (Normandy). After two days in police custody, he was indicted for criminal conspiracy, murder in connection with a terrorist enterprise and the war crimes of inhuman and degrading treatment and of using prohibited means and methods of warfare. He was subsequently placed in pre-trial detention.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Ahmed Hamdane El Aswadi was freed from detention and placed under judicial surveillance in May 2020. He fled to Germany, where he reported to a police station and was placed under extradition proceeding.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 28 May 2025, a dismissal order was issued by the French authorities. The case is now definitively closed.

## INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGED FORMER LIBERIAN ARMED GROUP COMMANDER MOVES FORWARD AS FRENCH AUTHORITIES VISIT LIBERIA

Saturday T.

### Country of commission

Liberia

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Saturday T., Liberian national, alleged former commander of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Crimes against humanity

### Current status

Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); detained

### Facts

Saturday T. was allegedly a NPFL commander involved in crimes against humanity during the First Liberian Civil War (1989-1996). According to the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, the NPFL, led by Charles Taylor, was responsible for at least 63 800 documented human rights violations.

### Procedure

In May 2018, Civitas Maxima filed a complaint in France against Saturday T. for his alleged commission or command of multiple crimes against humanity.

On 13 September 2023, Saturday T. was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) with committing and complicity in committing crimes against humanity and was placed under judicial surveillance. The prosecutor appealed the decision on judicial surveillance, requesting Saturday T. instead be placed in detention.

On 25 September 2023, the three investigating judges ruled that the gravity of the facts and the risk of Saturday T. consulting with possible accomplices and witnesses warranted his placement in detention.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Since Saturday T.'s arrest, the investigation has moved forward considerably. In January 2025, French authorities travelled to Liberia to interview victims and witnesses, conduct site visits and collect information on events that allegedly took place during the First Liberian Civil War. The French investigating judge visited Liberia along with her assistant, her special advisor, the clerk, the prosecutor, both defence and civil parties' lawyers and a team of French investigators (*gendarmes de l'Office central de lutte contre les crimes contre l'humanité et les crimes de haine*). Together they went to places where Saturday T. allegedly committed crimes. In accordance with French procedural law, all parties to the case were present, able to ask questions and make additional requests during the mission.

On 1 October 2025, the judges renewed their decision to keep Saturday T. in detention.

## INVESTIGATION COMPLETED IN CASE AGAINST FRENCH ECONOMIC ACTORS FOR ALLEGED COMPLICITY IN TORTURE IN LIBYA

Amesys and two of its executives

### Country of commission

Libya

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspects

French company Amesys; two French executives of the company

### Country of residence of suspects

France

### Charges

Complicity in torture

### Current status

Investigation completed; five indictments issued, two dismissed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge to send to trial or dismiss the case

### Facts

In 2007, the company Amesys signed a contract with the government of Libya to provide surveillance technologies for the purposes of intercepting communications and processing and analysing data. This technology, called EAGLE, allegedly allowed the Gaddafi regime (1969-2011) to repress dissident voices and to commit serious human rights abuses.

### Procedure

On 19 October 2011, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its member organisation in France the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (LDH) lodged a criminal complaint as civil parties before the investigating judge at the Paris Tribunal against Amesys and its management, denouncing their alleged role as accomplices in acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in Libya, on the basis of universal jurisdiction.

On 26 March 2012, the Office of the Prosecutor at the Paris Tribunal considered that there were insufficient grounds to open an investigation. However, the investigating judge decided on 23 May 2012 to open a formal criminal investigation. On 15 January 2013, the Paris Court of Appeal decided to allow the investigation to proceed.

In January 2013, five Libyan victims joined the proceedings as civil parties. They were heard in June and July 2013 by the investigating judge. Another Libyan victim joined the case and was heard on 11 December 2015. In March 2016, new evidence consisting of dozens of documents from Gaddafi's security services came to light, reportedly showing the regime's extensive use of the surveillance technologies provided by Amesys to track, arrest and torture political opposition.

On 30 May 2017, Amesys was formally assigned the status of assisted witness (*témoign assisté*) for complicity in torture committed in Libya between 2007 and 2011.

In June and July 2021, two French executives of the company, as well as two employees and the company itself, were charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) by the investigating judges for complicity in torture.

In December 2021 and January 2022, Amesys and its four indicted executives and employees requested the annulment of the procedure and their indictments.

In November 2022, the Investigating Chamber of the Paris Court of Appeal confirmed the indictments of Amesys and of its two executives. The annulment requested by the two employees was granted and their indictments were dismissed.

In 2023, the investigating judges issued a decision refusing to carry out several investigating acts requested by the defence and the prosecutor, including an expert analysis of the technical capacities of the EAGLE technology, deeming that these acts were not necessary to the investigation. Both the defence and the prosecutor appealed the judges' refusal. As a result, the Paris Court of Appeal partially overturned this decision and ordered the investigating judges to proceed with some of the requested investigating acts.

In February 2024, a technical expert was appointed by the investigating judges to carry out the expert analysis.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In March 2025, the technical expert appointed by the judges submitted expert analysis.

On 18 September 2025, the investigating judges completed their investigation.

The prosecutor will issue a formal request concerning the direction of the case (referral to trial, dismissal, or reopening of the investigation). The investigating judges will subsequently determine the direction of the case.

#### NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO FRENCH CITIZENS FOR COMPLICITY IN GENOCIDE IN GAZA

Nili Kupfer-Naouri and Rachel Touitou

Country of commission  
Palestine

Jurisdictional basis  
Active personality

#### Suspects

Nili Kupfer-Naouri, dual French and Israeli national, head of the association 'Israel is Forever', and Rachel Touitou, dual French and Israeli national, spokesperson of the organisation 'Tsav 9'

Country of residence of suspects  
Unknown

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspects have not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on crimes of complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, and incitement to genocide followed by effect.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

Nili Kupfer-Naouri and Rachel Touitou are alleged to have been involved in publicly orchestrating and participating in the blocking of humanitarian aid trucks at several entry points into Gaza since January 2024.

#### Procedure

In November 2024, two complaints were filed respectively by *Avocats pour la justice au proche-orient* and *Europalestine*, and the *Union juive française pour la paix* (UJFP) alongside a victim.

In May 2025, a judicial investigation was opened into the role of Kupfer-Naouri and Touitou in the blockade of humanitarian aid trucks from entering Gaza. The investigation focuses on the charges of complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, and incitement to genocide followed by effect.

In July 2025, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its Palestinian and French member organisations *Al-Haq*, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme*, joined the case as civil parties.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO WAR CRIMES FOR THE KILLING OF TWO FRENCH CHILDREN IN GAZA

Unknown

#### Country of commission

Palestine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Passive personality

#### Suspects

Unknown

#### Country of residence of suspects

Unknown

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, no suspects have been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes, including directing attacks against the civilian population and against civilian objects.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

On 24 October 2023, two French children, Janna and Abderrahim Abudaher, were killed in a missile strike by the Israeli army on a house in which they were sheltering with their family in the north of the Gaza Strip. The children's younger brother, Omar, and their mother, Yasmine Z., were also seriously injured in the strike.

#### Procedure

On 6 June 2025, the grandmother of Janna and Abderrahim Abudaher, alongside the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme*, filed a civil party complaint in Paris for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide for the killing of the children.

On 28 November 2025, the prosecutor's office requested the opening of a judicial investigation on charges of the war crimes of directing attacks against the civilian population and against civilian objects in relation to the incident.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO FRANCO-ISRAELI SOLDIER FOR ALLEGED WAR CRIME COMMITTED AGAINST PALESTINIAN DETAINEES

Yoel O.

#### Country of commission

Palestine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Yoel O., dual French and Israeli national serving in the Israeli army

#### Country of residence of suspect

France

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on the war crime of humiliating and degrading treatment inflicted on a person belonging to the opposing party, causing serious harm to their physical or mental integrity.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

On 19 March 2024, independent Palestinian journalist Younis Tirawi posted a video on X that depicts acts of violence inflicted on several Palestinian detainees, filmed by a third party.

The footage shows detainees dressed in white jumpsuits, their hands tied and their eyes blindfolded, being verbally abused in French. At least one detainee appears to show visible signs of torture.

Younis Tirawi claimed to have identified the individual allegedly responsible for the video as Yoel O., a Franco-Israeli soldier serving in the Israeli army and deployed in Gaza.

### Procedure

In April 2024, a complaint was filed for torture, complicity in torture as a war crime, and other war crimes.

In September 2024, the complaint was dismissed by the prosecutor's office.

On 17 December 2024, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its Palestinian and French member organisations *Al-Haq*, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* filed a civil party complaint against Yoel O. for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, torture and complicity in these crimes committed against Palestinians detainees.

On 1 October 2025, the prosecutor's office requested the opening of a judicial investigation on charges of humiliating and degrading treatment inflicted on a person belonging to the opposing party, causing serious harm to their physical or mental integrity, constituting a war crime.

On 14 November 2025, the complainants filed observations asking for the investigation to be broadened to other charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture and genocide.

### NEW CASE!

## INVESTIGATION INTO WIDOW OF FORMER RWANDAN PRESIDENT FOR HER ALLEGED ROLE IN THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST TUTSIS DISMISSED

Agathe Habyarimana (Kanziga)

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Agathe Habyarimana (Kanziga), Rwandan national, widow of the former president Juvénal Habyarimana

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
The suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focused on charges of complicity in crimes against humanity and genocide, and participation in a group formed to prepare genocide and crimes against humanity.

**Current status**  
Case dismissed; under appeal

**Facts**  
During the 1994 genocide against Tutsis in Rwanda, Agathe Habyarimana is suspected of having financed the *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines*, which broadcast anti-Tutsi hate messages, of giving her consent to acts of terror carried out by the presidential guard and of ordering the massacre of employees of an orphanage.

**Procedure**  
In 2008, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* (CPCR) filed a complaint against Agathe Habyarimana for her alleged role in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) joined the case as civil party.

In 2016, Agathe Habyarimana was placed under the intermediary status of assisted witness (*témoign assisté*).

In January 2022, the investigating judges closed the investigation.

In August 2022, the prosecutor requested the reopening of the investigation and several investigating acts.

In September 2024, the prosecutor requested that Agathe Habyarimana be charged while under investigation (*mise en examen*). This request was rejected by the judges.

In August 2025, the investigating judges closed the investigation and dismissed the charges against Agathe Habyarimana.

The civil parties appealed this decision.

**NEW CASE!****FORMER MEDICAL SCHOOL DEAN IN RWANDA INDICTED FOR GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY**

Alphonse K.

**Country of commission**

Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**

Active personality

**Suspect**

Alphonse K., dual Rwandan and French national, former dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Butare

**Country of residence of suspect**

France

**Charges**

Genocide, crimes against humanity and conspiracy to commit these crimes

**Current status**

Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); under judicial surveillance

**Facts**

Alphonse K., a former doctor and dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Butare, Rwanda, is suspected of having called for an attack on the Tutsi minority during a meeting in Butare on 14 May 1994. The meeting took place in the presence of Jean Kambanda, prime minister of the interim government set up after the bombing of Hutu president Juvénal Habyarimana's plane on 6 April 1994.

Alphonse K. is also accused of having allegedly ordered, within the Butare hospital, the 'extermination or deportation' of patients, refugees and Tutsi personnel.

He arrived in France in 2000 and was later naturalised as a French citizen.

**Procedure**

On 13 November 2024, a preliminary investigation was opened by the French authorities. The investigation was opened after Alphonse K.'s name came up in two trials in Paris, namely the trial of Eugène Rwamucyo, a doctor-teacher at the University of Butare, who was sentenced to 27 years in prison in 2024 and that of Sosthène Munyemana, another Rwandan doctor who was sentenced to 24 years in prison in 2023.

On 25 February 2025, he was taken into custody.

On 28 February 2025, Alphonse K. was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) with genocide, crimes against humanity and conspiracy to commit these crimes, and placed under judicial surveillance.

**NEW CASE!****CASE AGAINST FORMER GENERAL DIRECTOR OF FINANCE OF THE RWANDAN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE DISMISSED**

Cyprien Kayumba

**Country of commission**

Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**

Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**

Cyprien Kayumba, Rwandan national, lieutenant colonel, former general director of finance of the Rwandan Ministry of Defence

**Country of residence of suspect**

France

**Charges**

Complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity

**Current status**

Case dismissed; under appeal

**Facts**

Lieutenant Colonel Cyprien Kayumba oversaw military logistics for the Rwandan Ministry of Defence. In June 1992, he was appointed general director of finance within the ministry.

He is alleged to have been in charge of purchasing weapons used for the genocide of the Tutsis in 1994.

**Procedure**

In 2000, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* (CPCR), the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), the *Communauté Rwandaise de France* (CRF), the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (LDH) and *Survie*, filed a complaint alongside victims.

In 2002, an investigation was opened.

In 2018, Cyprien Kayumba was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) and placed under judicial surveillance.

In August 2022, the investigating judges completed the investigation.

In August 2024, the prosecutor submitted a request for Kayumba to be tried before the Paris Criminal Court for complicity in genocide and in crimes against humanity.

In January 2025, the investigating judges dismissed the charges against Kayumba.

The civil parties have appealed this decision.

## NEW CASE!

### FORMER RADIO JOURNALIST DETAINED OVER ACCUSATIONS OF GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

Hyacinthe Bicamumpaka

#### Country of commission

Rwanda

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Hyacinthe Bicamumpaka, Rwandan national, former journalist at Radio Rwanda

#### Country of residence of suspect

France

#### Charges

Genocide, complicity in crimes against humanity and conspiracy to commit these crimes

#### Current status

Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); detained

#### Facts

Hyacinthe Bicamumpaka was reportedly a 'prominent journalist' at Radio Rwanda, the official Hutu government radio station, during the 1994 genocide.

He arrived in France in June 1994 and sought asylum. His request for asylum was rejected in 1997 due to suspicions regarding his involvement in the genocide.

#### Procedure

In May 2021, the French online investigating news outlet *Mediapart* reported that Hyacinthe Bicamumpaka was in France, along with two other Rwandans suspected of having taken part in the genocide. The French authorities opened an investigation soon after.

On 26 April 2025, Hyacinthe Bicamumpaka was arrested and charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) with genocide, complicity in crimes against humanity and conspiracy to commit these crimes.

On 9 May 2025, his pre-trial detention was upheld on appeal.

## INVESTIGATION REOPENED INTO ALLEGED ROLE IN THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE OF FORMER HEAD OF IT AT THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN KIGALI

Callixte Mbarushimana

### Country of commission

Rwanda

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Callixte Mbarushimana, Rwandan national, former head of IT at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Kigali, Rwanda

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Crimes against humanity and complicity in these crimes

### Current status

Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*)

### Facts

In 1994, Callixte Mbarushimana was head of IT at the UNDP in Kigali, Rwanda. He was accused of having provided the Rwandan armed forces and the *Interahamwe*, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide, with material from the UNDP and a list of Tutsis to kill. He was also accused of having himself participated in some massacres.

### Procedure

In 2003, Callixte Mbarushimana obtained refugee status in France, where he settled.

In 2008, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* (CPCR) filed a complaint against Callixte Mbarushimana for his alleged role in the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda.

The same year, an investigation was launched by the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes.

In 2010, Callixte Mbarushimana was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for crimes against humanity and complicity in those crimes.

In October 2010, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) was admitted as a civil party.

On 28 September 2010, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a sealed arrest warrant against Callixte Mbarushimana for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against civilians in 2009 in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, when he was Executive Secretary of the *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda*. Callixte Mbarushimana was arrested in France on 30 September 2010 and transferred to the ICC.

In 2011, Pre-Trial Chamber I of the ICC declined to confirm the charges against Callixte Mbarushimana and did not commit the case to trial.

Between 2013 and 2017, the French investigators travelled several times to Rwanda to collect evidence.

On 1 October 2024, the investigating judges closed the investigation and dismissed the charges against Callixte Mbarushimana for lack of evidence.

The CPCR and FIDH appealed this decision.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 21 May 2025, the Court of Appeal overturned the investigating judge's decision and reopened the investigation.

## APPEAL TRIAL DATES SET FOR RWANDAN ALLEGED FORMER DRIVER FOR THE INTERAHAMWE MILITIA

Claude Muhayimana

### Country of commission

Rwanda

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Claude Muhayimana, dual Rwandan and French national, alleged former driver for the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Complicity in crimes against humanity; complicity in genocide

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 14 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; under judicial surveillance

### Facts

According to his conviction, Claude Muhayimana drove Hutu militias to several attack locations while he was the driver for the Kibuye Guesthouse. He was involved, as an accomplice, in the massacres of Tutsi civilians who had found refuge in Karongi, Gitwa and Bisesero between April and June 1994.

### Procedure

On 13 December 2011, the Rwandan judicial authorities issued an international arrest warrant against Muhayimana for his alleged participation in the genocide. The Rwandan authorities also requested his extradition from France.

On 26 February 2014, the French Supreme Court ruled that Muhayimana could not be extradited because Rwanda's request was based on laws passed after the alleged crimes took place.

On 9 April 2014, Muhayimana was arrested in Rouen following a complaint filed in June 2013 by the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda*. A criminal investigation was launched regarding his alleged role in the genocide committed in the district of Kibuye. Muhayimana was placed in pre-trial detention. On 3 April 2015, he was released and placed under judicial surveillance.

On 9 November 2017, the investigating judge referred the accused to the Paris Criminal Court for complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity. Muhayimana unsuccessfully appealed the referral decision.

The trial, initially scheduled from 29 September to 26 October 2020, was postponed twice due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The trial took place before the Paris Criminal Court between 22 November and 17 December 2021. Muhayimana was found guilty of complicity in genocide for transporting militiamen to various massacre sites during the genocide. He was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment.

Muhayimana appealed this decision and applied for his immediate release pending his trial before the Court of Appeal.

On 21 December 2022, the Court of Appeal released Muhayimana from detention and placed him under judicial surveillance while awaiting his appeal trial.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Muhayimana's appeal trial has been scheduled to take place from 2 to 27 February 2026.

## APPEAL TRIAL DATES SET FOR FORMER HEAD OF THE BUTARE CENTRE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN RWANDA

Eugène Rwamucyo

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Eugène Rwamucyo, Rwandan national, former head of the Centre of Public Health of the University of Butare, Rwanda

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
Complicity in genocide through serious bodily or mental harm; complicity in crimes against humanity through extrajudicial execution, torture and other inhumane acts; participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing genocide and crimes against humanity

**Current status**  
Convicted; sentenced to 27 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained

**Facts**  
Eugène Rwamucyo was the head of the Centre of Public Health of the University of Butare in Rwanda in 1994. He is accused of having supervised the burial of Tutsi victims and of finishing off those already injured in the Butare prefecture.

**Procedure**  
On 23 April 2007, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* (CPCR) lodged a complaint against Rwamucyo for his alleged participation in the genocide.

On 18 July 2007, the prosecutor of Lille opened a judicial investigation, which was transferred to investigating judges of the Paris Tribunal in November 2007. The CPCR was

admitted as a civil party in the case at the opening of the investigation. The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) also became a civil party in 2010.

On 18 September 2013, Rwamucyo was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for genocide through serious bodily or mental harm and the crimes against humanity of extrajudicial execution, torture and other inhumane acts. He was placed under judicial surveillance.

On 19 December 2018, the investigating judge informed the parties that he had completed his investigation.

On 7 April 2020, the prosecution issued its final submission requesting that Rwamucyo be sent to trial on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

On 13 October 2020, the investigating judge referred the case to the Paris Criminal Court for complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity. Rwamucyo appealed this decision.

In September 2022, the Paris Court of Appeal rejected Rwamucyo's appeal and confirmed the referral of his case to the Paris Criminal Court. The defence appealed this decision before the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

In January 2023, the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*) dismissed the appeal and definitively confirmed Rwamucyo's referral to the Paris Criminal Court.

Rwamucyo was tried before the Paris Criminal Court between 1 and 25 October 2024.

He was found guilty of the charges of complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, as well as participating in a group formed to prepare genocide and crimes against humanity.

He was acquitted of the charges of committing genocide and crimes against humanity as a direct perpetrator.

Rwamucyo was sentenced to 27 years of imprisonment.

Rwamucyo and the Public Prosecutor's Office both lodged appeals against this decision.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Rwamucyo's appeal trial has been scheduled to take place from 9 June 2026 to 10 July 2026.

### CASE CLOSED AFTER THE PASSING OF FORMER RWANDAN CIVIL SERVANT CHARGED WITH GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Isaac Kamali

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Active personality

**Suspect**  
Isaac Kamali, dual Rwandan and French national, former civil servant in Rwanda

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity; genocide and complicity in genocide

**Current status**  
Case closed due to the death of the suspect

**Facts**  
Isaac Kamali was accused of having actively taken part in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. He allegedly participated in the organisation of killings, providing weapons and vehicles to the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide. He is also alleged to have directly participated in massacres.

**Procedure**  
In 2003, a Rwandan court convicted Kamali *in absentia* for his role in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The Rwandan authorities sent an extradition request to France, where Kamali had moved after the genocide.

In June 2007, Kamali was arrested in a Paris airport due to an Interpol Red Notice. The French authorities rejected the Rwandan extradition request in 2008.

In 2009, the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes opened an investigation against Kamali, after the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* filed a complaint in February 2009.

The investigation unit travelled to Rwanda, Mali and Benin to collect evidence.

On 16 September 2021, Kamali was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) and placed under judicial surveillance for his alleged involvement in genocide and crimes against humanity.

On 13 October 2024, Isaac Kamali passed away.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Following Kamali's death, a dismissal order was issued on 2 October 2025; the case has thus been closed.

## TRIAL CONFIRMED OF RWANDAN NATIONAL CHARGED WITH GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Madjaliwa Safari

### Country of commission

Rwanda

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Madjaliwa Safari, Rwandan national

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Genocide; crimes against humanity

### Current status

Indicted; awaiting trial; detained

### Facts

Madjaliwa Safari is accused of having participated in the murder of Tutsi civilians in the provinces of Gitarama and Butare between April and July 1994. He allegedly played a decisive role in the arrests and executions of Tutsis at a roadblock known as 'Chez Premier'.

### Procedure

Rwandan authorities issued an arrest warrant against Safari in 2017 and the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes opened an investigation into his case in November 2019. In July 2023, he was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for genocide and crimes against humanity, and was arrested near Saint-Pierre-des-Corps, where he lived.

On 6 December 2024, Safari was indicted on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, Madjaliwa Safari's trial was scheduled to take place from 17 November to 18 December 2026 before the Paris Criminal Court.

## DISMISSAL OF THE CASE AGAINST RWANDAN FORMER PRIEST CHARGED WITH GENOCIDE AND COMPLICITY IN CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY UNDER APPEAL

Marcel Hitayezu

### Country of commission

Rwanda

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Marcel Hitayezu, dual Rwandan and French national, former priest in Mubuga (southern Rwanda)

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Genocide; complicity in crimes against humanity

### Current status

Case dismissed; under appeal

### Facts

As a priest in the parish of Mubuga (southern Rwanda), Marcel Hitayezu is accused of having denied Tutsis who had taken refuge in his church food and water while providing food to the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation, who attacked the Tutsis gathered in the church. Hitayezu contests these facts.

### Procedure

In 2016, the Rwandan judiciary requested the extradition of Hitayezu to prosecute him in Rwanda. The French Supreme Court denied this request in October 2016.

An investigation into the allegations put forward by the Rwandan authorities was opened in France on 26 July 2016.

Hitayezu was arrested on 14 April 2021 at his home in Montlieu-la-Garde (Charente-Maritime). He was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) with genocide and complicity in crimes against humanity.

On 6 May 2021, Hitayezu was released and placed under judicial surveillance.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 18 August 2025, the investigating judge dismissed the case. The civil parties appealed this decision. The appeal is pending.

## REFERRAL TO THE PARIS CRIMINAL COURT REQUESTED FOR FORMER SHAREHOLDER OF THE RWANDAN RADIO-TÉLÉVISION LIBRE DES MILLE COLLINES

Pierre Kayondo

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Pierre Kayondo, Rwandan national, former prefect of Kibuye, former member of parliament in Gitarama district and former shareholder of the *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines*

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
Genocide; complicity in genocide; complicity in crimes against humanity; participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing the commission of these crimes

**Current status**  
Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); under judicial surveillance

**Facts**  
Kayondo was reportedly a shareholder of the *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines*, a radio station that played a fundamental role in the 1994 genocide, inciting massacres and spreading hatred against the Tutsi and moderate Hutus.

He was reportedly a member of the *Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement* (National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development), which had close ties to the *Interahamwe* militia, a Hutu paramilitary organisation which was heavily implicated in the 1994 genocide.

He is also alleged to have taken part personally in the massacres.

**Procedure**  
On 22 September 2021, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* filed a complaint against Kayondo for his alleged involvement in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

On 18 October 2021, the French prosecuting authorities opened an investigation into Kayondo for his alleged involvement in crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda in 1994.

In September 2023, Kayondo was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for genocide and crimes against humanity and was placed under judicial surveillance.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 15 October 2025, the prosecution issued its final submission requesting that Kayondo be sent to trial on charges of genocide, complicity in genocide, complicity in crimes against humanity and conspiracy to commit these crimes.

## CONVICTION OF BUTARE DOCTOR FOR GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN RWANDA CONFIRMED ON APPEAL

Sosthène Munyemana

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Sosthène Munyemana, Rwandan national, former gynaecologist at the University Hospital of Butare

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
Genocide; crimes against humanity; participation in a group formed to prepare genocide and crimes against humanity

**Current status**  
Convicted; sentenced to 24 years in prison; confirmed on appeal; appeal pending before the Supreme Court; detained

**Facts**  
According to the judgment of the Paris Court of Appeal, Sosthène Munyemana controlled the key to an office where over forty Tutsis were detained between 23 April and 15 May 1994. After their detention in this facility, all but one of them disappeared and died in unknown circumstances during their transfer to other locations. The Court further concluded that Munyemana also took part in several preparatory acts leading up to the Tutsi genocide, such as meetings during which patrols and barricades were set up to identify and capture Tutsis.

**Procedure**  
On 18 October 1995, the NGOs *Collectif girondin pour le Rwanda*, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and *Survie*

lodged a criminal complaint against Munyemana for his alleged participation in genocide. In 2001, the *Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda* joined the proceedings as a civil party.

In 2006, Rwanda requested Munyemana's extradition from France. However, on 7 October 2010, the Investigation Chamber of the Bordeaux Court of Appeal denied this request.

In October 2008, Munyemana was found guilty *in absentia* by the Butare Gacaca Court in Rwanda. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

On 14 December 2011, Munyemana was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) in France for crimes against humanity and genocide and placed under judicial surveillance.

On 9 May 2017, the investigating judges of the specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes informed the parties that they had completed their investigation.

On 11 May 2018, the prosecutor issued his final submission.

In 2021, the investigating judges ordered that Munyemana be sent to trial for the commission of crimes against humanity, genocide, complicity in these crimes and participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing these crimes.

Munyemana appealed this decision before the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*), unsuccessfully.

Munyemana was tried before the Paris Criminal Court from 13 November 2023 to 19 December 2023. He was convicted and sentenced to 24 years of imprisonment for genocide, crimes against humanity and participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing these crimes. He was acquitted of the charges of complicity in these crimes.

Munyemana appealed the conviction.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 24 October 2025, Munyemana was convicted and sentenced by the Paris Court of Appeal to 24 years of imprisonment for wilful killings constituting genocide, as a direct perpetrator, and participation in a group formed to prepare genocide.

He was acquitted of the charges of wilful causing of great suffering or serious injury to body or health constituting genocide and of torture and extrajudicial executions constituting crimes against humanity.

Munyemana referred this decision to the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

## NEW CASE!

### ALLEGED FORMER SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER INDICTED FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Malik N.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Malik N., Syrian national, alleged former member of Branch 285 of the former Syrian State Intelligence Security Services in Damascus

**Country of residence of suspect**  
France

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity and complicity in crimes against humanity

**Current status**  
Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); detained

**Facts**  
Branch 285 of the former Syrian State Intelligence and Security Services in Damascus was a detention facility, operated by the former Syrian regime, notorious for systematic torture and abuse of detainees.

The International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism on Syria (IIIM) has documented how, during the former regime, hundreds of prisoners were held in the basement of Branch 285 in inhumane conditions of detention, deprived of hygiene and medical care. Systematic killings, torture and sexual abuse of detainees took place at the facility. Many prisoners were reportedly transferred to military hospitals before being buried in mass graves.

## Procedure

In October 2020, following a report by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes (PNAT) opened a preliminary investigation into suspicions of crimes committed between 2010 and 2013 by Malik N. in his capacity as an alleged former member of Branch 285 of the former Syrian State Intelligence Security Services in Damascus.

On 4 December 2025, the PNAT announced that it had charged Malik N. while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for crimes against humanity and complicity in crimes against humanity. He was subsequently placed in pre-trial detention while the investigation continues.

In its press release, the PNAT noted the effective international cooperation between the French authorities and Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Norway and the Netherlands during the course of the investigation.

## INVESTIGATION INTO CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED BY SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES RESERVIST COMPLETED

Abdulhamid Chaban

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Abdulhamid Chaban, Syrian national, former reservist of the General Intelligence Services (GIS)

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Complicity in the crimes against humanity of imprisonment, torture, rape and murder

### Current status

Charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*); investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge to send to trial or dismiss the case; under judicial surveillance

### Facts

During the Syrian civil war, the Syrian intelligence services systematically arrested, tortured and killed opposition activists. As a former member of the GIS, Abdulhamid Chaban was investigated for his alleged participation in crimes committed by the Syrian regime against the civilian population between 2011 and 2013.

### Procedure

On 12 February 2019, the French authorities arrested Chaban in the Paris region on suspicion of crimes against humanity, following the rejection of his application for asylum. On the same day, German authorities arrested two other former intelligence officials, Anwar Raslan and Eyad al-Gharib,

in Germany (see UJAR 2025, p. 58). The arrests were coordinated in the context of a joint French-German investigation.

On 15 February 2019, Chaban was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for complicity in crimes against humanity. He was placed in pre-trial detention.

On 22 February 2019, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), along with its member organisation in France, the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (LDH), were admitted as civil parties.

On 12 August 2019, Chaban filed an appeal against his indictment on the grounds of procedural irregularities and the lack of French courts' jurisdiction over crimes against humanity committed in Syria. The Court of Appeal did not grant his request.

In 2020, Chaban was released from pre-trial detention. He was placed under judicial surveillance.

On 18 February 2021, Chaban challenged the Court of Appeal's decision regarding French courts' jurisdictions before the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

On 24 November 2021, the Supreme Court overturned the Court of Appeal's decision, considering that, in order to be prosecuted in France, the French legal framework requires that crimes against humanity are also punishable *per se* under Syrian law (double criminality rule), which is not the case.

On 7 December 2021, FIDH opposed the Supreme Court's decision as it had not been notified of the Court hearing and was, therefore, not able to participate in it. The Supreme Court thus annulled its November 2021 decision and ordered a new hearing.

On 17 March 2023, the Supreme Court held a hearing in plenary session on the case, together with the Nema case (see p. 55), to determine whether French courts have jurisdiction over crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of torture committed in Syria, although those legal qualifications are not embedded in Syrian legislation. This time, FIDH participated in the hearing and was able to present its arguments.

On 12 May 2023, the Supreme Court issued two distinct decisions (in the Nema and the Chaban case) which both overturned the conclusions it had reached in its November 2021 decision. In the Chaban case, the Court concluded that, for French authorities to prosecute international crimes under universal jurisdiction, it is sufficient for the foreign legislation of the country where the crimes were committed to punish the underlying acts of international crimes (such as murder or rape), even if these are not explicitly classified as crimes against humanity. Doing so, the French Supreme Court definitively confirmed French courts' jurisdiction over crimes against humanity committed in Syria.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 5 August 2025, the investigating judges completed their investigation.

The prosecutor will issue a formal request concerning the direction of the case (referral to trial, dismissal, or reopening of the investigation). The investigating judges will subsequently determine the direction of the case.

## DENIAL OF FUNCTIONAL IMMUNITY TO THE FORMER GOVERNOR OF THE SYRIAN CENTRAL BANK CONFIRMED BY THE SUPREME COURT

Adib Mayaleh (André Mayard)

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Adib Mayaleh (André Mayard), French-Syrian national, former governor of the Syrian Central Bank

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

The suspect is not formally charged. The investigation focused on complicity in the crimes against humanity of wilful killing, imprisonment and torture, complicity in the war crimes of wilful killing, wilfully causing serious injury to body or health and deprivation of liberty committed against civilians, as well as participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

### Current status

Investigation completed; placed under the status of assisted witness (*témoin assisté*)

### Facts

Adib Mayaleh is suspected of having provided economic and financial support to the former Syrian regime, which was implicated in numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity, in his capacity as governor of the Syrian Central Bank.

### Procedure

On 8 December 2016, a preliminary investigation was opened on the charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes and complicity in these crimes committed since March 2011.

On 5 December 2017, a judicial investigation was opened on the charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes, complicity in these crimes and laundering of the proceeds of these crimes.

On 16 December 2022, Adib Mayaleh was arrested on French territory.

On 22 December 2022, Adib Mayaleh was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*).

On 20 June 2023, Adib Mayaleh challenged his indictment and argued his functional immunity precluded any proceedings against him.

On 26 January 2024, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) joined the case as civil parties.

On 5 June 2024, the Investigating Chamber of the Paris Court of Appeal followed the civil parties' reasoning and found that functional immunities do not apply in cases of international crimes. The defence then referred the case to the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

In parallel, on 21 May 2024, following a request from Adib Mayaleh, the investigating judges cancelled his indictment, on the basis that there was insufficient evidence against him at this stage of the proceedings. They placed Adib Mayaleh under the intermediary status of assisted witness.

On 21 May 2024, the prosecutor appealed the decision of the investigating judges. On 15 January 2025, the Court of Appeal confirmed the status of assisted witness for Adib Mayaleh.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 4 July 2025, the Supreme Court jointly examined the questions of functional immunity and personal immunity (see also Bashar al-Assad chemical attacks case hereafter) in cases of international crimes.

On 25 July 2025, following the arguments put forward by FIDH and SCM as civil parties, the French Supreme Court refused to grant functional immunity to Adib Mayaleh.

The Court found that international customary law had evolved with regard to functional immunities and recognised a general exception to the principle of functional immunity for agents of a foreign State in cases of international crimes.

On 5 August 2025, the investigating judges completed their investigation.

## NEW ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR BASHAR AL-ASSAD FOR 2013 CHEMICAL ATTACKS AFTER SUPREME COURT CANCELS PREVIOUS ARREST WARRANT

Bashar al-Assad, Maher al-Assad, Ghassan Abbas, Bassam al-Hassan, Talal Shafiq Makhluf

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Passive personality

**Suspects**  
Five Syrian nationals: Bashar al-Assad, former president of Syria; Maher al-Assad, former president's brother and *de facto* commander of the 4<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division; General Ghassan Abbas, former director of Branch 450 of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC); General Bassam al-Hassan, former presidential advisor for strategic affairs and liaison officer between the presidential palace and the SSRC; and General Talal Shafiq Makhluf, former leader of the 105<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Republican Guard

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Russia, unknown

**Charges**  
Complicity in the war crimes of wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health and deliberate attacks against civilians; complicity in the crimes against humanity of murder and other inhumane acts

**Current status**  
Under investigation; arrest warrants issued

**Facts**  
In 2011, the Syrian regime brutally repressed opponents' demonstrations, giving rise to the beginning of the armed conflict. In 2013, as reported

by the United Nations Fact Finding Mission into the Alleged Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, chemical weapons, specifically sarin gas, were used on multiple occasions during the armed conflict in Syria. In August 2013, in Eastern Ghouta (the suburbs of Damascus), significant quantities of sarin were used in a well-planned attack that indiscriminately targeted civilian areas, resulting in thousands of casualties.

**Procedure**  
On 1 March 2021, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression and individual victims (one of French nationality) of the chemical attacks filed a complaint and were admitted as civil parties. A judicial investigation was opened for crimes against humanity and war crimes in April 2021. Open Society Justice Initiative, Syrian Archive and Civil Rights Defenders later joined the case as civil parties. In 2021 and 2022, several civil parties testified before the investigating judges and witnesses were heard.

On 14 November 2023, the investigating judges issued four international arrest warrants against former president Bashar al-Assad, the former president's brother and *de facto* leader of the 4<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division Maher al-Assad, former director of Branch 450 of the SSRC General Ghassan Abbas and presidential advisor for strategic affairs and liaison officer between the presidential palace and former SSRC General Bassam al-Hassan for complicity in crimes against humanity and complicity in war crimes.

On 21 December 2023, the prosecutor appealed the arrest warrant against then-president Bashar al-Assad on immunity grounds.

In June 2024, the Investigating Chamber of the Paris Court of Appeal followed the civil parties' reasoning and upheld the arrest warrant against Bashar al-Assad.

The prosecutor referred the matter to the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

On 8 December 2024, the government of Bashar al-Assad was overthrown during a major offensive by the Syrian opposition, led by the group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. On the same day, Bashar al-Assad left Syria for Russia, where he is reported to have claimed asylum.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 4 July 2025, the Supreme Court jointly examined the questions of functional immunity (see also Adib Mayaleh case p. 48) and personal immunity in cases of international crimes.

On 25 July 2025, the Supreme Court handed down its decision and overturned the arrest warrant against Bashar al-Assad. The Court ruled that, at the time the warrant was issued, Bashar al-Assad enjoyed personal immunity as the sitting head of State.

The Supreme Court further held that no development in international customary law had established an exception to the principle of personal immunity for heads of State, even in cases involving international crimes.

Given that Bashar al-Assad was overthrown on 8 December 2024, he no longer benefits from personal immunity and cannot invoke functional immunity given the international crimes charges against him. Consequently, on 29 July 2025, the investigating judges issued a new arrest warrant against him.

In addition, on 16 July 2025, the investigating judges issued an arrest warrant against General Talal Shafiq Makhlef, the former leader of the 105<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Republican Guard.

## INVESTIGATION INTO WAR CRIMES ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED IN THE SYRIAN CITY OF DERA'A COMPLETED AND ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR BASHAR AL-ASSAD

Bashar al-Assad, Fahed Jassem al-Fraj, Ali Abdallah Ayoub, Ahmad Balloul, Ali Safetli, Nadim al-Jourdi, Ibrahim al-Chaher

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Passive personality

**Suspects**  
Seven Syrian nationals: Bashar al-Assad, former president of Syria; Fahed Jassem al-Fraj, former minister of defence; Ali Abdallah Ayoub, former chief of staff of the armed forces; Ahmad Balloul, former commander of the Air Force and Air Defence; Ali Safetli, former commander of the 64<sup>th</sup> Helicopter Brigade and commander of the Bley airport; Nadim al-Jourdi, former chief of staff of the 64<sup>th</sup> Helicopter Brigade; and Ibrahim al-Chaher, former chief of staff of the Air Force

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Russia, unknown

**Charges**  
War crimes of deliberate attacks against the civilian population and murder of a person protected by international humanitarian law

**Current status**  
Investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge to send to trial or dismiss the case; arrest warrants issued

## Facts

In 2011, the Syrian regime brutally repressed opponents' demonstrations, giving rise to the beginning of the armed conflict. On 7 June 2017, the city of Deraa, and more particularly the neighbourhood of Tareq al-Sad, was heavily bombed by the Syrian army.

This attack, targeted against civil infrastructure, cost the life of Salah Abou Nabout, a French-Syrian national.

## Procedure

In 2017, Omar Abou Nabout filed a complaint before the Paris Tribunal on behalf of his father, Salah Abou Nabout. Since then, several judicial expert reports were requested and multiple witnesses and experts were heard by the judges.

In 2020, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression became a civil party in the case.

On 18 October 2023, the investigating judges of the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes issued international arrest warrants against Fahed Jassem al-Fraj, Ali Abdallah Ayoub, Ahmad Balloul and Ali Safetli.

In March 2024, the investigating judges completed their investigation.

In May 2024, the prosecutor requested the reopening of the investigation and the issuance of two additional arrest warrants.

On 4 September 2024, the investigating judges issued two additional arrest warrants against Nadim al-Jourdi, the former chief of staff of the 64<sup>th</sup> Helicopter Brigade, and Ibrahim al-Chaher, the former chief of staff of the Air Force.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 21 January 2025, at the prosecutor's request and following the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria, the investigating judges issued an arrest warrant against Bashar al-Assad, finding that, as a former head of State, he could no longer claim personal immunity and that his functional immunity did not apply in a case involving war crimes. The arrest warrant has been issued on the basis of complicity in war crimes, specifically the war crimes of intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population and murdering a person protected by international humanitarian law.

On 24 January 2025, the investigating judges definitively completed their investigation.

The prosecutor will issue a formal request concerning the direction of the case (referral to trial, dismissal, or reopening of the investigation). The investigating judges will subsequently determine the direction of the case.

## ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR BASHAR AL-ASSAD AND SIX OTHER FORMER HIGH-RANKING SYRIAN OFFICIALS FOR WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN HOMS IN 2012

Bashar al-Assad, Ali Ayoub, Ali Mamluk, Ghassan Bilal, Maher al-Assad, Mohamed Dib Zaitoun, Rafik Mahmoud Shahadah

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Passive personality

### Suspects

Seven Syrian nationals: Bashar al-Assad, former president of Syria; Ali Abdallah Ayoub, former chief of staff of the armed forces; Ali Mamluk, former head of Syrian General Intelligence; Ghassan Bilal, former head of the Security Office of the Syrian Army's 4<sup>th</sup> Division; Maher al-Assad, former president's brother and *de facto* leader of the 4<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division; Mohamed Dib Zaitoun, former head of the General Security Directorate; and Rafik Mahmoud Shahadah, former head of security for the Military and Security Committee in Homs

### Country of residence of suspects

Russia, unknown

### Charges

Complicity in the war crimes of wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health and deliberate attacks against civilians; complicity in the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution and other inhumane acts; participation in a group formed to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity

### Current status

Under investigation; arrest warrants issued

### Facts

On 22 February 2012, a Syrian army bombardment in Baba Amr (Homs) led to the death and serious injury of several journalists operating from a media centre there.

French photojournalist Rémi Ochlik and American war crimes correspondent Marie Colvin were both killed in the attack. Several other journalists were injured in the attack, including French journalist Edith Bouvier as well as Syrian and British journalists who were using the centre as a base to report on the events in Homs in early 2012.

### Procedure

This case was originally opened in 2012 as a homicide case but was reclassified in 2014 as a war crimes case.

The families of Ochlik and Colvin are civil parties in the case, together with French, Syrian and British journalists injured in the attack, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and Reporters without Borders.

On 9 April 2018, documents filed in a United States civil case concerning Colvin's death were declassified. They allegedly demonstrate the premeditated nature of the Syrian army bombardment of the media centre in Homs that led to the deaths of Colvin and Ochlik and to the injuries to several others including Bouvier, Paul Conroy and Wael al Omar. These documents were filed in the ongoing war crimes investigation in France.

On 30 January 2019, the United States District Court in Washington DC held Syria's government liable for the targeting and killing of Colvin and awarded a compensatory USD 302 000 000 to her relatives.

In November 2022, Syrian activists were heard by the investigators, following a request made by the civil parties.

On 18 December 2024, following the civil parties' request, the investigation was extended to include the charges of murder, persecution and other inhumane acts constituting crimes against humanity committed against journalists, activists and human rights defenders.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 19 August 2025, the investigating judges issued arrest warrants against Bashar al-Assad, Ali Ayoub, Ali Mamluk, Ghassan Bilal, Maher al-Assad, Mohamed Dib Zaitoun, Rafik Mahmoud Shahadah.

## MULTINATIONAL LAFARGE AND ITS FORMER EXECUTIVES TRIED FOR FINANCING TERRORISM IN SYRIA, INVESTIGATION INTO COMPLICITY IN CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY CONTINUES

Lafarge SA, Bruno Lafont and others

**Countries of commission**  
Syria and France

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction and active personality

### Suspects

The French cement company Lafarge SA, which merged in 2015 with Holcim, became LafargeHolcim, and was renamed Holcim in 2021. The suspect for complicity in crimes against humanity is Lafarge SA in its legal entity. Suspects for financing terrorism and violation of international sanctions (for some) are Lafarge SA in its legal entity and eight individuals: Bruno Lafont, French national, former CEO of Lafarge SA; Christian Herrault, French national, former Deputy CEO-COO of Lafarge SA; Bruno Pescheux, French national, former Director of Lafarge Cement Syria (LCS); Frédéric Jolibois, French national, former Director of LCS; Jacob Waerness, Norwegian national, former LCS security manager; Ahmad Al Jaloudi, Jordanian national, former LCS security manager; Amro Taleb, Syrian national; and Firas Tlass, Syrian national

**Countries of residence of the suspects**  
France, Syria and Switzerland

### Charges

Complicity in crimes against humanity; financing of a terrorist enterprise; violation of international sanctions

### Current status

Trial concluded for financing terrorism and violation of international sanctions; verdict pending; Lafarge SA charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for complicity in crimes against humanity

### Facts

Lafarge owned and ran a cement factory in Jalabiya, Syria. From 2012 on, several armed groups operated in the factory's vicinity. The company allegedly entered into negotiations with ISIS to purchase oil and pozzolan (a material used to make concrete) from them, as well as to obtain official ISIS passes for crossing checkpoints in order to maintain its production in the area. Testimonies also point to Lafarge risking the lives of its employees, who suffered kidnappings and extortion, and violating a number of basic labour rights. The company allegedly worked out 'arrangements' with armed groups, including ISIS and *Jabhat al-Nusra*, around the factory from 2012-2015 amounting to at least EUR 13 000 000, according to the judicial inquiry.

### Procedure

In September 2016, the French minister of finance filed a complaint before the Paris prosecutor against LafargeHolcim for its alleged illegal purchase of oil in Syria, despite the European Union embargo issued in 2012. The Paris prosecutor opened an investigation in October 2016.

On 15 November 2016, 11 Syrian former Lafarge employees and the human rights groups Sherpa and the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) filed a criminal complaint as civil parties in Paris against Lafarge, Lafarge Cement Syria and their current and former top executives for the financing of terrorism, complicity in crimes against humanity committed in Syria, endangerment of people's lives and for a series of labour rights violations.

On 9 June 2017, three investigating judges of the Paris Tribunal opened an investigation into the crimes alleged by the plaintiffs. In September 2017, three of the victims were heard by one of the investigating judges.

Between December 2017 and May 2018, eight former executives, including former CEOs of the Holcim group, were charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) with financing terrorism and endangerment of people's lives, amongst other charges, and were requested to provide the courts with a deposit of several million euros. In September 2019, a Syrian-Canadian alleged former intermediary between the company and ISIS suppliers was also charged.

On 28 June 2018, three investigating judges of the Paris Tribunal charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) the legal entity Lafarge SA (now Holcim) with complicity in crimes against humanity, financing a terrorist enterprise, endangerment of people's lives and violation of an embargo. The investigating judges ordered the company to hand over EUR 30 000 000 to the judicial authorities as a security deposit ahead of a possible trial.

On 24 October 2019, the Investigation Chamber of the Paris Court of Appeal rejected the admissibility of Sherpa and the ECCHR as civil parties.

On 7 November 2019, the Court of Appeal confirmed the indictments of the Lafarge executives and of the Lafarge company itself for financing a terrorist enterprise, endangerment of people's lives and violation of a European Union embargo. However, it dismissed the charges of complicity in crimes against humanity for the company arguing that the money transfers had an economic purpose and were not driven by an intention to participate in crimes against humanity.

In November 2019, Sherpa and the ECCHR appealed the rejection of their civil party applications and the dismissal of the complicity in crimes against humanity charges to the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*). Defence lawyers also appealed the 7 November confirmation of indictments.

On 7 September 2021, the Supreme Court ruled that Lafarge's indictment for complicity in crimes against humanity was wrongly dismissed by the Paris Court of Appeal, finding that knowingly transferring millions of dollars to a terrorist enterprise with knowledge of its criminal nature was sufficient to establish the moral element for complicity in crimes against humanity, without the necessity to establish whether Lafarge was driven by an intent to commit crimes against humanity. The court also ruled that Lafarge's indictment for endangerment of peoples' lives was wrongly confirmed by the Paris Court of Appeal, finding that it had not sufficiently justified the application of French law to the case of Syrian workers. The Supreme Court therefore referred the case back to the Paris Court of Appeal for a new decision on both charges. In addition, it confirmed Sherpa's inadmissibility as a civil party on all charges and ECCHR's inadmissibility for all charges except the complicity in crimes against humanity charge.

The Supreme Court sent the legal challenges against the various indictments back to a newly composed Court of Appeal.

On 18 May 2022, the Paris Court of Appeal upheld all charges against the parent company Lafarge SA (Holcim). In confirming the charge of complicity in crimes against humanity, the Court of Appeal reiterated the legal findings of the Supreme Court that there was serious or corroborating evidence that the company knowingly chose

to maintain its activities in the region by financing armed and terrorist groups. With regard to the charge of deliberately endangering the lives of its subsidiary's employees in Syria, the Court of Appeal further found that French law was applicable under private international law, as there was a closer connection between the workers and the French parent company. The court relied on the permanent interference of Lafarge SA in the management of its subsidiary in Syria, as had been highlighted by the Supreme Court. The court thus found that there was serious or corroborating evidence that Lafarge may have been complicit in crimes against humanity and may have endangered the lives of its Syrian workers and upheld both charges.

On 18 October 2022, in a separate proceeding in the United States, Lafarge SA and LCS pleaded guilty before a federal court to conspiring to provide material support to foreign terrorist organisations and agreed to pay USD 778 000 000 in fines and forfeiture. It is the first time that a company was prosecuted in the United States on this charge. The media reported that in court, the Lafarge chair said the former company executives knowingly and wilfully agreed to participate in a conspiracy to make and authorise payments intended for the benefit of various armed groups in Syria. The plea agreement is distinct from the French criminal proceedings and does not address the central question of corporate complicity in international crimes and reparations for those affected.

In 2023, Lafarge SA (Holcim) filed another appeal to the Supreme Court against the 18 May 2022 decision of the Court of Appeal, which had upheld all charges against the company. Central to Lafarge's claim was that the Supreme Court needed to decide whether the Court of Appeal was right in ruling that French law governs the

employment relationship between the multinational Lafarge and its Syrian subsidiary's workers, in order to uphold the charge of deliberate endangerment of the Syrian workers' lives.

As a result, on 14 March 2023, the Supreme Court's criminal chamber, assigned to the case, requested the formal opinion of the Supreme Court's social rights chamber on the question of whether French labour laws on employee safety are overriding mandatory provisions providing protections that are of public interest and thus cannot be derogated. On 4 July 2023, the social chamber issued its opinion that rules about security obligations for the employer are not 'overriding mandatory provisions' which would apply in all instances. The social chamber concluded that these rules alone cannot justify the application of French law to the working relationship between the subsidiary Syrian workers and Lafarge. The human rights organisations, plaintiffs in this case, including ECCHR, Sherpa and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), along with former Lafarge employee plaintiffs in this case argued that regardless of the qualification of these rules as overriding mandatory provisions, French law should apply to the employment relationship based on the criteria of a closer connection derived from private international law regulations.

The criminal chamber of the Supreme Court held its subsequent hearing on 18 September 2023. In an exceptional turn, instead of issuing its awaited decision, the Supreme Court, on 3 October 2023, ordered the reopening of the debates regarding a potential decision to cancel the charge of endangering the lives of its Syrian employees without referring the case back to the lower court.

On 16 January 2024, the Supreme Court made its final decision and confirmed the Lafarge company's indictment for complicity in crimes against humanity while dismissing the charge of endangerment of workers' lives.

On 16 October 2024, French investigating judges ordered Lafarge SA and eight individuals to stand trial before a French criminal court for financing a terrorist enterprise and violating international sanctions.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Between 4 November and 19 December 2025, the trial for financing terrorism and violation of international sanctions took place before the Paris Criminal Court. The company Lafarge SA (Holcim), four former top executives, two LCS managers and two Syrian intermediaries stood accused of having transferred EUR 4 700 000 to terrorist groups – notably to ISIS, the Al Nusra Front and Ahrar Al-Sham – in Syria in 2013-2014, in order to keep its cement plant operating. Firas Tlass, subject to a pending arrest warrant, was absent.

All defendants were referred to the criminal court for financing terrorist enterprises. This offence involves providing, collecting or managing funds or property of any kind, or giving advice for this purpose, with the intention of seeing these funds used – or knowing that they were intended to be used – to commit acts of terrorism, regardless of whether such acts occur.

Lafarge and its four former top executives were also accused of non-compliance with international financial sanctions by having violated European regulations prohibiting the provision of funds or economic resources to certain persons and entities linked to Al-Qaeda, the Al-Nusra Front and ISIS.

In its closing arguments, the prosecution urged the court to find all defendants guilty. It requested the maximum fine for Lafarge SA (Holcim) as a company, prison sentences of up to eight years – including six years for former CEO of the group, Bruno Lafont, and five years for both Christian Herrault and Bruno Pescheux, former CEO-COO of the group and former director of LCS respectively – but also fines and bans on holding commercial positions.

The verdict will be announced on 13 April 2026.

The judicial investigation into the company's complicity in crimes against humanity continues.

## INVESTIGATION COMPLETED INTO FRENCH ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF ISIS FOR COMPLICITY IN GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY COMMITTED AGAINST YAZIDIS

Lolita C.

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Lolita C., French national, alleged former member of ISIS

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity; participation in a terrorist criminal association

### Current status

Charged while under investigation (*mise en examen*); investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge to send to trial or dismiss the case; detained

### Facts

In August 2014, ISIS fighters invaded Mount Sinjar, the stronghold of the Yazidis, a Kurdish-speaking religious minority in northern Iraq. Thousands were killed and thousands of women and teenage girls were kidnapped and sexually enslaved in Iraq and Syria.

Lolita C, a French citizen who left France for Syria in 2014, is accused of having enslaved an 8-year-old Yazidi child in 2017.

### Procedure

In August 2021, upon her expulsion from Türkiye to France, Lolita C. was charged while under investigation (*mise en examen*) on charges of participating in a terrorist criminal association.

In June 2024, Lolita C. was charged while under investigation (*mise en examen*) on further charges of complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, for having enslaved an 8-year-old Yazidi child in 2017 in Syria.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 19 December 2025, the investigating judges completed their investigation. The prosecutor will issue a formal request concerning the direction of the case (referral to trial, dismissal, or reopening of the investigation). The investigating judges will subsequently determine the direction of the case.

## FORMER SPOKESPERSON AND SENIOR OFFICIAL OF SYRIAN ARMED GROUP JAYSH AL-ISLAM CONVICTED FOR COMPLICITY IN WAR CRIMES

Majdi Nema (alias Islam Alloush)

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Majdi Nema, Syrian national, former spokesperson and senior official of Jaysh al-Islam

### Country of residence of suspect

France

### Charges

Complicity in the war crime of recruitment of child soldiers; participation in a group formed to prepare war crimes

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 10 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained

### Facts

Jaysh al-Islam was a rebel armed group formed in 2013, opposed to the former Syrian regime, and which operated mainly in Eastern Ghouta (the suburbs of Damascus, Syria). This group is suspected of having been involved in numerous crimes, including the abduction, torture and enforced disappearance of human rights lawyers Razan Zaitouneh, Nazem al-Hammadi and Wael Hamada and of the political activist Samira al-Khalil.

Majdi Nema, also known under his wartime alias Islam Alloush, was a senior official and spokesperson for Jaysh al-Islam between 2013 and 2016. He was allegedly involved in the war crime of recruitment of child soldiers, and in the preparation of war crimes

committed by the group, including the recruitment of child soldiers, wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, extrajudicial executions and kidnapping.

#### Procedure

On 26 June 2019, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM), the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its member organisation in France the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (LDH) filed a complaint against Nema for crimes committed by Jaysh al-Islam.

Following this complaint, Nema was arrested on 29 January 2020 in Marseille. He was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for war crimes, torture, enforced disappearances and complicity in these crimes. The investigating judges performed several procedural acts, including hearings of victims, civil parties and witnesses.

In July 2020, Nema lodged an appeal against his indictment, claiming that the French courts lacked jurisdiction.

In April 2022, the Paris Court of Appeal determined that French courts do have jurisdiction over war crimes, torture and enforced disappearances committed by armed groups in Syria.

Nema appealed this decision before the French Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

On 17 March 2023, the Supreme Court held a hearing in plenary session on the Nema case, together with the Chaban case (see p. 47), to determine whether the principle of double criminality allowed French courts to exercise jurisdiction over crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of torture committed in Syria, although those legal qualifications are not embedded in Syrian legislation.

On 12 May 2023, the Supreme Court concluded that, for French courts to prosecute international crimes under universal jurisdiction, it is sufficient for the foreign legislation of the country where the crimes were committed to punish the underlying acts of international crimes (such as murder or rape), even if these are not explicitly classified as war crimes or crimes against humanity. Doing so, the French Supreme Court definitively confirmed the French courts' jurisdiction over war crimes committed in Syria, and over Nema's case.

Regarding the legal requirement of the suspect's habitual residence in France to allow prosecution under universal jurisdiction, the court found that this criterion was subject to a case-by-case factual evaluation by the lower courts but specified a set of indicators for establishing a sufficient connection between France and the person prosecuted.

With regards to acts of torture perpetrated by non-State groups, the Supreme Court took note of the evolution of international law in this area and confirmed that such acts could indeed be attributed to persons acting for or on behalf of a non-State group when the group exercises quasi-governmental authority.

On 19 July 2023, the investigating judges of the specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes ordered that Nema be sent to trial before the Paris Criminal Court for complicity in the war crimes of recruitment of child soldiers, wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health and deliberate attacks against civilians, as well as complicity in enforced disappearances and participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing war crimes. They excluded the charge of torture. The defence appealed the order to send Nema to trial.

On 20 November 2023, the Court of Appeal dismissed the charges of complicity in the war crimes of wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, deliberate attacks against civilians and complicity in enforced disappearances. It confirmed Nema's referral to the Criminal Court for complicity in the war crime of recruitment of child soldiers and participation in a group formed for the purpose of preparing war crimes.

The civil parties appealed this decision before the Supreme Court.

On 14 February 2024, the Supreme Court confirmed the dismissal of the charges of complicity in the war crimes of wilful killings, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health and deliberate attacks against civilians and complicity in enforced disappearances.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

From 29 April to 28 May 2025, Majdi Nema was tried before the Paris Criminal Court for complicity in the war crime of recruitment of child soldiers and for participating in a group formed to prepare war crimes.

He was convicted and sentenced to ten years of imprisonment for these crimes.

Majdi Nema appealed this decision. The appeal trial will be held from 15 June to 9 July 2027.

## FRENCH COUPLE, ALLEGED MEMBERS OF ISIS, TO BE TRIED FOR GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY COMMITTED AGAINST YAZIDIS

Sonia Mejri and Abdelnasser Benyoucef (alias Abou Mouthana)

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Active personality

**Suspects**  
Sonia Mejri; Abdelnasser Benyoucef (alias Abou Mouthana), French nationals, alleged former members of ISIS

**Country of residence of suspects**  
France; unknown

**Charges**  
Serious bodily and mental harm constituting genocide; enslavement, imprisonment, torture, rape, persecution and other inhumane acts constituting crimes against humanity; participation in a terrorist criminal association

**Current status**  
Sonia Mejri: indicted; awaiting trial; detained

Abdelnasser Benyoucef (alias Abou Mouthana): indicted; presumed dead in Syria

**Facts**  
In August 2014, ISIS fighters invaded Mount Sinjar, the stronghold of the Yazidis, a Kurdish-speaking religious minority in northern Iraq. Thousands were killed and thousands of women and teenage girls were kidnapped and sexually enslaved in Iraq and Syria.

Sonia Mejri allegedly left France for Syria in 2014.

Her husband, Abdelnasser Benyoucef, an eminent member of ISIS, allegedly left France for Syria in 2013.

They are accused of having enslaved a young Yazidi woman in 2015.

**Procedure**  
On 28 January 2020, Sonia Mejri was charged while under investigation (*mis en examen*) for terrorism charges, before the investigation was extended to include charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

On 7 February 2024, the Yazidi victim was heard by the investigating judges. She then became a civil party in the case.

On 24 September 2024, the investigating judges issued their final order to send Sonia Mejri and Abdelnasser Benyoucef to trial on the charges of serious bodily and mental harm constituting genocide; enslavement, imprisonment, torture, persecution and other inhumane acts constituting crimes against humanity; and complicity in these crimes, as well as participation in a terrorist group. Sonia Mejri appealed this order.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 22 January 2025, the Paris Court of Appeal cancelled the charges against Sonia Mejri of genocide and crimes against humanity as a direct perpetrator and sent her to trial for complicity in rapes constituting crimes against humanity and participation in a terrorist group.

Regarding the crime of genocide, the Paris Court of Appeal held that, under the French Criminal Code, the offence requires that the criminal acts be committed against several members of a group, in execution of a concerted plan aimed at the partial or total destruction of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. In this case, however, the Court found that Sonia Mejri was accused of crimes committed against only one member of the Yazidi group and therefore could not be prosecuted for genocide.

The prosecutor and the civil parties referred the matter to the Supreme Court (*Cour de cassation*).

On 7 May 2025, the Supreme Court overturned the Court of Appeal's decision. The Supreme Court found that it is sufficient that the acts of genocide of which the defendant is accused were committed in execution of a concerted plan aimed at the total or partial destruction of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, or of a group determined by any other arbitrary criterion, regardless of whether they were committed against only one individual. Accordingly, the French Criminal Code allows for the punishment of each of the acts involved in the execution of this plan.

The Supreme Court sent the matter back to the Court of Appeal.

On 8 July 2025, the Paris Court of Appeal followed the Supreme Court's decision and sent Mejri to trial for genocide, crimes against humanity, complicity in these crimes and participation in a terrorist group.

The trial date has not been set yet.

Sonia Mejri is currently detained in France. Her husband is presumed dead in Syria. However, in the absence of evidence certifying his death, French courts have jurisdiction to try him *in absentia*.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION INTO WAR CRIMES OPENED FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF FRENCH PHOTOJOURNALIST IN UKRAINE

Unknown

#### Country of commission

Ukraine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Passive personality

#### Suspects

Unknown

#### Country of residence of suspects

Unknown

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, no suspects have been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

On 3 October 2025, French photojournalist Antoni Lallican was killed after reportedly being targeted by a Russian drone on the outskirts of Komyshuvakha, a village in the Donetsk region of Ukraine. Ukrainian journalist Georgiy Ivanchenko was also seriously injured in the attack.

#### Procedure

On 5 October 2025, the French specialised unit for the prosecution of international crimes announced that it had opened an investigation into war crimes in relation to the death of Antoni Lallican.

#### Follow-up on other cases

- Ali Mamlouk, Jamil Hassan and Abdel Salam Mahmoud (UJAR 2025, p. 35): convicted *in absentia*; case referred to a civil court for damages.
- Ahmed Nasser al-Raisi (UJAR 2023, p. 50): the investigation is ongoing.
- Antoine M. (UJAR 2022, p. 43): the investigation is ongoing.
- BNP Paribas and senior staff members (UJAR 2025, p. 38): the investigation is ongoing.
- Charles Twagira (UJAR 2023, p. 33): the investigation is ongoing.
- Eric Danboy Bagale (UJAR 2023, p. 28): the investigation is ongoing.
- Exxelia (UJAR 2024, p. 44): the investigation is ongoing.
- Jean-Marie Vianney Nzapfakumunsi (UJAR 2024, p. 46): the investigation is ongoing.
- Laurent Serubuga (UJAR 2018, p. 27): the investigation is ongoing.
- Nabil Greseque (UJAR 2025, p. 47): the investigation is ongoing.
- Nexa Technologies and four executives and employees (UJAR 2025, p. 47): the investigation is ongoing.
- Paul Barril (UJAR 2024, p. 50): the investigation is ongoing.
- Sabri Essid (UJAR 2025, p. 50): awaiting trial; location unknown.
- Salah Habib (UJAR 2023, p. 49): the investigation is ongoing.
- Unknown – investigation into the deaths of French journalists in Ukraine (UJAR 2025, p. 54): the investigation is ongoing.
- Unknown – investigation into the deaths of two French humanitarians in Ukraine (UJAR 2025, p. 53): the investigation is ongoing.
- Unknown – members of the French military for responsibility in the Rwandan genocide (UJAR 2025, p. 54): dismissal of the case under appeal before the Supreme Court.

#### Ongoing structural investigations

- Structural investigation regarding crimes committed by former Syrian regime officers (see UJAR 2023, p. 42)
- Structural investigation regarding crimes committed against Yazidis and other ethnic or religious minority groups in Syria

# GERMANY



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Germany

## NEW CASE!

### LEADER OF A SYRIAN MILITIA ARRESTED FOR SUSPECTED CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Anwar S.

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Anwar S., Syrian national, alleged head of a *shabiha* militia deployed in Aleppo

#### Country of residence of suspect

Germany

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on crimes against humanity, including killing, torture, and deprivation of liberty.

#### Current status

Under investigation; detained

#### Facts

Anwar S. allegedly acted as the head of a *shabiha* militia deployed in Aleppo in 2011 on behalf of the former Syrian regime to violently suppress opposition protests. The militia is alleged to have been involved in beating and detaining protestors and transferring them to police and intelligence departments, where they suffered serious abuses.

According to the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, on eight occasions between late April 2011

and November 2011 Anwar S. and members of the militia beat civilians with batons, metal pipes and similar tools to disperse or suppress protests. On some occasions, electric shocks are alleged to have been used. The militia is also alleged to have transferred some of the protestors to police and intelligence departments, where they were subjected to further abuse. In one incident outside a mosque in Aleppo's Said Al Dawla district, a member of the militia allegedly injured a protester so severely that he died shortly afterwards.

#### Procedure

On 30 September 2025, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office announced that Anwar S. had been arrested in Berlin on suspicion of crimes against humanity in the form of killing, torture and deprivation of liberty.

## NEW CASE!

### SYRIAN NATIONAL CHARGED WITH CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED IN SYRIAN GENERAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE'S DETENTION FACILITY

Fahad A.

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Fahad A., Syrian national, alleged former guard of Branch 251 (al-Khatib branch), a detention facility run by the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate

#### Country of residence of suspect

Germany

#### Charges

Crimes against humanity of murder, torture and deprivation of liberty; murder

#### Current status

Indicted; detained

#### Facts

Between late April 2011 and mid-April 2012, Fahad A. allegedly worked as a guard at Branch 251 (al-Khatib branch), a detention facility run by Syrian General Intelligence in Damascus. He reportedly took part in over 100 interrogations involving severe abuse, including electric shocks and beatings with cables, and carried out additional torture at night. At least 70 detainees allegedly

died as a result of these abuses and the inhumane detention conditions.

Previously, two individuals responsible for crimes committed at the same facility were convicted by the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz: the former head of the investigation unit at the al-Khatib branch, Anwar Raslan, and Eyad al-Gharib, a member of a sub-unit of the investigating division (see UJAR 2023 p. 56).

Since 2021, Fahad A. has reportedly been living in Germany.

#### Procedure

On 19 May 2025, the Federal Court of Justice issued an arrest warrant against Fahad A. for the crimes against humanity of murder, torture and deprivation of liberty.

On 27 May 2025, Fahad A. was arrested. On 10 December 2025, the Federal Prosecutor's Office charged him with the crimes against humanity of murder, torture and deprivation of liberty as well as with murder.

## **SYRIAN DOCTOR SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES**

Alaa M.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Alaa M., Syrian national, former doctor and alleged member of the Syrian Military Intelligence

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Germany

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity of murder, torture and deprivation of reproductive capacity; war crimes against persons; murder and dangerous bodily harm

**Current status**  
Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment and subsequent preventive detention; awaiting appeal trial; detained

**Facts**  
According to the indictment, between April 2011 and the end of 2012, Alaa M. worked as a doctor in a military hospital in the city of Homs as well as in the al-Mezzeh military hospital in Damascus. In these hospitals, as well as in the prison of Department 261 of the Syrian Military Intelligence in Homs, he allegedly severely mistreated and tortured numerous detained civilians, two of whom subsequently died.

Among other things, he is accused of beating several detained patients with batons and a plastic tube, administering a lethal injection to one person, stepping on a prisoner's wound with boots and subsequently setting it on fire with disinfectant, and pouring alcohol over the genitals of a 14 or 15-year-old boy, which he then ignited.

Alaa M. fled Syria to Germany, where, from 2015 to 2020, he worked as a doctor.

#### Procedure

On 19 June 2020, the federal public prosecutor arrested Alaa M. on suspicion of crimes against humanity.

On 16 December 2020, the arrest warrant was extended to cover allegations of murder in one case, torture in 18 cases, inflicting grievous bodily and mental harm in one case, severe deprivation of physical liberty in seven cases (one of which led to death) and an attempt to deprive a person of their reproductive capacity, all of which are characterised as crimes against humanity.

The Syrian Center for Legal Studies and Research supported the prosecuting authorities by referring witnesses.

On 15 July 2021, the federal public prosecutor indicted Alaa M. In early November 2021, the main parts of the indictment were admitted for trial by the Higher Regional Court of Frankfurt. The court declined, however, to admit ten counts of the indictment to trial for legal reasons.

In January 2022, upon appeal by the federal public prosecutor, the Federal Court of Justice overturned the decision declining to admit ten counts of the indictment to trial, thus admitting to trial the full indictment.

On 19 January 2022, the trial against Alaa M. began before the Higher Regional Court of Frankfurt. Throughout the year, the accused and several witnesses and civil parties were heard by the court.

In November 2023, the Higher Regional Court of Frankfurt issued a legal notice stating that it was considering ordering the preventive detention of the defendant subsequent to serving

a possible prison sentence, due to the threat he allegedly poses to society.

Proceedings continued throughout 2024. The chamber continued to hear witnesses, including anonymous witnesses who were granted protective measures (i.e. disguising their appearance with wigs and glasses), as well as expert witnesses, with the proceedings exceeding 150 trial days. Witnesses testifying in proceedings continued to be threatened. Additionally, the federal public prosecutor announced that preliminary investigations into additional charges against Alaa M. had been conducted.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 16 June 2025, after 188 trial days and hearing testimony from more than 50 witnesses – including former colleagues from the military hospital in Homs as well as survivors of the acts alleged to have been committed by the defendant – Alaa M. was found guilty of ten counts of crimes against humanity, including two counts of murder and eight counts of torture. Two of the torture counts were concurrently qualified as attempted crimes against humanity through deprivation of reproductive capacity. The Court found one of the cases to also constitute the offence of murder, and three cases to qualify as war crimes against persons. Citing the particular gravity of the crimes, it imposed a life sentence and subsequent preventive detention, based on expert psychiatric testimony indicating sadistic tendencies and a high risk of reoffending.

Alaa M. has lodged an appeal.

## ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF HEZBOLLAH-BACKED MILITIA SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES IN SYRIA

Ammar A.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Ammar A., Syrian national, alleged former member of Hezbollah-backed militia

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Germany

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity of torture, murder, forcible transfer resulting in death and deprivation of liberty; war crimes against persons and property; murder

**Current status**  
Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; awaiting appeal trial; detained

**Facts**  
In 2011, the former Syrian regime brutally repressed opponents' demonstrations, giving rise to the beginning of the armed conflict. Various armed groups, including Hezbollah, aligned themselves with the then-Syrian government.

Ammar A. was an alleged member of the local Hezbollah-backed militia in the Syrian town of Busra al-Sham between 2012 and 2014. In August 2012, he and other members of the militia reportedly acting under his directive allegedly forcibly broke into the houses of civilians and stole numerous items, before setting the houses ablaze. The residents endured physical abuse, and one person succumbed to a gunshot wound.

In April 2013, Ammar A., along with other militia members, allegedly arrested a civilian in Busra al-Sham. They hit him several times before delivering him and two other prisoners to military intelligence personnel in another city. The military secret service employees beat the three victims with electrical cables, allegedly in Ammar A.'s presence. The victims were then held captive in the military intelligence prison for several weeks in inhumane conditions and were subjected to severe physical abuse by prison guards.

Additionally, at an unspecified time in 2014, a 40-year-old Sunni merchant and his family were allegedly forced into their courtyard during a raid. According to the Court, their house was searched, money and gold were stolen, and the man was arrested, tortured for 24 hours, and then thrown into the street, unable to walk due to his injuries.

**Procedure**  
On 27 November 2023, the Federal Court of Justice issued an arrest warrant against Ammar A. for the crimes against humanity of torture and deprivation of liberty and for war crimes against persons and property.

On 12 December 2023, Ammar A. was arrested in the Rhein-Neckar district. The Federal Court of Justice ordered him to be placed in pre-trial detention.

The indictment was issued in July 2024 and the trial commenced on 15 October 2024 at the Higher Regional Court in Stuttgart.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 3 June 2025, after 42 trial days and testimony from 30 witnesses, mostly Syrians now living around the world, Ammar A. was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity and war crimes. These include killing and forcible transfer resulting in death, murder, looting and aggravated robbery (August 2012); torture and aiding torture, cruel and inhuman treatment and unlawful detention (April 2013); as well as torture, unlawful detention, cruel and inhuman treatment, looting and aggravated robbery (2014).

Ammar A. has lodged an appeal.

## FOUR ALLEGED MEMBERS OF A FORMER SYRIAN REGIME-AFFILIATED MILITIA AND ONE ALLEGED SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER ON TRIAL FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES

Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Sameer S., Wael S. and Mazhar J.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspects**  
Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Sameer S., Wael S. (all stateless Syrian Palestinians who were alleged members of a Syrian militia) and Mazhar J., Syrian national, alleged former Syrian intelligence officer

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Germany

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity including murder, torture and deprivation of liberty; war crimes including killing, torture and the use of prohibited methods of warfare, specifically through the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare; murder

**Current status**  
On trial; detained

**Facts**  
Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Sameer S. and Wael S. are suspected of having been members of the armed militia 'Free Palestine Movement' (FPM) in Syria since at least early 2012. The militia exercised control over Yarmouk, Damascus, on behalf of the former Syrian regime. The district was predominantly inhabited by Palestinians.

In July 2013, the Syrian regime sealed off Yarmouk completely, resulting in a shortage of food, water and medical supplies. FPM

closely collaborated with the Syrian Military Intelligence Service, in particular with its Branches 227 and 235. Mazhar J. is alleged to have had an active role in Division 235, the so-called Palestine Branch.

All five suspects allegedly participated in the violent crackdown on a peaceful anti-government protest in Yarmouk on 13 July 2012. They and others reportedly targeted the civilian protestors and shot them. Six individuals succumbed to their wounds while other victims were seriously injured.

They are also suspected of having severely physically abused civilians from Yarmouk. The events occurred between mid-2012 and 2014 at checkpoints, which the FPM and other pro-regime militias had established at the district's entrances or exits. The victims' heads were reportedly punched and beaten with rifle butts.

Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Mazhar J. and Sameer S. also allegedly detained civilians multiple times and handed them over to Syrian intelligence. Several individuals arrested by Mahmoud A. and Mazhar J. were reportedly killed or died as a result of the harsh detention conditions. Mahmoud A. is further accused of beating civilians on two occasions while they were waiting for humanitarian aid, allegedly aiming to obstruct food distribution and worsen the population's starvation.

**Procedure**  
On 3 July 2024, all five suspects were arrested in Germany.

Another three alleged FPM members were arrested in Sweden at the same time (see p. 86). The joint investigation team 'Caesar' coordinated the investigations.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 24 June 2025, the federal public prosecutor indicted Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Sameer S., Wael S. and Mazhar J. on multiple counts of murder and attempted murder, as well as for crimes against humanity and war crimes through acts of killing, attempted killing and torture. All defendants except Wael S. were also charged with crimes against humanity for unlawful deprivation of liberty, with the actions of Mahmoud A. and Mazhar J. allegedly resulting in several deaths. In addition, Mahmoud A. is accused of committing war crimes by employing prohibited methods of warfare, specifically through the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.

On 29 September 2025, the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz accepted the indictment and ordered that the case proceed to trial. The trial commenced on 19 November 2025 before the same court.

The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights is supporting survivors and witnesses in participating in the trial and exercising their procedural rights.

## UPDATES ON VARIOUS PROCEEDINGS AGAINST ALLEGED FORMER ISIS MEMBERS

This year saw the continuation and start of eight cases against 12 alleged former members of ISIS, which led to four convictions in 2025. Most cases this year, six in total, are conducted on the basis of universal jurisdiction. Two cases are based on the active personality principle as the suspects are German nationals returning from Syria or Iraq. Regarding the investigating focus, most cases include charges of war crimes, four cases also include charges of crimes against humanity, while three cases have included charges of genocide.

### NEW CASE!

Ahmad A. A.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Ahmad A. A., Syrian national, alleged former patrolman and fighter for ISIS in the town of Kishkiya, Syria

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Germany

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity of murder, torture, unlawful deprivation of liberty and persecution; war crimes of killing a protected person and torture or cruel and inhuman treatment; membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; murder

**Current status**  
Indicted; detained

**Facts**  
During the Syrian civil war, ISIS succeeded in seizing control of the Deir ez-Zor Governorate in July 2014. This region includes the territory of the Al-Shu'aitat tribe, encompassing the villages of Abu Hamman, Gharanij and Kishkiya. From the end of July 2014, ISIS launched a brutal campaign against the tribe. Numerous members of the tribe, particularly men, were killed by ISIS.

Ahmad A. A. is alleged to have joined ISIS in the spring of 2014. He allegedly served as a patrolman and fighter for ISIS in the town of Kishkiya and acted as a local guide for foreign ISIS supporters. According to the indictment, together with other members of the group, he searched the region for members of the Al-Shu'aitat tribe. On one occasion, in mid-August 2014, Ahmad A. A., as part of an ISIS unit, is alleged to have arrested numerous

members of the tribe. The ISIS unit allegedly severely abused the male prisoners, beating them and beheading two prisoners. The unit allegedly then abducted the remaining prisoners, some of whom were killed.

#### Procedure

On 16 January 2025, the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice issued an arrest warrant against Ahmad A. A. on suspicion of membership in a foreign terrorist organisation. On 20 January 2025, police arrested him in Monheim am Rhein, North Rhine-Westphalia. On 21 January 2025, he was brought before the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice, who ordered that he be placed in pre-trial detention.

On 4 November 2025, the Federal Prosecutor's Office filed charges against Ahmad A. A. for the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, unlawful deprivation of liberty and persecution, the war crimes of killing a protected person and torture or cruel and inhuman treatment as well as membership in a foreign terrorist organisation and murder.

Amer Tarak A., Basel O. and Sohail A.

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspects

Amer Tarak A., Basel O. and Sohail A., Syrian nationals, alleged former members of the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* (Brigade of Soldiers of Mercy) armed group, subsequently assimilated into ISIS

#### Country of residence of suspects

Germany

#### Charges

War crimes; membership in foreign terrorist organisations

#### Current status

Amer Tarak A. convicted of war crimes and membership in foreign terrorist organisations; sentenced to nine years and ten months in prison; detained

Basel O. convicted of membership in foreign terrorist organisations; sentenced to four years and six months in prison; detained

Sohail A. convicted of war crimes and membership in foreign terrorist organisations; sentenced to seven years in prison; detained

#### Facts

Amer Tarak A. allegedly founded the association *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* in the Syrian province of Deir ez-Zor in February 2013 and acted as its leader from then on. *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* was an armed rebel group that had the goal of toppling the former Syrian regime by force. It initially declared its allegiance to the Free Syrian Army but then pursued an Islamist agenda. Since 2013, the association repeatedly took part in combat operations against the former Syrian army.

In June 2013, the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* armed group, reportedly led by Amer Tarak A., together with *Jabhat al-Nusra* and other jihadist groups, raided the village of Hatlah near Deir ez-Zor. The operation, described as a 'purge', targeted the Shiite population living there. Up to 60 Shiite residents were killed, and the remaining individuals were compelled to flee to other areas of Syria or abroad. Pillaging and looting were also committed. The outcome of this operation was the eradication of Shiite presence in Hatlah.

In July 2014, Amer Tarak A. is said to have joined ISIS and placed the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* armed

group, including all fighters, equipment and finances, under ISIS command. During the ISIS capture of the city of al-Mayadin and the military action against the al-Shu'aitat tribe in the Deir ez-Zor region at the end of July 2014, the suspect allegedly led the fighters of his former association.

Basel O. allegedly held a leading military position within the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* armed group since at least the end of 2013. On various occasions, he is said to have commanded combat troops of the group in battles against Syrian forces, in particular at the military airport of Deir ez-Zor in December 2013 and April 2014.

Sohail A. allegedly joined the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* armed group by June 2013 at the latest. He was responsible for the group's public relations work and headed its media department. In particular, he allegedly produced propaganda videos to glorify the group, including the incident in Hatlah. After ISIS took control of the area around Deir ez-Zor at the beginning of July 2014 and the *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* armed group joined the organisation, Sohail A. also joined ISIS. He also performed media-related tasks for ISIS.

#### Procedure

On 6 September 2023, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, acting on warrants issued by the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice on 22 August 2023, arrested Amer Tarak A. and Basel O. in Kiel and Munich, respectively. In addition, the premises of the suspects were searched.

On the same day, the suspects were brought before the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice, who ordered their pre-trial detention.

On 20 March 2024, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office brought charges before the Higher Regional Court

of Munich against Amer Tarak A. and Basel O. They were accused of membership in the foreign terrorist organisation *Liwa Jund al-Rahman*, with Amer Tarak A. identified as the ringleader. In addition, Amer Tarak A. was also accused of committing war crimes in the form of expulsion (forced displacement), looting and destruction and with membership in the foreign terrorist organisation ISIS.

The additional suspect, Sohail A., was arrested on 10 April 2024 and placed in custody in Dortmund.

On 7 June 2024, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office brought charges before the Higher Regional Court of Munich against Sohail A. and filed complementary charges against Basel O. Basel O. was also charged with membership in the foreign terrorist organisation ISIS. Sohail A. was accused of membership in the foreign terrorist organisations *Liwa Jund al-Rahman* and ISIS and of committing war crimes in the form of expulsion, looting and destruction.

The Federal Public Prosecutor's Office decided to combine these proceedings. Hence, the trial of the three suspects began on 16 September 2024 before the Higher Regional Court of Munich.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 11 November 2025, the Higher Regional Court of Munich convicted Amer Tarak A., Basel O. and Sohail A. of membership or leading a terrorist organisation abroad. Amer Tarak A. and Sohail A. were also found guilty of war crimes. The Court sentenced Amer Tarak A. to nine years and ten months in prison, Basel O. to four years and six months and Sohail A. to seven years.

Mohammad A. and Asmael K.

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspects

Mohammad A. and Asmael K., Syrian nationals, alleged former members of ISIS

#### Country of residence of suspects

Germany

#### Charges

War crimes of hostage-taking and murder; membership in a foreign terrorist organisation

#### Current status

Convicted of membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes; sentenced to seven and six years in prison; detained

#### Facts

In the fall of 2012, Mohammad A. allegedly founded an armed combat unit in Damascus, which included up to 50 fighters. With this unit, he reportedly joined the foreign terrorist organisation *Ahfad al-Rasul* Brigades (AR) in November 2012. The AR was a military organisation with around 15 000 members aiming to overthrow the Syrian regime. To achieve its goal, the AR repeatedly carried out explosive attacks on State facilities in Syria. As the leader of his unit, Mohammad A. is believed to have planned and commanded an attack on a Syrian security forces building in the Damascus district of Yarmouk in March 2013.

By late 2013, Mohammad A. reportedly joined ISIS. He was allegedly closely associated with the local leaders of ISIS and exercised command over around 200 ISIS fighters.

Asmael K. also allegedly joined ISIS as a fighter in Damascus in 2013.

At the end of 2013, Mohammad A. and the ISIS fighting unit he commanded reportedly abducted two opponents of the organisation on different occasions in Damascus. The victims were held in ISIS detention centres and executed together with ten other prisoners in mid-January 2014. Asmael K. is said to have taken part in the arrest of one of the victims. He also allegedly guarded the 12 prisoners at the execution site and shot at least one person.

#### Procedure

Mohammad A. was arrested on 8 March 2023 in Wiesbaden, and Asmael K. on 20 March 2023 in Essen.

On 8 December 2023, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office brought charges before the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf against them. The defendants were suspected of membership in a foreign terrorist organisation. They were also accused of the war crimes of hostage-taking resulting in death and, in the case of Asmael K., of the killing of persons protected under international humanitarian law and murder.

On 30 April 2024, the trial of the two defendants started before the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 18 September 2025, the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf convicted Mohammad A. and sentenced him to seven years in prison and convicted Asmael K. and sentenced him to six years in prison for membership in a foreign terrorist organisation. They were both acquitted of the war crimes charges (killing and hostage-taking) for lack of sufficient evidence.

Nadine K.

#### Countries of commission

Syria and Iraq

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Nadine K, German national, former member of ISIS

#### Country of residence of suspect

Germany

#### Charges

Crimes against humanity of enslavement, deprivation of liberty, persecution, extermination and sexual violence; genocide by extermination; war crimes against persons by sexual violence and expulsion; membership in a terrorist organisation abroad; human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation; exploitation by taking advantage of a deprivation of liberty and severe deprivation of liberty

#### Current status

Conviction partly overturned by the Federal Court of Justice; sentenced to eight years and six months' imprisonment; detained

#### Facts

Nadine K. left Germany in December 2014 to join ISIS, following her husband.

According to the conviction, from spring 2015, the couple stayed in Mosul, Iraq, where Nadine K. kept the joint household and raised their daughter in accordance with ISIS ideology. The family lived in a house whose legal residents had fled or been displaced by ISIS.

In the house, Nadine K. and her husband reportedly stored a large number of explosives and weapons, including hand grenades, Kalashnikov assault rifles and a Glock pistol. In addition, they allegedly set up a reception centre for single female ISIS members, with the approval and financial

support of ISIS. They provided the women with board, lodging and support regarding marriages or divorces before the Sharia court.

From spring 2016, Nadine K. and her husband reportedly kept a Yazidi woman and forced her to do unpaid housework and childcare. According to the conviction, the husband regularly raped and beat the enslaved woman, which Nadine K. knew. Nadine K. made sure that the woman could not escape. The woman had to conduct daily prayers in accordance with Islamic rules and observe fasting times during Ramadan. All this served the declared aim of ISIS to destroy the Yazidi faith.

In the fall of 2016, Nadine K. moved with her family and the enslaved Yazidi woman to Syria and lived in ISIS-controlled territory until the beginning of March 2019.

#### Procedure

In March 2019, Nadine K. was captured by Kurdish forces in Syria. Upon her return to Germany, she was arrested on 31 March 2022 and was placed in custody.

On 16 September 2022, the federal public prosecutor formally indicted Nadine K. The criminal trial began in January 2023 at the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz.

On 21 June 2023, the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz convicted Nadine K. of membership in a terrorist organisation abroad, crimes against humanity of enslavement, deprivation of liberty and persecution, aiding and abetting genocide by extermination, aiding and abetting crimes against humanity by extermination, expulsion and sexual violence, aiding and abetting war crimes against persons by sexual violence and expulsion, human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, exploitation by taking advantage of a deprivation of liberty and severe deprivation of liberty. She was sentenced to a total term

of nine years and three months of imprisonment.

Nadine K. filed an appeal against the judgement before the Federal Court of Justice.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 10 July 2025, the Federal Court of Justice amended the verdict rendered on 21 June 2023, overturned the sentence, and referred the case back to the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz for a new hearing and decision. The Federal Court of Justice found legal errors regarding the conviction of Nadine K. on the charges of aiding and abetting genocide, aiding and abetting crimes against humanity through extermination and expulsion, and aiding and abetting war crimes against persons through expulsion, and acquitted her of these charges. The Higher Regional Court did find the existence of a genocide committed by ISIS against the Yazidis. However, according to the Federal Court of Justice, Nadine K. did not contribute to creating living conditions for the Yazidis that were likely to cause their physical destruction, either in whole or in part.

On 15 December 2025, the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz found Nadine K. guilty of crimes against humanity through enslavement, deprivation of liberty and persecution in conjunction with aiding and abetting crimes against humanity through sexual violence and war crimes against persons through sexual violence, with membership in a terrorist organisation abroad, exercising actual control over weapons of war, human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, exploitation by taking advantage of deprivation of liberty and aggravated deprivation of liberty. She was sentenced to eight years and six months' imprisonment.

Ossama A.

**Country of commission**

Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**

Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**

Ossama A., Syrian national, former member of ISIS

**Country of residence of suspect**

Germany

**Charges**

War crimes against property; war crimes against persons; crimes against humanity; aiding and abetting genocide; membership in a foreign terrorist organisation

**Current status**

Convicted of war crimes against property and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes against persons, crimes against humanity and aiding and abetting genocide; sentenced to five years in prison; detained

**Facts**

Ossama A. joined ISIS in July 2014 after the group captured his hometown of Al Abed in the Deir ez-Zor province of Syria in June 2014. Until spring 2016, he was involved as a member of the organisation in the area of real estate management, providing ISIS with information on properties in Al Abed and their owners, participating in the organisation's seizure of three houses, and providing logistical support to ISIS members staying in confiscated property by supplying them with gas cylinders.

The indictment had also alleged that he had played a role in imprisoning abducted Yazidi women and girls, possessing keys to one of the prisons and supplying inmates with food.

Before the Syrian military recaptured the town, Ossama A. left ISIS and moved with his family to a town near the Turkish border. In October 2021, he entered Germany as a refugee.

**Procedure**

On 28 March 2024, an arrest warrant against Ossama A. was issued by the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice.

On 11 April 2024, Ossama A. was arrested by officers from North Rhine-Westphalia State Office of Criminal Investigation in Essen. On the same day, he was brought before the investigating judge at the Federal Court of Justice for a remand hearing and was placed in pre-trial detention.

On 20 December 2024, Ossama A. was indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, aiding and abetting genocide and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation.

**DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025**

On 1 October 2025, the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf convicted Ossama A. of war crimes against property and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation, sentencing him to five years' imprisonment and ordering his continued detention. He was acquitted of the other charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and aiding and abetting genocide.

Twana H. S. and Asia R. A.

**Countries of commission**

Syria and Iraq

**Jurisdictional basis**

Universal jurisdiction

**Suspects**

Twana H. S. and Asia R. A., Iraqi nationals, alleged former members of ISIS

**Country of residence of suspects**

Germany

**Charges**

Genocide; crimes against humanity; war crimes; membership in a foreign terrorist organisation

**Current status**

On trial; detained

**Facts**

The two suspects formed a couple, married under Islamic law, and were allegedly members of ISIS in Iraq and Syria from 2015 to 2017. Since the end of 2015 at the latest, they allegedly kept a then-five-year-old Yazidi girl and, from October 2017, another then-twelve-year-old Yazidi girl, as slaves.

Twana H. S. allegedly raped both children repeatedly, with the help of Asia R. A., who prepared the room and put make-up on one of the girls. In addition, the suspects reportedly exploited the girls economically by constantly using them for housework and childcare. The girls were forbidden to practice their own religion; instead, they had to follow Islamic prayers and rules of faith according to the defendants' instructions.

The defendants would also respond to the children's alleged misconduct with harsh physical violence. On one occasion, Twana H. S. allegedly hit the older girl with a broomstick. Asia R. A. reportedly scalded the younger girl's hand with hot water and repeatedly forced both children to

stand on one leg for 30 minutes each as punishment.

Before leaving Syria in November 2017, the suspects handed the girls over to other members of ISIS.

#### Procedure

On 19 March 2024, an arrest warrant was issued against them by the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice. On 9 April 2024, both were arrested by officers of the federal criminal police in the southern state of Bavaria.

The accused were brought before the investigating judge of the Federal Court of Justice on 9 and 10 April 2024, who issued the arrest warrants and ordered them to be remanded in custody.

On 9 December 2024, Twana H. S. and Asia R. A. were indicted on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 19 May 2025, the trial of Twana H. S. and Asia R. A. began before the High Regional Court of Munich.

#### Follow-up on other cases

- Moustafa M. (UJAR 2025, p. 68): on trial.
- Sara B. (UJAR 2024, p. 83): on trial.
- Unknown – killing of German-Palestinian family in Gaza (UJAR 2025, p. 62): the investigation is ongoing.
- Unknown – killing of five civilians, including a German citizen, in Ukraine (UJAR 2025, p. 63): the investigation is ongoing.

#### Ongoing structural investigations

- Structural investigation since 2015 regarding crimes in eastern Ukraine and since March 2022 regarding international crimes committed in Ukraine
- Structural investigation regarding crimes committed by the former Syrian regime
- Structural investigation regarding crimes by rebel armed groups in Syria
- Structural investigations regarding ISIS crimes and ISIS crimes against the Yazidis



## NEW CASE!

### FORMER ISIS MEMBER CONVICTED OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AGAINST THE YAZIDI COMMUNITY IN SYRIA

Murat Dernjani

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Murat Dernjani, Kosovan national,  
former member of ISIS

#### Country of residence of suspect

Kosovo

#### Charges

Crimes against humanity, including  
sexual violence and enslavement

#### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 20 years  
in prison; detained

#### Facts

In 2013, Murat Dernjani reportedly travelled with his wife and son to Türkiye with the intention of joining ISIS. He subsequently entered Syria and was active as a member of ISIS in Syria and Iraq between 2014 and 2017. During this period, he was allegedly involved in the persecution of the Yazidi community in the city of Raqqa, including by abusing and inflicting sexual violence on Yazidi women and girls.

In August 2017, Dernjani left Syria and surrendered to the Turkish authorities. He subsequently returned to Kosovo.

#### Procedure

In January 2019, Dernjani pleaded guilty to organising and participating in a terrorist group. The Basic Court of Pristina sentenced him to five years in prison.

Having subsequently also been charged with crimes against humanity the Basic Court of Pristina convicted Dernjani, on 4 July 2025, of crimes against humanity, including sexual violence and enslavement inflicted on Yazidi women and girls. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

# LITHUANIA



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Lithuania

## NEW CASE!

### MEMBER OF THE RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES EXTRADITED TO LITHUANIA FOR ALLEGED WAR CRIMES COMMITTED IN UKRAINE

Name withheld

#### Country of commission

Ukraine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction and passive personality

#### Suspect

Russian national, member of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, military police squad inspector, senior sailor in the 177<sup>th</sup> Separate Marine Infantry Regiment of the Caspian Flotilla

#### Country of residence of suspect

Russia

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes, including torture and unlawful deprivation of liberty.

#### Current status

Under investigation; detained

#### Facts

Between March and September 2022, servicemen of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, including personnel from the 177<sup>th</sup> Separate Marine Infantry Regiment of the Caspian Flotilla, are alleged to have participated in the organisation of a filtration camp located on the territory of the Melitopol military airfield in southeastern Ukraine.

At this camp, civilians and prisoners of war, including a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, are alleged to have been illegally detained, tortured and humiliated. According to the investigation, the suspect is alleged, together with other Russian military personnel, to have guarded illegally detained civilians and prisoners of war and participated in beatings and acts of torture, including by keeping victims in a metal safe, strangling them until they lost consciousness, hanging them by their hands, dousing them with cold water in freezing temperatures and inflicting injuries on them using electric shocks.

The Lithuanian victim was a civilian who had not participated in hostilities.

#### Procedure

In August 2023, the Armed Forces of Ukraine detained the suspect near the village of Robotyne in the Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine.

On 8 September 2025, following an extradition request by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Lithuania and the completion of the required legal procedures, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine approved the extradition of the suspect. On 29 October 2025, the suspect was extradited to Lithuania.

On 30 October 2025, the District Court of Vilnius City granted the request of the Lithuanian Prosecutor General's Office to detain the suspect for a period of three months. The individual is suspected of war crimes inflicted on civilians and prisoners of war, including torture and unlawful deprivation of liberty.

The investigation involved extensive cooperation of the parties within the framework of the Joint Investigation Team involving multiple States and the International Criminal Court and coordinated by Eurojust.

#### Follow-up on other cases

- Boris B., Vyacheslav K. and Pavel M. (UJAR 2025, p. 72): suspects indicted, location unknown.
- Belarusian regime officials (UJAR 2022, p. 70): the investigation is ongoing.

# NETHERLANDS



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in the Netherlands

## CASE CLOSED AFTER THE PASSING OF FORMER AFGHAN PRISON COMMANDER

Abdul Razaq Arif

### Country of commission

Afghanistan

### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

### Suspect

Abdul Razaq Arif, dual Afghan and Dutch national, former commander of the Pul-e-Charkhi prison in Kabul

### Country of residence of suspect

The Netherlands

### Charges

War crimes of arbitrary detention, cruel and inhuman treatment and assault on personal dignity

### Current status

Case closed due to the death of the suspect

### Facts

During the Soviet-Afghan war, the Pul-e-Charkhi prison in Kabul was reportedly notorious for its inhumane conditions of detention, incommunicado detention, torture and executions of political prisoners. From 1983 to 1988, Abdul Razaq Arif worked in a supervisory role at the Pul-e-Charkhi prison.

Razaq Arif arrived in the Netherlands in 2001 and later obtained Dutch nationality.

### Procedure

In 2012, the Dutch police opened an investigation into alleged war crimes committed in Afghanistan by perpetrators now residing in the Netherlands. This included Razaq

Arif's involvement in Pul-e-Charkhi in Afghanistan. On 12 November 2019, the Dutch police arrested Razaq Arif on suspicion of war crimes. In 2020, the prosecutors gathered statements from victims and former Afghan government officials, demonstrating that the suspect held three different positions at the Pul-e-Charkhi prison.

On 14 April 2022, The Hague District Court established that Razaq Arif had worked in a supervisory role in the Pul-e-Charkhi prison from 1983 to 1988 and was responsible for the detention conditions and the order of Blocks 1, 2 and 3 of the prison, where political prisoners and detainees were held. As such, he was found guilty of the war crimes of arbitrary detention, cruel and inhuman treatment and assault on the personal dignity of at least 18 individual political prisoners committed between 1983 and 1987. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison, almost 40 years after the crimes took place, with the court considering that 'the passage of time does not constitute a reason for a reduced sentence.'

On 12 June 2024, the Court of Appeal overturned Razaq Arif's conviction. The judges ruled in his favour based on the legal interpretation of the crimes in question, in particular whether these acts qualified as war crimes. The court accepted the defence's argument that the detention of political prisoners in Pul-e Charkhi may not have been linked to the conflict, ruling that the offences could not therefore be classified as war crimes.

On 7 July 2024, the Dutch Public Prosecution Service announced it would challenge Razaq Arif's acquittal before the Supreme Court. The appeal specifically contested the Court of Appeal's finding that no link existed between the inhuman acts for which Razaq Arif had been convicted by The Hague District Court and the armed conflict.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, Public Prosecution Service launched an appeal against the Court of Appeal's ruling.

On 20 May 2025, the Supreme Court declared that the appeal by the Public Prosecution Service was inadmissible as Razaq Arif had since passed away.

**CONVICTION OF SYRIAN  
ARMED GROUP MEMBER  
FOR WAR CRIME AND  
MEMBERSHIP IN A  
TERRORIST ORGANISATION  
CONFIRMED ON APPEAL**

Abu Khuder

**Country of commission**

Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**

Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**

Abu Khuder (Ahmad al-K.), Syrian national, leader of *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* (Strangers of Mohassan) Battalion in Mohassan, Syria

**Country of residence of suspect**

The Netherlands

**Charges**

War crime of killing a protected person; membership in a terrorist organisation

**Current status**

Convicted; sentenced to 23 years and six months in prison; confirmed on appeal; detained

**Facts**

Abu Khuder was an officer in a Syrian border force known as the Camel Corps when the Syrian conflict began in 2011, prompting him to join the Free Syrian Army in its fight against the al-Assad regime. Khuder was accused of having radicalised and joined *Jabhat al-Nusra*, a Salafi-jihadist terrorist organisation previously linked to al-Qaeda, after members of that organisation helped them attack an army base in the eastern city of Mohassan, driving out the government forces. He was accused of having the command of a *Jabhat al-Nusra* battalion known as *Ghuraba'a Mohassan*.

During their investigation, Dutch authorities uncovered a video that shows Khuder shooting and killing a Syrian military soldier on

the bank of the Euphrates River on 10 July 2012. This video was published on YouTube on 18 July 2012. The translation of the video's title reads 'Execution of Lieutenant Colonel by the hands of the Free Army "Syria" +18.' On 16 November 2017, the Dutch Police uncovered a second video on the internet that shows Khuder taking a leading role during the execution, and appears to show Khuder firing his gun several times in the direction of the victim.

Khuder denied the charges, maintaining that he lied to a *Guardian* journalist regarding his membership in *Jabhat al-Nusra* and that he, while present at the site of the killing, was not involved in the officer's execution.

Khuder has been living in the Netherlands since 2014, where he was granted temporary asylum.

**Procedure**

On 21 May 2019, Khuder was arrested in the Dutch village of Kapelle, on suspicion of membership in a terrorist organisation and of committing a war crime.

According to the Dutch National Public Prosecutor, the arrest was based on witness testimonies obtained following a raid against six suspected former *Jabhat al-Nusra* members in Germany.

On 24 May 2019, an investigating judge in The Hague ordered the prolongation of Khuder's detention during the judicial investigation. In hearings on 2 September and 18 November 2019, the lawyers of the accused denied the charges.

On 16 July 2021, the District Court in The Hague found Khuder guilty of the war crime of killing a protected person for his involvement in the execution of a prisoner *hors de combat*. The District Court, however, acquitted Khuder of the terrorism charges, since it could not be proven

beyond a reasonable doubt that the battalion he commanded was a terrorist organisation at the time he participated in the execution. The District Court sentenced Khuder to 20 years in prison for his involvement in the execution.

Both Khuder and the prosecution service appealed the District Court's decision.

On 14 November 2023, the Hague Court of Appeal upheld Khuder's acquittal for membership in a group affiliated with *Jabhat al-Nusra*. The Court of Appeal instead ruled that *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* – the battalion in which Khuder allegedly held a leadership position – could itself be qualified as a terrorist organisation. The Court of Appeal, therefore, increased Khuder's sentence to 23 years and six months.

Khuder appealed this decision, claiming that there was insufficient evidence to show beyond a reasonable doubt that he was a leader of the *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* Battalion. Further, Khuder argued that the prosecution had not proved beyond a reasonable doubt that *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* was a terrorist organisation because there was insufficient evidence to conclude that the group had the intent to commit more than one terrorist offence, beyond the execution.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 18 February 2025, Khuder's appeal was dismissed by the Supreme Court. The Court disagreed with the reasoning that *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* was not a terrorist organisation. Specifically, the Court followed the prosecution's reasoning, stating that it was not unreasonable to believe that even after the execution of the Syrian army soldier, *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* still had the intent to commit terrorist acts. The Court noted that the group's previously committed acts, their continued structured character, their ongoing cooperation with other armed groups, and their continued involvement in armed struggle against the then Syrian government were sufficient evidence in the aggregate to conclude that they intended to commit further terrorist acts.

In arguing that *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* was not a terrorist organisation, the defence stated that *Ghuraba'a Mohassan* did not unlawfully force the Syrian government to do or refrain from doing something (in reference to Article 83a of the Dutch Criminal Code which defines 'terrorist intent', in part, as 'compelling the government or an international organisation to take or refrain from certain actions'). The Supreme Court dismissed this argument, stating that only individuals such as demonstrators or activists who legitimately attempt to influence a government's behaviour are considered exempt from the definition of 'terrorist intent' found in Article 83a.

The Supreme Court dismissed both grounds of appeal. The guilty verdict against Khuder became final on 18 February 2025.

## ACQUITTAL OF COMMANDER OF ARMED GROUP AHRAR AL-SHAM FOR WAR CRIME IN SYRIA CONFIRMED BY SUPREME COURT

Ahmad al-Y.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Ahmad al-Y., Syrian national, former commander of the armed group *Ahrar al-Sham*

**Country of residence of suspect**  
The Netherlands

**Charges**  
War crime of assault on personal dignity; membership in a terrorist organisation

**Current status**  
Convicted of membership in a terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes; sentenced to five years and four months in prison; awaiting new ruling from the Court of Appeal on charge of membership in a terrorist organisation; detained

**Facts**  
According to the judgment, Ahmad al-Y. commanded *Ahrar al-Sham* fighters and took part in an offensive in the city of Hama in April 2015. During this time, he subjected persons who were *hors de combat* to humiliating and degrading treatment by posing with the corpse of an enemy fighter, interrogating him in front of a camera together with other armed men and kicking the body of another. In addition, he appeared in a video posted on YouTube 'singing to celebrate the deaths of fighters and referring to them as dogs.'

Ahmad al-Y. entered the Netherlands as an asylum seeker in October 2019.

## Procedure

On 22 October 2019, Dutch police arrested Ahmad al-Y. in an asylum centre in Ter Apel, on suspicion of assault on personal dignity constituting a war crime. According to the Dutch Public Prosecutor, Ahmad al-Y. was flagged by German authorities in 2015 when he spent a short time seeking asylum there before returning to Syria due to personal circumstances.

On 21 April 2021, The Hague District Court found Ahmad al-Y. guilty of membership in a terrorist organisation and committing the war crime of assault on personal dignity by putting his foot on a corpse, making a kicking movement to another and by celebrating the deaths of the deceased adversaries while referring to them as 'dogs'. He was sentenced to six years in prison. The prosecution appealed the decision.

On 6 December 2022, the Court of Appeal acquitted Ahmad al-Y. of the war crimes charges, while upholding the conviction on membership in a terrorist organisation. The Court ruled that the acts depicted in the videos presented in support of the case did not reach the threshold of the war crime of assault on personal dignity. The Court of Appeal reduced the sentence to five years and four months' imprisonment.

The Public Prosecutor's Office appealed this decision. The prosecutor argued that the Court of Appeal erred in finding that Ahmad al-Y.'s behaviour did not qualify as a war crime. Furthermore, the prosecution argued that there was sufficient evidence to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was a member of the terrorist organisation for a longer period than the Court of Appeal determined. Specifically, the prosecution argued that the Court of Appeal did not have proper reasoning to support its finding that Ahmad al-Y. was not a member of *Ahrar al-Sham* during the period of November 2015 to July 2017.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 22 April 2025, the Supreme Court found that, while Ahmad al-Y's behaviour with regard to the corpse was disrespectful, it did not meet the threshold of the war crime of assault on personal dignity. The Supreme Court dismissed this ground of appeal.

The second ground of appeal was granted, as the Supreme Court agreed with the prosecution that the Court of Appeal failed to give sufficient reasoning as to why and how it found that Ahmad al-Y was not a member of *Ahrar al-Sham* between the aforementioned dates. The Supreme Court ordered that this appeal concerning participation in the terrorist organisation *Ahrar al-Sham* be reheard by the Court of Appeal.

## FIRST CONVICTION IN THE NETHERLANDS OF A MEMBER OF A FORMER SYRIAN REGIME-AFFILIATED MILITIA CONFIRMED ON APPEAL

Mustafa A.

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Mustafa A., Syrian national, former member of *Liwa al-Quds*

**Country of residence of suspect**  
The Netherlands

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity of serious deprivation of liberty and torture; war crimes of serious deprivation of liberty and torture; participating in an organisation whose aim is to commit international crimes

**Current status**  
Convicted; confirmed on appeal; sentenced to 13 years in prison; detained

**Facts**  
The pro-regime militia *Liwa al-Quds* in Syria was founded in the al-Nayrab Palestinian refugee camp near Aleppo. Armed by the former Syrian regime, it was deployed to arrest civilians and crush dissent.

Mustafa A. was born in the al-Nayrab camp and was a member of the *Liwa al-Quds* militia. According to the conviction, in January 2013, he arrested a civilian in his home in the al-Nayrab camp. This civilian was abused during the arrest and taken to a Syrian Air Force Intelligence prison, where he was tortured.

Mustafa A. had been living in the Netherlands since 2020 and had applied for asylum there.

## Procedure

In 2020, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) shared information regarding the allegations against Mustafa A. with the Dutch war crimes unit. The Dutch police arrested Mustafa A. in Kerkrade on 24 May 2022. He was later charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Syria in 2013. In August and October 2022, The Hague District Court decided there were sufficient compelling reasons to keep him in custody.

On 22 January 2024, the Hague District Court determined that *Liwa al-Quds* was a criminal organisation with the intent to commit bodily harm and pillage as war crimes, as well as unlawful detention as a crime against humanity. The court also confirmed that Mustafa A. held a leadership role within the organisation. The court found Mustafa A. responsible for the arrest of one victim and complicit in the torture inflicted upon this individual in detention. Due to insufficient evidence, Mustafa A. was acquitted of charges related to the arrest and torture of a second victim. Furthermore, the District Court also stated that the first victim's compensation claim was inadmissible because it lacked sufficient information on Syrian law. Mustafa A. was sentenced to 12 years in prison by the District Court.

Both Mustafa A. and the prosecution service filed appeals against the decision.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 27 August 2025, the Hague Court of Appeal upheld the conviction of Mustafa A. for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court upheld the previous decision of the District Court of The Hague, while increasing the sentence from 12 to 13 years of imprisonment.

The Court of Appeal confirmed the District Court's decision that *Liwa al-Quds* was a criminal organisation that took part in the systematic attacks against the Syrian population, and that Mustafa A. played a leading role in the organisation. Additionally, the Court of Appeal confirmed that Mustafa A. was guilty of the arrest and torture of the civilian in 2013.

In addition to the conviction, the Court of Appeal ordered Mustafa A. to pay EUR 40 000 in compensation to the first victim for the pain and suffering he had endured. The District Court of The Hague had earlier declared the compensation claim inadmissible, stating it lacked sufficient information about Syrian law. The Court of Appeal reached a different conclusion than the District Court on the matter of the compensation claim due, in part, to expert reports submitted on behalf of the injured party. This decision marks the first time that a compensation claim under Syrian law has been awarded in a case involving international crimes.

The Court of Appeal further stated that Mustafa A.'s asylum status in the Netherlands had been revoked. However, he will not be extradited to Syria given the consequences he could face there as a perceived supporter of the previous Assad government.

## INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUE INTO FIRST CHARGES IN THE NETHERLANDS FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY BROUGHT AGAINST ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF SYRIAN PRO-REGIME PARAMILITARY GROUP

Name withheld

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Universal jurisdiction

**Suspect**  
Syrian national, alleged former head of the interrogation department of the National Defence Force (NDF)

**Country of residence of suspect**  
The Netherlands

**Charges**  
Crimes against humanity of torture and sexual violence; torture

**Current status**  
Indicted; detained

**Facts**  
In 2013 and 2014, the suspect allegedly served as the head of the interrogation department of the NDF in Salamiyah, Syria. The NDF was a paramilitary group that comprised several pro-regime militias, fighting on the side of the former Syrian government. According to the International Crimes Team of the Dutch National Police, in his position as head of the NDF, the suspect allegedly committed acts of torture and sexual violence against civilians, as crimes against humanity.

In July 2021, the suspect arrived in the Netherlands, obtained a temporary asylum permit and settled in Druten with his family.

## Procedure

On 8 December 2023, the suspect was arrested in Druten, in the province of Gelderland. Shortly after his arrival in the Netherlands, the International Crimes Team had been informed that a person with this name had worked as the chief interrogator at the NDF in Salamiyah. The suspect was charged with complicity in torture in an official capacity with specific intent, complicity in torture as a crime against humanity and complicity in various forms of sexual violence as a crime against humanity.

On 11 December 2023, he was brought before the examining magistrate for a procedural hearing.

In 2024, during pre-trial hearings, the defence requested to suspend the pre-trial detention of the suspect. The court affirmed the importance of the ongoing investigation, concluding that it should proceed despite its lengthy duration and the accused's continued pre-trial detention.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

A further hearing took place on 17 February 2025.

On 15 April 2025, the sixth pre-trial hearing was held. During this hearing, new materials were added to the defendant's case file. As of that date, the case was still in the investigation phase.

## Follow-up on other cases

- Ayada K. (UJAR 2025, p. 74): the investigation is ongoing.
- Ayham al-S. (UJAR 2025, p. 74): the investigation is ongoing.
- Eshetu Alemu (UJAR 2024, p. 89): conviction upheld on appeal; under appeal before the Supreme Court.
- Guus Kouwenhoven (UJAR 2022, p. 87): convicted of war crimes; pending extradition from South Africa; application pending before the European Court of Human Rights.
- Hasna Aarab (UJAR 2025, p. 75): awaiting appeal trial.
- Krista van T. (UJAR 2025, p. 76): awaiting appeal trial.
- Pierre-Claver Karangwa (UJAR 2025, p. 77): the investigation is ongoing.
- Xaviera S. (UJAR 2025, p. 77): awaiting appeal trial.
- Yousra Lemouesset (UJAR 2025, p. 78): conviction partly upheld on appeal; under appeal before the Supreme Court.
- Name withheld – Dutch national suspected of war crimes during Surinamese interior war (UJAR 2025, p. 79): the investigation is ongoing.
- Name withheld – Dutch national suspected of involvement in Rwandan genocide (UJAR 2025, p. 79): the investigation is ongoing.

# PERU



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Peru

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO MEMBER OF ISRAELI ARMY COMBAT ENGINEERING CORPS FOR ALLEGED CRIMES COMMITTED IN GAZA

Adi Karni

#### Country of commission

Palestine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Adi Karni, Israeli national, alleged member of the Combat Engineering Corps of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

#### Country of residence of suspect

Israel

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

The Combat Engineering Corps of the IDF is alleged to have been involved in mass demolitions of civilian infrastructure and neighbourhoods in Gaza and targeted attacks on protected civilian objects. Adi Karni is alleged to have served as a combat engineering soldier within this unit and to have been directly involved in the destruction of civilian areas in Gaza during the military offensive by the IDF between 2023 and 2024.

In May 2025, Karni was reported to have been present in Peru as a tourist.

#### Procedure

In May 2025, a legal complaint was submitted to the Public Prosecutor's Office by Julio César Arbizu González, representing the Hind Rajab Foundation, alleging that Adi Karni was in Peru and had been involved in the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Gaza. The complaint is reported to have been supported by audio-visual documentation and open-source information concerning Karni's alleged participation in the destruction of civilian neighbourhoods and infrastructure in Gaza, as part of broader military operations conducted by the Combat Engineering Corps of the IDF.

On 10 June 2025, the Public Prosecutor's Office announced that it had assigned the case to its specialised Human Rights Prosecution Unit for preliminary criminal investigation.

# POLAND



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Poland

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO ALLEGED COMPLICITY OF ISRAELI ARMS COMPANIES IN GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN GAZA

Unknown representatives of Israeli arms companies

#### Countries of commission

Palestine, Israel and Poland

#### Jurisdictional basis

Passive personality

#### Suspects

Unknown representatives of Israeli arms companies

#### Country of residence of suspects

Israel; unknown

#### Charges

The suspects have not been formally charged. The investigation focused on aiding and abetting genocide and crimes against humanity and endorsing or justifying genocide and crimes against humanity.

#### Current status

Case dismissed; under appeal

#### Facts

On 2 September 2025, the International Defence Industry Exhibition (MSPO) took place in Kielce, Poland. Ten Israeli arms companies, among them Elbit Systems Ltd, RAFAEL Advanced Defense Systems Ltd, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and Smartshooter, exhibited at MSPO.

Several of these companies are reported to have advertised their technologies at the exhibition as 'battle-tested' or 'combat proven'. The company Smartshooter is reported to have referred specifically to the deployment of its technology during 'Operation Iron Sword', referring to the war in Gaza since 7 October 2023.

#### Procedure

On 3 September 2025, a verbal notice of possible crimes alleged to have been committed by four Israeli arms companies participating in the MSPO in Kielce was made at a local police station in Kielce by journalist Roman Kurkiewicz and the Polish-Palestinian Justice Initiative (KAKTUS). The complaint alleged that representatives of these companies aided, abetted and praised the commission of international crimes, including genocide and crimes against humanity, by marketing weapons deployed against civilians in Gaza as 'battle-tested'. The complaint submitted that such conduct may constitute public endorsement of international crimes and aiding and abetting their commission, within the meaning of applicable domestic and international criminal law.

On 8 September 2025, the District Prosecutor's Office in Kielce confirmed that it had opened an investigation into Israeli arms companies present at the MSPO fair for allegedly aiding and abetting and praising the commission of genocide and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

According to media reports, the police summoned between two and ten representatives of the companies concerned for questioning. Two individuals, reportedly representatives of Elbit Systems Ltd and RAFAEL Advanced Defense Systems Ltd, were questioned by the police in Kielce. Other representatives reportedly departed the territory of Poland prior to being interviewed by law enforcement authorities.

The prosecutor has subsequently issued a decision to discontinue the proceedings. This decision has been appealed and is pending determination by a court.

# PORTUGAL



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Portugal

## CONVICTION OF IRAQI BROTHERS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN A TERRORIST ORGANISATION AND WAR CRIMES NOW BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT

Ammar Ameen and Yaser Ameen

### Country of commission

Iraq

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspects

Brothers Ammar Ameen and Yaser Ameen, Iraqi nationals, former members of the local ISIS al-Hisbah Religious Police and the al-Amniyah Intelligence Service of ISIS

### Country of residence of suspects

Portugal

### Charges

War crimes of causing great suffering or serious harm to physical integrity or health and unlawful deprivation of liberty; membership in a terrorist organisation; resistance and coercion of an officer

### Current status

Ammar Ameen convicted of war crimes and membership in a terrorist organisation; sentenced to 16 years in prison; confirmed by the Court of Appeal; under appeal before the Supreme Court of Justice; detained

Yaser Ameen convicted of membership in a terrorist organisation; sentenced to ten years in prison; confirmed by the Court of Appeal; under appeal before the Supreme Court of Justice; detained

### Facts

According to the conviction, brothers Ammar Ameen and Yaser Ameen were members of the al-Hisbah Religious Police and al-Amniyah Intelligence Services of ISIS during its occupation of Iraq between 2014 and 2016. During this period, the brothers were responsible for kidnappings, assaults, corporal punishment and public humiliation of people who did not conform to the laws imposed by ISIS. In one instance, Ammar Ameen kidnapped and whipped an Iraqi citizen in a public square in Mosul, Iraq.

In 2016, both brothers left Iraq. They stayed for a period in Türkiye, before travelling to Greece and subsequently claiming asylum in Portugal in 2017.

### Procedure

In 2017, an Iraqi individual living in Portugal filed a complaint with the Immigration and Borders Service in the city of Leiria, informing the Portuguese authorities that Ammar and Yaser Ameen belonged to ISIS in Mosul. In September 2017, an investigation was opened by the Portuguese National Counter-Terrorism Unit.

In September 2021, Ammar and Yaser Ameen were arrested and detained in preventative custody on suspicion of belonging to a terrorist organisation related to their activities as members of ISIS in Iraq between 2014 and 2016.

In September 2022, the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Central Department of Investigation and Criminal Prosecution charged both brothers with membership in a terrorist organisation and with the war crimes of causing great suffering or serious harm to physical integrity or health and unlawful

deprivation of liberty. Ammar Ameen was also charged with resistance and coercion of an officer.

On 18 January 2024, the Central Criminal Court of Lisbon convicted both brothers of the crime of membership in a terrorist organisation. Yaser Ameen was sentenced to 10 years in prison and expulsion from Portugal.

Ammar Ameen was also convicted of war crimes for the kidnapping and whipping of an Iraqi citizen in a public square in Mosul, Iraq, as well as for resistance and coercion of an officer. The court sentenced Ammar Ameen to 16 years in prison, expulsion from Portugal and ordered him to pay EUR 15 000 to the victim.

The Public Prosecutor's Office appealed the decision on the grounds that there was evidence of war crimes having been committed by both defendants and that the sentences imposed were low.

In May 2024, both brothers appealed their convictions.

For the first time in Portugal, the investigation was conducted in close cooperation with the United Nations Investigating Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) and judicial authorities in Iraq.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, the judgment of the Lisbon Court of Appeal, issued on 30 December 2024, was made public. The Court of Appeal confirmed in full the decision of the Central Criminal Court of Lisbon. This decision has been appealed by both the Public Prosecutor's Office and the defence and is now pending before the Supreme Court of Justice.



**NEW CASE!**

**INVESTIGATION OPENED INTO SENIOR EXECUTIVES OF COMPANY FOR ALLEGED COMPLICITY IN GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY FOR SUPPLYING STEEL TO ISRAELI WEAPONS MANUFACTURER**

José Antonio Jainaga and two other executives of steel company Sidenor

**Country of commission**  
Palestine

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Active personality

**Suspects**  
José Antonio Jainaga, president of the company, and two other executives of steel company Sidenor

**Country of residence of suspects**  
Spain

**Charges**  
As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspects have not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on smuggling and complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity.

**Current status**  
Under investigation

**Facts**  
Sidenor is a privately-owned steel company, which is alleged to have covertly sold steel to Israel Military Industries (IMI) without requesting the necessary authorisation from the Spanish government

and registering in the relevant registry. IMI is a subsidiary of Elbit Systems Ltd., which is Israel's largest arms manufacturer and supplies the Israel Defense Forces.

**Procedure**  
In July 2025, a criminal complaint against executives of Sidenor was filed by the association of the Palestinian community of the region of Catalonia. Whistleblowers within the company are reported to have contributed to the criminal complaint.

On 24 October 2025, Judge Francisco de Jorge of the National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*) announced the opening of an investigation into José Antonio Jainaga and two other Sidenor executives for alleged smuggling offences and complicity in genocide or, alternatively, complicity in crimes against humanity for having supplied steel to weapons manufacturers in Israel.

While the judge concluded that the alleged conduct could also be attributable to Clerbil SL, which serves as the sole administrator of Sidenor Holdings Europa, he declined to open an investigation into the company as a legal entity at the current stage of proceedings, given the active involvement of its employees in exposing the alleged unlawful conduct and preventing its continuation.

On 12 November 2025, a hearing took place before the National Court, during which the three executives of Sidenor testified.

**NEW CASE!**

**ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR FORMER SENIOR MEMBER OF THE RWANDAN PATRIOTIC ARMY FOR GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY**

Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa

**Country of commission**  
Rwanda

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Passive personality

**Suspect**  
Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa, Rwandan national, former chief of staff and head of military intelligence of the Rwandan Patriotic Army

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Unknown

**Charges**  
Genocide and crimes against humanity

**Current status**  
Under investigation; arrest warrant issued; current location unknown

**Facts**  
In his role as chief of staff and head of military intelligence of the Rwandan Patriotic Army, Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa is alleged to have played a decisive role in multiple massacres committed against Rwandan and Congolese civilians during the 1990s, including a massacre at the Nyacyonga camp for internally displaced people in April 1994 and massacres in Ruhengeri, Gisenyi, Cyangugu, Nyakinama and Mukingo in 1996 and 1997.

Nyamwasa is also alleged to have been responsible for the murders of four Spanish nationals: priest Joaquim Vallmajó, who was killed by members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front in 1994, and three staff members of the humanitarian organisation Doctors of the World, María Flors Sirera Fortuny, Luis Valtueña Gallego and Manuel Madrazo Osuna, who were killed in Ruhengeri in northern Rwanda in 1997.

In 2010, Nyamwasa left Rwanda and claimed asylum in South Africa, having reportedly fallen out with the regime of President Paul Kagame. On 22 June 2010, he was granted refugee status by South Africa.

#### Procedure

In 2005, a criminal complaint was filed by relatives of victims, including nine Spanish citizens, against 40 high-ranking officials of the Rwandan Patriotic Army/Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPA/RPF) for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and torture alleged to have been committed between 1994 and 2000 in the Great Lakes region.

In 2008, after evidence including the statements of more than 50 protected witnesses was gathered, the investigating judge of the Spanish National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*), Fernando Andreu, issued international and European arrest warrants against 40 high-ranking officials of the RPA/RPF, including Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa.

In 2010, the Spanish authorities requested the extradition of Nyamwasa from South Africa, where he had been granted asylum.

In 2014, the investigation into Nyamwasa and other Rwandan officials was closed as a consequence of the reform of Spain's universal jurisdiction legislation. In 2017, following a request by the lawyer representing Spanish victims, the investigation was partly re-opened on the basis of a decision by the National Court reinterpreting the new legislation, in particular with respect to the exercise of passive personality jurisdiction and the prospect of extraditing a leading suspect.

In May 2024, the National Court sent a rogatory letter to the South African authorities requesting that Nyamwasa provide a statement to the investigation via video link. The request did not receive a response from the South African authorities. Nyamwasa's lawyers subsequently stated that his whereabouts were unknown.

In July 2025, Investigating Judge of the National Court José Luis Calama issued international and European arrest warrants against Nyamwasa for his alleged leading role in the killing of four Spanish nationals and in crimes committed in the context of campaigns of violence in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 1990s.

Lawyers representing Nyamwasa submitted an appeal against the arrest warrant, which was rejected by the National Court in August 2025.

## INVESTIGATION REOPENED INTO THE ALLEGED PARTICIPATION OF A SPANISH BUSINESSMAN IN THE ILLEGAL TRADE OF BLOOD DIAMONDS DURING THE CIVIL WAR IN SIERRA LEONE

Manuel Terrén

#### Country of commission

Sierra Leone

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Manuel Terrén, Spanish national, alleged to have designed and supervised the actions of a business network in Liberia dedicated to the illegal extraction, marketing and export of blood diamonds from Sierra Leone during the late 1990s and early 2000s

#### Country of residence of suspect

Brazil

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes.

#### Current status

Under investigation; the suspect is under provisional release

#### Facts

During the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002), the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a non-State armed group, enslaved civilians in the district of Kono, in the east of Sierra Leone, forcing them to work in the diamond pits as a means to finance the RUF's armed struggle against the government.

Between at least 1997 and 2002, Manuel Terrén is alleged to have traded with the RUF for diamonds obtained through the enslavement of the civilian population. The proceeds obtained from the deals were then purportedly brought to Monrovia, Liberia, to be sold on the international market.

The investigation focuses on the alleged participation of foreign actors in the illegal trade of blood diamonds between Sierra Leone, Liberia and some European countries during the civil war in Sierra Leone.

#### Procedure

On 10 September 2021, a complaint was filed against Manuel Terrén before the National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*) in Madrid by an individual who suffered and witnessed alleged crimes in the Sierra Leonean region of Kono during the civil war. This complaint was filed with the support of the NGOs Civitas Maxima (based in Switzerland) and Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL – based in Sierra Leone).

The investigation was formally opened on 7 January 2022, with subsequent investigating measures undertaken to ascertain the criminal liability of the person under investigation.

On 2 July 2024, Manuel Terrén was arrested in Málaga, Spain, when he was travelling from Brazil. He filed an appeal against his detention and was ultimately released on 24 July 2024.

On 1 October 2024, the investigating judge formally opened a new stage of the investigation phase (*procedimiento sumario ordinario*). On 12 November 2024, Manuel Terrén lodged an appeal challenging this decision, which the prosecutor partially joined on 4 December 2024, asserting, among other issues, that the prosecution of the alleged crimes was time-barred.

On 18 December 2024, the section of the Criminal Chamber (*Sala de lo Penal*) tasked with deciding the appeal upheld the decision opening a new stage of the investigation phase but partially granted Manuel Terrén's appeal. As such, it ordered the investigating judge to close the investigation phase and the

competent section of the Criminal Chamber to assess whether the alleged offences were time-barred from prosecution.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

Following the termination of investigating proceedings on 7 January 2025 and the holding of dedicated hearings on 12 June 2025, the Criminal Chamber issued a decision on 16 June 2025. Therein, it concluded that there was insufficient evidence at that stage to decide whether the statute of limitations applied to the alleged crimes, and that additional investigating measures would be necessary before such a determination could be made.

Subsequently, on 30 June 2025 the Criminal Chamber confirmed, at the request of the civil party, the resumption of the investigation. The investigation has been ongoing since then, with further investigating measures currently underway.

# SWEDEN



UJIM INTERACTIVE MAP

Cases in Sweden

## TRIAL CONTINUES OF SWISS AND SWEDISH OIL BUSINESSMEN FOR ALLEGED COMPLICITY IN SUDANESE WAR CRIMES

Alexander Schneider and Ian Lundin

### Country of commission

Sudan (now South Sudan)

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction and active personality

### Suspects

Alexander Schneider, Swiss national and CEO of Orrön Energy; Ian Lundin, Swedish national and chairman of Orrön Energy

### Countries of residence of suspects

Sweden and Switzerland

### Charges

Complicity in war crimes

### Current status

On trial

### Facts

The second Sudanese civil war took place between the government of Sudan, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other armed groups from 1983 to 2005. According to a [report](#) published in 2010 by the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan, the company Lundin Petroleum (later renamed Lundin Energy and Orrön Energy) signed a contract in 1997 through a subsidiary with the government of Sudan for the exploration and production of oil in a war zone in southern Sudan, the Block 5A concession, which was not at that time under full governmental control.

Lundin Petroleum allegedly paid the Sudanese army and non-State armed groups to forcibly displace the local population from oil-rich areas to secure their operations. Between 1999 and 2003, around 160 000 civilians were forcibly displaced and thousands died. Other crimes were allegedly carried out in this context, including unlawful killings, rape, enslavement, torture, indiscriminate attacks, pillage and the recruitment of child soldiers.

Schneider was the head of exploration during the relevant time period, and Lundin, the chairman of the company. According to the prosecution, these two executives supported the government of Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese army and regime-allied militias in carrying out systematic attacks against civilians.

In April 2020, Lundin Petroleum changed its name to Lundin Energy.

In July 2022, Norway's Aker BP acquired 98 per cent of the shares of Lundin Energy. The remaining two per cent, renamed Orrön Energy, would carry the full responsibility of the Sudanese legacy. Several NGOs denounced the fact that the takeover by Aker BP will make it very difficult for the victims to ever receive compensation, and that this constitutes an abuse of company law aimed at denying war crimes victims their rights.

### Procedure

In 2010, the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan submitted to the Swedish International Public Prosecution Office its report indicating that Lundin Petroleum may have been complicit in international crimes committed in Sudan between 1997

and 2003. Swedish prosecutors opened a preliminary investigation the same year. Schneider and Lundin became formal suspects after being questioned by prosecutors in 2016.

Under Swedish law, the prosecution of a foreign national for crimes committed abroad requires governmental authorisation. On 18 October 2018, the Swedish government authorised the prosecutor to proceed with an indictment in this case.

On 11 November 2021, Schneider and Lundin were indicted for aiding and abetting war crimes committed in Sudan between 1999 and 2003 in the context of the non-international armed conflict, with the purpose of securing the company's oil operations in southern Sudan. According to the prosecution, the Sudanese regime systematically attacked civilians and committed indiscriminate attacks to take control over relevant areas and create conditions for the oil exploration activities of Lundin Petroleum.

Later that month, Schneider requested the District Court to reject the indictment against him, claiming that Swedish courts have no jurisdiction over him due to his Swiss nationality. The District Court rejected his request and Schneider appealed to the Svea Court of Appeal, which agreed with the lower court's decision.

On 28 February 2022, Schneider appealed his indictment before the Swedish Supreme Court on the grounds that there was no legal basis in international law for the exercise of universal jurisdiction

against a non-Swedish national who is not present on Swedish territory.

On 10 November 2022, the Supreme Court ruled that, in the exercise of universal jurisdiction, some form of connection to Sweden is required for a crime to be prosecuted by national authorities. However, it concluded that the connection to Sweden of the crimes allegedly committed by Schneider was sufficient for a trial to be held by Swedish courts and that there was no obstacle to it in international law. The Supreme Court hence confirmed Schneider's indictment.

The criminal liability of private companies does not exist in Sweden, so the company cannot be charged as a legal entity. However, when a company makes a profit from a crime, that profit can be confiscated. The prosecution has therefore asked for the confiscation of around SEK 1 400 000 000 (EUR 117 000 000) from Lundin Energy, which reportedly corresponds to the profit the company made from the sale of the business in 2003. In addition, the prosecution asked for a fine of SEK 3 000 000 (EUR 252 000).

In August 2023, the claim to confiscate was raised to SEK 2 381 300 000 (around EUR 200 000 000).

On 5 September 2023, the trial of the two former executives began in Stockholm. Thirty-two victims have joined the proceedings as civil parties.

At the end of November 2023, the Stockholm District Court decided that 27 plaintiffs would not be able to have their damage claims tried within the framework of the criminal trial. Rather, the issue of compensation for the victims will be addressed in separate civil cases. The court grounded

its decision on the delays that those civil claims would bring to the trial, and on the fact that the civil claims had been submitted belatedly. As a result of this decision, if the victims lose these civil cases, they will be responsible for paying Lundin and Schneider's legal costs. Additionally, non-European Union citizen plaintiffs must furnish a security deposit to cover the estimated legal costs of the defendants.

During 2023 and 2024, the prosecution and the defence teams of Alexander Schneider, Ian Lundin and Orrön Energy completed their opening presentations.

In May 2024, the plaintiffs began testifying.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

During the course of 2025, the remaining plaintiffs testified. Between December 2024 and March 2025, the defendants, Ian Lundin and Alexander Schneider testified before the Stockholm District Court. During the remainder of 2025, 27 further witnesses provided testimony to the Court.

The trial is expected to continue until May 2026.

## CONVICTION OF SWEDISH NATIONAL FOR GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES AGAINST YAZIDIS IN SYRIA CONFIRMED ON APPEAL

Lina Laina Ishaq

**Country of commission**  
Syria

**Jurisdictional basis**  
Active personality

**Suspect**  
Lina Laina Ishaq, Swedish national, former member of ISIS

**Country of residence of suspect**  
Sweden

**Charges**  
Genocide through causing members of the group serious pain or harm or subjecting them to severe suffering and forcibly transferring children under the age of 18 from the group to another group; crimes against humanity of torture or other inhumane treatment, causing a person to enter into forced labour or other such state of coercion, deprivation of liberty and persecution on the basis of culture, religion, gender and age; war crimes of torture or other inhuman treatment and humiliating or degrading treatment

**Current status**  
Convicted; sentenced to 12 years in prison; confirmed on appeal; appeal pending before the Supreme Court; detained

**Facts**  
The city of Raqqa in Syria was taken over by ISIS militants in 2014. Under ISIS control, the Yazidi minority was deprived of basic freedoms and rights. Women, men and children were regarded as property and subjected to enslavement, slave trading, sexual slavery, forced labour, deprivation of liberty and extrajudicial executions.

According to the conviction, having travelled to Syria in 2013 to join her husband, Lina Laina Ishaq was involved in buying and receiving women and children belonging to the Yazidi minority in her residence in Raqqa. She is alleged to have treated these people as slaves and abused them in numerous ways, including by forcing them to live without enough food, clothing or warmth.

Ishaq returned to Sweden in 2020.

#### Procedure

In 2022, Ishaq was convicted of serious crimes under international law and serious war crimes for failing, in her capacity as a legal guardian, to prevent her 12-year-old son from being recruited and used as a child soldier by ISIS during the armed conflict in Syria (UJAR 2023, p. 79). She was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

On 19 September 2024, while serving the sentence for her previous conviction, the Swedish Prosecution Authority indicted Ishaq on further charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious war crimes in Raqqa, Syria, during the period August 2014 to December 2016. She was charged with having held nine people, six minor children and three adult women, captive in her home in Raqqa. According to the indictment, they were treated as slaves, were required to perform forced labour and experienced severe suffering and torture. Ishaq was further accused of having sold people to ISIS with the knowledge that they risked being killed or subjected to serious sexual abuse.

The Swedish Prosecution Authority identified the victims through information shared by the United Nations Investigating Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD).

On 7 October 2024, the trial began before the Stockholm District Court.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 11 February 2025, the Stockholm District Court convicted Ishaq of genocide through causing nine members of the Yazidi community serious pain or harm or subjecting them to severe suffering and through forcibly transferring six children under the age of 18 from the group to another group. She was further convicted of the crimes against humanity of torture or other inhumane treatment, causing a person to enter into forced labour or other such state of coercion, deprivation of liberty and persecution as well as the war crimes of torture or other inhuman treatment and humiliating or degrading treatment. The District Court assessed the sentencing value of the criminal acts to correspond to a prison sentence of 16 years. Taking the previously issued prison sentence into consideration, the District Court set the prison sentence at 12 years. The Court also ordered her to pay damages to the victims (SEK 150 000 each, approximately EUR 13 000). This conviction constitutes the first in Sweden for crimes against humanity and the first conviction internationally for genocide through the transfer of children to another group.

On 17 February 2025, the Swedish Prosecution Authority appealed the verdict, seeking an increased sentence of life imprisonment or, alternatively, a longer fixed-term sentence.

On 11 November 2025, the Svea Court of Appeal confirmed the Stockholm District Court's judgment and sentence in full.

The defence has appealed the decision to the Supreme Court.

## NEW CASE!

### CONVICTION OF FORMER MEMBER OF ISIS FOR WAR CRIMES FOR EXECUTION OF JORDANIAN PILOT IN SYRIA CONFIRMED ON APPEAL

Osama Krayem

Country of commission  
Syria

Jurisdictional basis  
Active personality

Suspect  
Osama Krayem, Swedish national, former member of ISIS

Country of residence of suspect  
Sweden

Charges  
War crimes of killing a protected person and subjecting a protected person to humiliating or degrading treatment; terrorism offence of murder

Current status  
Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; confirmed on appeal; detained

Facts  
On 24 December 2014, a fighter pilot of the Royal Jordanian Air Force was captured by ISIS after his plane crashed in Syria while on a mission for the global coalition against ISIS. On 3 February 2015, a film was published by ISIS showing the execution of the pilot by being locked in a metal cage and set on fire while alive.

Osama Krayem travelled from Sweden to Syria in August 2014 to join ISIS and was identified as one of the masked individuals who participated in the execution of the pilot. Krayem guarded the pilot before and during the execution and brought him to the cage where he was set on fire.

In 2025, Krayem was extradited to Sweden from France to stand trial for his participation in the execution of the pilot. In France he was already serving a 30-year prison sentence for complicity in the ISIS attacks in Paris in November 2015 and he has also been sentenced to life in prison in Belgium for participation in the ISIS attacks in Brussels in March 2016.

#### Procedure

On 27 May 2025, the Swedish Prosecution Authority charged Krayem with the war crimes of killing a protected person and subjecting a protected person to humiliating or degrading treatment, as well as terrorism offences, for his participation, together with other members of ISIS, in the execution of the Jordanian pilot in Syria.

On 4 June 2025, the trial began at the Stockholm District Court.

On 31 July 2025, the Stockholm District Court convicted Krayem of both counts of war crimes as well as terrorism offences and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The Court concluded that the pilot was a protected person under international humanitarian law, having been placed *hors de combat* by being captured. Given that the pilot was captured while serving in the global coalition against ISIS and considering the narrative advanced by ISIS in the video, framing the killing as retaliation for coalition airstrikes, the Court further concluded that there was a clear nexus between the killing and the non-international armed conflict in Syria.

While the Court concluded that another man lit the fire which caused the death of the pilot, it nevertheless determined that Krayem contributed so substantially to the pilot's death, by guarding him and bringing him to the cage where he was set on fire, that he should be considered to have participated in the act.

The Court awarded each of the victim's parents and siblings damages of SEK 80 000 (approximately EUR 7 000).

On 29 October 2025, the Svea Court of Appeal confirmed the Stockholm District Court's judgment in full.

As Krayem was temporarily surrendered to stand trial in Sweden from serving a prison sentence in France, he will be returned to France to complete his sentence.

## **SWEDISH NATIONAL ON TRIAL FOR WAR CRIMES COMMITTED IN SYRIA**

Names withheld

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspects

Three Swedish nationals, alleged members of the Syrian militia 'Free Palestine Movement' (FPM)

#### Country of residence of suspects

Sweden

#### Charges

War crimes

#### Current status

One individual on trial; detained; investigation into two other individuals completed without indictment

#### Facts

The FPM is a Palestinian-Syrian armed movement. In 2012, upon the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, it formed a number of armed militias which fought on the side of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and the Syrian government.

During the period 2012 to 2014, the militia took part in exercising control over the Damascus district of Yarmouk on behalf of the former Syrian regime. During this period, the militia was implicated in serious abuses of civilians, including during a violent crackdown on anti-government protests in the district in July 2012, when members of the militia are reported to have shot at civilian protestors, killing and injuring many.

#### Procedure

In July 2024, three individuals were arrested in Sweden on suspicion of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Syria during the period 2012 to 2014.

The arrests took place in coordination with Germany, Europol and Eurojust, as part of the joint investigation team 'Caesar'. As part of the same investigation, five individuals were arrested in Germany on the same day (see p. 62).

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

On 26 September 2025, the Swedish Prosecution Authority indicted one of the individuals, a 55-year-old Swedish national, on two counts of serious war crimes committed in Syria in 2012 and 2013. The individual is alleged to have been involved in a violent attack on a peaceful demonstration in the Damascus district of Yarmouk on 13 July 2012. During this attack, several civilians were shot dead and others were injured. During the first half of 2013, he is also alleged to have been involved in manning a checkpoint in connection with the siege of Yarmouk by the Syrian regime and regime-affiliated armed groups, where a large number of civilians were arrested. Many of those arrested were transferred to the custody of the Syrian security services, where they were subjected to severe suffering and, in several cases, were killed.

The investigation into the other two individuals was completed without indictment.

The trial began on 20 October 2025 and is expected to continue until March 2026.

#### Follow-up on other cases

- Names withheld – Members of the Syrian intelligence services (UJAR 2021, p. 67): the investigation is ongoing.



## CONVICTION OF FORMER GAMBIAN MINISTER OF INTERIOR FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY UNDER APPEAL

Ousman Sonko

### Country of commission

The Gambia

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Ousman Sonko, Gambian national, former State Guard commander, former inspector general of the police (2005 to 2006) and former minister of the interior (2006 to 2016)

### Country of residence of suspect

Switzerland

### Charges

Crimes against humanity of murder, torture, severe deprivation of liberty and rape

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 20 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained

### Facts

The Gambia was under the control of President Yahya Jammeh from 1994 to 2016. For more than two decades, all opposition was repressed. Torture, extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances were widespread.

After Jammeh's re-election in September 2006, Ousman Sonko was appointed minister of the interior. He held this position until September 2016, when he was dismissed from office and left The Gambia.

In December 2016, Jammeh refused to recognise the result of the presidential election which saw the victory of the opposition candidate Adama Barrow. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) launched a military intervention in The Gambia to enforce the election results, which led to Jammeh stepping down as president in January 2017 and going into exile in Equatorial Guinea.

In 2018, a Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) was set up to investigate the crimes committed during the Jammeh regime. In its final report published late in 2021, the TRRC recommended the prosecution of Sonko for the role he allegedly played in killings that took place in 2000, 2005 (West African migrants), 2006 and 2012 and acts of torture committed in 2006 and 2016. The TRRC also recommended his prosecution for acts of sexual violence allegedly committed in 2005 and 2015.

The Gambian government published an implementation plan of the TRRC recommendations in May 2023. One year later, the Gambian National Assembly passed the Special Prosecutor's Office Bill and the Special Accountability Mechanism Bill to prosecute perpetrators of the Jammeh regime.

In parallel, the creation of a hybrid court to try the most senior members of the regime, including Yahya Jammeh, was under discussion in the ECOWAS. On 15 December 2024, the ECOWAS approved the establishment of the Special Tribunal for The Gambia.

### Procedure

Alerted of Sonko's presence on Swiss territory, TRIAL International filed a criminal complaint before the prosecuting authorities in Bern on 25 January 2017. The former Gambian minister was arrested the following day at the immigration centre of Lyss (canton of Bern), where he had applied for asylum.

Between 2017 and 2022, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) heard Sonko on multiple occasions. Ten Gambian victims filed individual complaints. All of them, along with dozens of witnesses, including the United Nations special rapporteur on torture, were heard by the OAG. The Swiss authorities travelled on different occasions to The Gambia during their investigation to gather evidence in the framework of mutual judicial cooperation, including to hear witnesses.

In April 2023, the OAG indicted Sonko for crimes against humanity and referred the case to the Federal Criminal Court (FCC).

Sonko's trial took place in two phases in early 2024. From 8 to 26 January, all parties were heard on the facts. From 4 to 7 March 2024, the OAG, the plaintiffs' lawyers and the defence presented their closing arguments. Ousman Sonko delivered a final statement to the court.

On 15 May 2024, the FCC sentenced Ousman Sonko to 20 years in prison for his involvement in numerous crimes against humanity committed between 2000 and 2016. Specifically, the court found him guilty of the murder of a perceived political

opponent in 2000, torture and unlawful detention in connection with a coup plot in March 2006, the murder of a politician in 2011, and deprivation of liberty, torture of peaceful demonstrators in addition to the murder of one of its leaders in 2016. The FCC also ordered Sonko to pay compensation to the plaintiffs in accordance with the damage suffered.

However, the FCC dropped all charges of sexual offences. Without ruling that they did not take place, the court held that these acts were isolated from the context of the attacks against the civilian population and therefore could not constitute crimes against humanity. The court also ruled that electric shocks to the genitals should be considered torture rather than sexual violence.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In April 2025, the written grounds for the judgment were notified to the parties, each of whom appealed several aspects of the decision. The defendant notably contested the Court's jurisdiction over the events that took place before 1 January 2011, the guilty verdict, the sentence handed down, and the reparations decided. The plaintiffs and the OAG appealed the closure of the case regarding the sexual violence charges as well as the failure to recognise the aggravated nature of the offences committed.

On 12 June 2025, the FCC published a redacted version of the judgment, [available to the public](#).

Sonko's appeal trial has been scheduled to start on 30 March 2026.

## NEW CASE!

### RWANDAN NATIONAL UNDER INVESTIGATION IN SWITZERLAND FOR WAR CRIMES ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

Name withheld

#### Country of commission

Rwanda

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Name withheld, Rwandan national, alleged former head of nurses and midwives at a medical centre

#### Country of residence of suspect

Switzerland

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes.

#### Current status

Under investigation; detained

#### Facts

The suspect, a Rwandan national who allegedly served as the head of nurses and midwives at a medical centre during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, is accused of having participated in numerous acts of sexual violence (rape) and killings of members of the Tutsi civilian population.

The suspect allegedly facilitated the identification of Tutsis and participated in attacks on schools, churches and a medical centre.

#### Procedure

In September 2020, the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration transmitted an anonymous denunciation to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). The denunciation referred to a report issued on 14 May 2020 by the National Commission for the Fight

against Genocide (CNLG) of the Republic of Rwanda, titled 'The Significance of Doctors, Nurses and Medical Staff's Role in the Genocide against the Tutsi'.

On 6 August 2021, based on this information, the OAG opened a criminal investigation into the suspect on suspicion of war crimes.

On 16 February 2022, the Swiss authorities requested mutual legal assistance from Rwanda.

Between 2022 and 2024, the suspect was questioned multiple times by the OAG.

On 27 November 2024, the suspect was arrested and placed in pre-trial detention.

On 22 April 2025, the Federal Criminal Court confirmed the extension of the suspect's detention, finding that the charges were sufficiently substantiated at this stage.

Nine individuals have reportedly filed criminal complaints against the suspect.

## DECISION PENDING TO CLOSE CASE AGAINST FORMER SYRIAN VICE PRESIDENT

Rifaat al-Assad

### Country of commission

Syria

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Rifaat al-Assad, Syrian national, Syria's former vice president, brother of the former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad and uncle of the former president Bashar al-Assad, former head of the Defence Brigades (*Saraya al-Difa*), Syria's elite commando troops, from 1971 to 1984

### Country of residence of suspect

United Arab Emirates

### Charges

War crimes and crimes against humanity of having ordered homicides, acts of torture, cruel treatment and illegal detentions

### Current status

As of 31 December 2025, indicted; case will be closed in 2026 due to the death of the suspect

### Facts

In February 1982, opponents of the former Syrian regime led an armed uprising in Hama. In retaliation, the Syrian armed forces, including the Defence Brigades, attacked the city. The civilian population was trapped and cut off from supply, food and electricity for almost a month. The estimated number of civilian casualties ranges from 10 000 to 40 000, depending on the source. In addition to the high number of casualties, entire areas of the city were destroyed.

Rifaat al-Assad, as the commander of the Defence Brigades, is accused of having ordered numerous offences that took place in Hama in 1982 during the civil war in Syria.

### Procedure

In December 2013, after being informed that Rifaat al-Assad was present on Swiss territory, TRIAL International filed a criminal complaint with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) accusing him of having committed war crimes during the Hama massacre in 1982. A criminal investigation was opened a few days later against Rifaat al-Assad for the same charges.

In August 2014, a plaintiff joined the proceedings.

In 2015, Rifaat al-Assad returned to Geneva. TRIAL International and the plaintiff asked the Swiss authorities to arrest him to proceed to his hearing. After the OAG refused to proceed with his arrest, the plaintiff filed a motion for provisional measures before the Federal Criminal Court (FCC). The FCC ordered the OAG to hear Rifaat al-Assad without delay, and a short hearing took place, during which Rifaat al-Assad decided to remain silent.

In 2016, three other plaintiffs joined the criminal proceedings.

In 2017, TRIAL International filed an additional complaint, backed by various evidence, regarding Rifaat al-Assad's involvement in the Tadmor prison massacre that occurred in 1980. The complaint was dismissed by the OAG.

In September 2017, four years after the official opening of the investigation, one of the plaintiffs filed a petition alleging a denial of justice. The FCC dismissed it, considering that the extensive delay could be explained by the complexity of the case.

In August 2018, a letter to Switzerland signed by the United Nations special rapporteurs on torture and on the independence of judges and lawyers was published by the United Nations. It heavily criticised Switzerland for

an alleged lack of independence and political interference notably concerning the case against Rifaat al-Assad. In five years of proceedings, only four witnesses and two plaintiffs had been heard.

In April 2021, a fifth plaintiff who had joined the case in October 2020 was heard by the OAG and in June the same year, one witness was heard. The investigation then continued, however at a slow pace: only one witness, whose hearing had been postponed in 2021, was heard in March 2022.

In early 2023, two complaints were closed as the plaintiffs could no longer be reached.

In August the same year, the FCC made public its order of 19 July 2022 to the Federal Office of Justice to issue an international arrest warrant that had been delivered by the OAG in November 2021, for Rifaat al-Assad. In the same order, the FCC confirmed that the Swiss authorities had jurisdiction to prosecute Rifaat al-Assad and to request his extradition to Switzerland.

On 11 March 2024, the OAG closed its investigation and indicted Rifaat al-Assad not only on charges of war crimes, but also on crimes against humanity, considering that the facts were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack launched against the population of the city of Hama.

On 31 November 2024, the FCC notified the parties that it intended to close the case on the grounds that Rifaat al-Assad's state of health would not allow him to travel to Switzerland or attend his trial and defend himself.

On 8 December 2024, the government of Bashar al-Assad was overthrown during a major offensive by the Syrian opposition. On the same day, Bashar al-Assad left Syria.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, the FCC continued to examine whether Rifaat al-Assad's health would allow him to travel to Switzerland, attend his trial and defend himself. No final decision had been taken on whether to close the case based on the assessment that the defendant was unable to attend and participate in his trial, or to issue a summons to trial.

On 20 January 2026, Rifaat al-Assad passed away, which will extinguish the criminal proceedings.

## NEW CASE!

### SWISS NATIONAL UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR ALLEGED WAR CRIMES IN UKRAINE

Jona Neidhart

#### Country of commission

Ukraine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Jona Neidhart, Swiss national

#### Country of residence of suspect

Switzerland

#### Charges

As the case is at the investigation stage, the suspect has not been formally charged. The investigation focuses on war crimes.

#### Current status

Under investigation

#### Facts

Jona Neidhart left Switzerland in 2022 to join the Ukrainian military, where he served from March 2022 to December 2023, and again from January 2025 to June 2025. He subsequently returned to Switzerland.

During his service, he is suspected of having committed war crimes, allegedly by forcing Russian prisoners to remove their protective equipment and carry a wounded soldier, and by shooting a wounded and unarmed Russian soldier in the head.

#### Procedure

In 2024, the Swiss Military Justice opened an investigation into Neidhart for serving in a foreign army. During his questioning in September 2025, allegations of war crimes emerged.

In light of these allegations, the Military Justice referred the case to the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland, which opened a criminal investigation into the alleged war crimes in December 2025.

## Follow-up on other cases

- Alieu Kosiah (UJAR 2025, p. 90): conviction upheld on appeal; on appeal before the Supreme Court.
- Christoph Huber (UJAR 2020, p. 82): the Office of the Attorney General closed the investigation in May 2025.
- Khaled Nezzar (UJAR 2024, p. 99): Proceedings were closed on 21 June 2024. The two appeals lodged to the Federal Criminal Court for breach of the principle of expeditiousness during the investigation, constitutive of a denial of justice, were rejected in March 2025. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) was seized on July 2025 of this matter. The request was declared inadmissible by the ECtHR.
- Yuri Harauski (UJAR 2024, p. 101): awaiting appeal trial.
- Investigation targeting oil trading scheme as possible complicity in international crimes (UJAR 2023, p. 86): the investigation is ongoing.
- Investigation opened regarding timber trafficking across The Gambia and Senegal (UJAR 2023, p. 83): the investigation is ongoing.
- Unknown – attack on Swiss journalist in Ukraine (UJAR 2024, p. 107): the investigation is ongoing.



## NEW CASE!

### ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR BENJAMIN NETANYAHU AND 36 OTHER SENIOR ISRAELI OFFICIALS FOR GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED IN GAZA

Benjamin Netanyahu and 36 other senior Israeli officials

#### Country of commission

Palestine

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspects

Benjamin Netanyahu, prime minister of Israel; Israel Katz, minister of defence of Israel; Itamar Ben-Gvir, minister of national security of Israel; Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir, chief of the general staff of the Israel Defense Forces; David Saar Salama, commander of the navy of Israel; and 32 other senior Israeli officials

#### Country of residence of suspects

Israel

#### Charges

Genocide and crimes against humanity

#### Current status

Under investigation; arrest warrants issued

#### Facts

Following an investigation into crimes committed in the context of the war in Gaza, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has determined that, since 7 October 2023, Israel has systematically

carried out attacks on civilians, hospitals, and infrastructure, killing and injuring thousands of civilians and rendering residential areas uninhabitable.

In the course of this investigation, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office identified multiple incidents alleged to amount to genocide and crimes against humanity. These incidents include the attack on Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital, which resulted in the deaths of approximately 500 people on 17 October 2023, the killing of six-year-old Hind Rajab on 29 January 2024, the bombing of the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital on 21 March 2025 and the obstruction of humanitarian aid.

In addition, as part of the investigation, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office examined the attack against the Global Sumud Flotilla, whose participants sought to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza by sea during the summer of 2025. The flotilla was reportedly intercepted and attacked in international waters by units of the Israeli navy, and the individuals on board were subsequently detained. Several individuals detained on the flotilla by the Israeli authorities were repatriated to Türkiye in early October 2025. Upon their return, they underwent forensic and psychological examinations at the Istanbul Forensic Medicine Institute, and the resulting reports were submitted to the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

#### Procedure

On 7 November 2025, arrest warrants against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and 36 other senior Israeli officials, requested by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, were issued by the Istanbul Criminal Judge of Peace.



## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION CLOSED INTO BRITISH NATIONAL SUSPECTED OF WAR CRIMES COMMITTED IN SRI LANKA BETWEEN 1984-1987 DUE TO INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE

Name withheld

#### Country of commission

Sri Lanka

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Name withheld, British national

#### Country of residence of suspect

United Kingdom

#### Charges

As the case was at the investigation stage, the suspect had not been formally charged. The investigation focused on war crimes.

#### Current status

Case dismissed

#### Facts

The investigation related to the actions of a British national within the context of the Sri Lankan civil war (1983-2009), specifically during the period 1984-1987.

#### Procedure

On 7 November 2023, officers from the Metropolitan Police War Crimes Team interviewed an 80-year-old man under caution on suspicion of offences under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957.

On 20 October 2025, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.

### CASE AGAINST FIVE BRITISH SOLDIERS SUSPECTED OF WAR CRIMES IN SYRIA CLOSED WITHOUT CHARGES

Names withheld

#### Country of commission

Syria

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspects

Five British nationals, members of the Special Air Service (SAS) of the British army

#### Country of residence of suspects

United Kingdom

#### Charges

As the case was at the investigation stage, the suspects were not formally charged. The investigation focused on charges of murder and war crimes.

#### Current status

Case dismissed

#### Facts

The case related to the alleged murder by members of the British SAS of a suspected jihadist who was killed in an operation in Syria in 2022. The five suspects were alleged to have used excessive force in the incident.

#### Procedure

The five suspects were arrested by British military police in March 2024. Case files recommending prosecution on murder charges were sent by service police to the Service Prosecuting Authority, the military equivalent of the Crown Prosecution Service.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, the case was closed without charges against any of the individuals involved.

## NEW CASE!

### INVESTIGATION CLOSED INTO ZIMBABWEAN NATIONAL SUSPECTED OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND TORTURE DUE TO INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE

Name withheld

#### Country of commission

Zimbabwe

#### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

#### Suspect

Name withheld, Zimbabwean national

#### Country of residence of suspect

United Kingdom

#### Charges

As the case was at the investigation stage, the suspect had not been formally charged. The investigation focused on crimes against humanity and torture.

#### Current status

Case dismissed

#### Facts

The suspect was alleged to have committed crimes against humanity and torture in Zimbabwe between 2003-2006.

#### Procedure

On 17 July 2024, officers from the Metropolitan Police arrested a 42-year-old man in the West Midlands as part of ongoing investigations into allegations of crimes against humanity and torture that occurred in Zimbabwe between 2003-2006, contrary to Section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988. The suspect was later released on bail pending further enquiries.

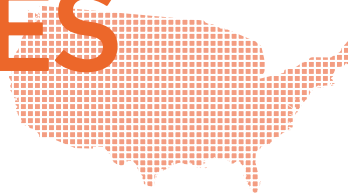
On 27 May 2025, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.

### Follow-up on other cases

- Vincent Bajinya, Célestin Ugirashebuja, Charles Munyaneza, Emmanuel Nteziryayo and Célestin Mutabaruka (UJAR 2022, p. 89): the investigation is ongoing.
- Afghan national (UJAR 2024, p. 108): on 5 October 2023, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Angolan national (UJAR 2024, p. 109): on 12 February 2024, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Gambian national (UJAR 2024, p. 119): the investigation is ongoing.
- Iranian national (UJAR 2024, p. 111): on 10 September 2024, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Kuwaiti national (UJAR 2023, p. 90): on 16 September 2024, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Libyan national (UJAR 2024, p. 115): on 17 July 2024, the investigation was closed due to insufficient evidence to proceed.
- Rwandan national (UJAR 2025, p. 95): the investigation is ongoing.
- Sri Lankan nationals (UJAR 2024, p. 117): the investigation is ongoing.
- Syrian national (UJAR 2024, p. 118): the investigation is ongoing.

### Ongoing structural investigations

- Structural investigation in relation to core international crimes committed in Israel and the Palestinian territories
- Structural investigation in relation to core international crimes committed by the former Syrian regime since 2011
- Structural investigation in relation to core international crimes committed against the Yazidis
- Structural investigation in relation to core international crimes committed in Ukraine since 2019
- Structural investigations in each of the countries under investigation by the International Criminal Court



## NEW CASE!

### ALLEGED FORMER MEMBER OF THE SECURITY FORCES OF THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF WESTERN BOSNIA ACQUITTED OF TORTURING PRISONERS

Sead Miljković (or Sead Dukić)

#### Country of commission

Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### Jurisdictional basis

Active personality

#### Suspect

Sead Miljković (or Sead Dukić), United States national, alleged former member of the *Obezbjeđenje objekata i lica* (OBL)

#### Country of residence of suspect

United States

#### Charges

Torture; passport fraud

#### Current status

Acquitted of torture; convicted of passport fraud; sentenced to eight months of house arrest

#### Facts

Sead Miljković was alleged to have been a member of the OBL, a police force of the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia (APZB). The OBL was in charge of guarding the APZB headquarters near the town of Velika Kladuša, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

From December 1994 to August 1995, OBL members reportedly imprisoned soldiers of the former army of Bosnia and Herzegovina in detention camps and subjected them to torture and forced labour. The torture is reported

to have included severe beatings with a metal pipe, rifle butt and shovel handle until prisoners lost consciousness. Members of the OBL also allegedly threatened the prisoners with death, forced them to perform hard labour without water and forced prisoners to fight each other. They are also alleged to have pushed one victim's head down onto a knife or bayonet, as if to impale his throat.

Sead Miljković was alleged to have tortured two prisoners of war, Emir Pehlic and Ibro Nuhanovic, from 1994 to 1995.

#### Procedure

In 2023, Miljković was discovered living in Chattanooga, Tennessee, United States of America under a false name. He was identified through facial recognition and fingerprints matching his profile on the Interpol Red Notices list.

In June 2023, Miljković was arrested and indicted by a grand jury on three counts of passport fraud. On 6 December 2023, a superseding indictment added charges of torture. On 14 December 2023, Miljković was sent to trial.

On 24 February 2025, a judge denied Miljković's motion to dismiss the torture charges based on the statute of limitations, holding that, due to the nature of the alleged crimes, the statute of limitations did not apply.

The trial for the three counts of torture was held in late April 2025. On 2 May 2025, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty on the torture charges.

Following the trial, Miljković pled guilty to one count of passport fraud on 17 June 2025. In exchange, the prosecution dropped the other passport fraud charges.

On 2 November 2025, Miljković was sentenced to eight months of house arrest for passport fraud, part of a five-year probation term, and a USD 4 000 fine. His defence team has indicated it is likely he will be forced to leave the United States.

## FORMER ALLEGED MEMBER OF A PARAMILITARY DEATH SQUAD CONVICTED OF TORTURE COMMITTED IN THE GAMBIA

Michael Sang Correa

### Country of commission

The Gambia

### Jurisdictional basis

Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Michael Sang Correa, Gambian national, alleged former member of the *Junglers* paramilitary group

### Country of residence of suspect

United States

### Charges

Torture; conspiracy to commit torture

### Current status

Convicted; sentenced to 67.5 years in prison; under appeal; detained

### Facts

The Gambia was under the control of Yahya Jammeh from 1994 to 2016. During his dictatorship, human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, torture, extrajudicial killing, sexual violence and arbitrary detention were widespread. The *Junglers* were a death squad that answered directly to President Jammeh and were considered one of the most brutal enforcement arms of Jammeh's regime. In 2015, the United Nations special rapporteur on torture found that the *Junglers* carried out the regime's most repressive abuses: arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearance and extrajudicial killing.

Michael Sang Correa is alleged to be a former member of the *Junglers* death squad. Correa and other *Junglers* allegedly tortured detainees in the Mile 2 Prison and the National Intelligence Agency Headquarters. According to the

indictment against him, Correa and other *Junglers* tortured suspected coup d'état participants for confessions, including by beating their victims with plastic pipes, wires and branches; suffocating them with plastic bags; dripping molten plastic and acid on their bodies; and subjecting them to electric shocks.

In 2016, Adama Barrow defeated Jammeh in a presidential election and launched the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) to reckon with Jammeh's legacy of human rights abuses. The TRRC issued its findings on 24 December 2021 and called for the prosecution of those most responsible for gross human rights violations and abuses during Jammeh's rule, including the former president and members of the *Junglers* paramilitary unit. During the TRRC hearings in The Gambia, former members of the *Junglers* publicly testified about the crimes they committed under Jammeh's orders. Several victims testified that Correa personally tortured them or was present while other *Junglers* tortured them.

### Procedure

On 17 September 2019, the United States Department of Homeland Security arrested Correa in Denver, Colorado for overstaying his visa. Correa was placed in immigration detention and removal proceedings. He applied for asylum, but his application was denied in January 2020. Correa appealed his asylum denial in February 2020, and his removal from the United States was stayed pending the resolution of his appeal.

Following news of his detention, Correa's victims and a coalition of human rights organisations, comprised of the Center for Justice and Accountability, the African Network Against Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances, the Gambia Center for Victims of Human

Rights Violations, the Guernica Centre for International Justice, Human Rights Watch, the Solo Sandeng Foundation and TRIAL International, called on the United States to investigate the credible allegations of grave international crimes committed by Correa in The Gambia.

On 11 June 2020, the United States Attorney for the District of Colorado announced Correa's indictment under the Torture Act on six counts of torture and one count of conspiracy to commit torture. Following this announcement, the Gambian Ministry of Justice issued a press release in support of the indictment. Correa pled not guilty to the charges against him. In October 2023, the United States District Court for the District of Colorado scheduled Correa's trial for two weeks starting on 16 September 2024.

In December 2023, Correa filed two motions challenging the indictment. He argued that the United States Congress lacked constitutional authority to enact the Torture Act. Correa also argued that the prosecution of a noncitizen for crimes committed entirely within the jurisdiction of another sovereign State violated his rights to due process.

In February 2024, the court denied both of Correa's motions challenging the indictment. The court affirmed that the United States Congress has constitutional authority to enact criminal statutes codifying United States obligations under international treaties, such as the Convention Against Torture. The court also concluded that Correa had 'receive[d] fair warning that he could face prosecution for his actions', 'because he is alleged to have committed an offence (1) in violation of a statute implementing an international treaty which provided global notice of proscribed conduct, and/or (2) which is universally condemned such that he was on notice of

potential future prosecution'. While the court found 'that nexus to the United States is not required' to comply with Correa's due process rights, it found that any nexus requirement was satisfied 'by Mr. Correa's wilful travel to the United States and prolonged presence in this country', along with one victim's United States citizenship.

On 19 August 2024, Correa filed a motion to dismiss the indictment against him, arguing that the charges were not timely. The court denied this motion.

On 30 August 2024, less than three weeks before Correa's trial was scheduled to begin, he filed another motion to dismiss the indictment. He explained that two witnesses whose testimony he wished to present in support of his defence refused to travel to the United States without immunity from prosecution. He argued that the United States government's refusal to grant immunity to these two witnesses violated his right to due process. The court denied this motion. In a second motion, Correa sought to delay the trial so that his attorneys could travel to The Gambia to record oral testimony from these two witnesses. On 11 September 2024, the court granted Correa's motion.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

The trial was eventually held in April 2025. During the historic five-day trial, the jury heard evidence that Correa was a member of the *Junglers*. Victims and witnesses testified that, following an attempted coup against former president Yahya Jammeh's dictatorship in 2006, Correa and other *Junglers* brutally tortured suspected participants in the coup, including by beating them, suffocating them with plastic bags and subjecting them to electric shocks.

On 15 April 2025, the jury unanimously found Correa guilty of five counts of torture and one count of conspiracy to commit torture.

On 22 August 2025, Correa was sentenced to 67.5 years in prison. During sentencing, Correa's victims made statements about the impact of crimes committed by Correa and other *Junglers* on them and their families. They also spoke about the impact of this case on The Gambia, emphasising the importance of accountability for the *Junglers* and continued hope for justice.

On 25 August 2025, Correa filed a notice of appeal to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeal.

## TRIAL DATES SET FOR FORMER HEAD OF DAMASCUS CENTRAL PRISON AND GOVERNOR OF DEIR EZ-ZOR CHARGED WITH TORTURE

Samir Ousman Alsheikh

Country of commission  
Syria

Jurisdictional basis  
Universal jurisdiction

### Suspect

Samir Ousman Alsheikh, Syrian national, former head of Damascus Central Prison (Adra Prison) and former governor of Deir ez-Zor

Country of residence of suspect  
United States

### Charges

Torture and conspiracy to commit torture; fraud and misuse of visas; attempted unlawful procurement of naturalisation

### Current status

Indicted; awaiting trial; detained

### Facts

Damascus Central Prison, colloquially known as Adra Prison, was a prison operated by the Syrian Interior Ministry for the detention of political dissidents and prisoners accused or convicted of other crimes.

The prison is reported to have contained a 'punishment wing', located in a below-ground section of the building, which included small isolation cells where prisoners were detained in extremely cold conditions, allowed to wear only minimal or no clothing and were provided with inadequate or inedible food. The wing also contained a room in which prisoners were interrogated and subjected to numerous forms of torture, including beatings with batons and cables, being suspended from the ceiling by their wrists for hours, being shocked with electric prods and burned with heated metal

rods and being subjected to a device known as the 'Flying Carpet', which folded prisoners' bodies in half at the waist, causing excruciating pain and sometimes resulting in fractured spines.

According to the indictment, in his role as head of the prison during the period 2005 to 2008, Samir Ousman Alsheikh ordered subordinates and was sometimes personally involved in interrogating and torturing prisoners in the 'punishment wing', including by beating them, suspending them from the ceiling with their arms extended and subjecting them to the 'Flying Carpet'.

Alsheikh is reported to have immigrated to the United States in 2020 and to have applied for United States citizenship in 2023.

#### Procedure

On 10 July 2024, Alsheikh was arrested at the Los Angeles International Airport for making false statements related to his role in torture allegedly committed in Adra Prison in his applications for permanent residency and United States citizenship. On 22 August 2024, he filed a request to be released from detention pending trial. The United States District Court for the Central District of California denied the request and ordered he remain detained pending trial.

On 12 December 2024, a superseding indictment was issued charging Alsheikh with torture and conspiracy to commit torture, fraud and misuse of visas, and attempted unlawful procurement of naturalisation. The charges of torture relate to his conduct as head of Adra Prison during the period 2005 to 2008.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2025

The trial has been scheduled to take place in March 2026.

### Follow-up on other cases

- Dmitry Budnik, Suren Seiranovich and others ([UJAR 2025](#), p. 96): suspects indicted, location unknown.
- Jamil Hassan and Abdul Salam Mahmoud ([UJAR 2025](#), p. 96): suspects indicted, location unknown.
- Ross Roggio and Roggio Consulting Co., LLC ([UJAR 2025](#), p. 98): conviction and sentence under appeal.

**Table of**

**Cases**

- \* ● For defendants who were formally charged or convicted, charges are marked by a **black** symbol.
- For those who have not yet been formally charged, alleged crimes are marked by **grey** symbol.

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Unknown members of the Chinese authorities	Argentina	China	●	●				Under investigation	16
Álvaro Uribe Vélez	Argentina	Colombia		●	●			Case dismissed; under appeal	17
Aung San Suu Kyi and others	Argentina	Myanmar	●	●				Under investigation; arrest warrants issued	18
Nicolás Maduro and others	Argentina	Venezuela		●				Under investigation; arrest warrants issued	19
<b>Active personality</b> Oliver Schulz	Australia	Afghanistan			●			Indicted; awaiting trial	21
Khaled H. and Musab A. R.	Austria	Syria				●		Indicted; Khaled H. detained; Musab A. R. released from detention subject to less restrictive measures	22
<b>Active personality</b> Etienne Davignon	Belgium	Democratic Republic of the Congo			●			Indicted; awaiting confirmation of charges	24
Martina Johnson	Belgium	Liberia		●	●			Investigation completed; awaiting confirmation of the charges; on conditional release	25
Two Israeli soldiers	Belgium	Palestine			●			Case referred to the ICC	26
A.S.	Belgium	Rwanda	●		●			Charged while under investigation; detained	26
R.G.	Belgium	Rwanda	●		●			Charged while under investigation; detained	27
E.K.	Belgium	Rwanda			●			Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	27
Emmanuel Nkunduwimye	Belgium	Rwanda	●		●			Convicted; sentenced to 25 years in prison; appeal before the Supreme Court rejected; detained	27

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Ernest Gakwaya	Belgium	Rwanda	●		●			Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	27
<b>Active personality</b> Sammy Djedou	Belgium	Syria and Iraq	●	●				Convicted in absentia; sentenced to life imprisonment; current location unknown, presumed dead	28
<b>Active personality</b> Ahmed Fouad Mostafa Eldidi	Canada	Iraq			●			Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	29
Yan Petrovsky	Finland	Ukraine			●			Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; on appeal	30
<b>Active personality</b> Several multinational garment companies	France	China						Case dismissed	32
Roger Lumbala Tshitenga	France	Democratic Republic of the Congo		●				Convicted; sentenced to 30 years in prison; detained	33
Ahmed Hamdane El Aswadi	France	Iraq						Case dismissed	34
Saturday T.	France	Liberia		●				Charged while under investigation; detained	35
Amesys and two of its executives	France	Libya				●		Investigation completed; five indictments issued, two dismissed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge	35
<b>Active personality</b> Nili Kupfer-Naouri and Rachel Touitou	France	Palestine	●	●				Under investigation	36
<b>Passive personality</b> Unknown – killing of two French children in Gaza	France	Palestine			●			Under investigation	37
<b>Active personality</b> Yoel O.	France	Palestine			●			Under investigation	37
Agathe Habyarimana	France	Rwanda						Case dismissed; on appeal	38
<b>Active personality</b> Alphonse K.	France	Rwanda	●	●				Charged while under investigation; under judicial surveillance	39

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Cyprien Kayumba	France	Rwanda						Case dismissed; on appeal	39
Hyacinthe Bicomumpaka	France	Rwanda	●	●				Charged while under investigation; detained	40
Callixte Mbarushimana	France	Rwanda		●				Charged while under investigation	41
Claude Muhayimana	France	Rwanda	●	●				Convicted; sentenced to 14 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; under judicial surveillance	41
Eugène Rwamucyo	France	Rwanda	●	●				Convicted; sentenced to 27 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained	42
<b>Active personality</b> Isaac Kamali	France	Rwanda						Case closed due to the death of the suspect	43
Madjaliwa Safari	France	Rwanda	●	●				Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	44
<b>Active personality</b> Marcel Hitayezu	France	Rwanda						Case dismissed; on appeal	44
Pierre Kayondo	France	Rwanda	●	●				Charged while under investigation; under judicial surveillance	45
Sosthène Munyemana	France	Rwanda	●	●				Convicted; sentenced to 24 years in prison; confirmed on appeal; appeal pending before the Supreme Court; detained	45
Malik N.	France	Syria		●				Charged while under investigation; detained	46
Abdulhamid Chaban	France	Syria		●				Charged while under investigation; investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge; under judicial surveillance	47

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
<b>Active personality</b> Adib Mayaleh (André Mayard)	France	Syria		•	•			Investigation completed; placed under the status of assisted witness	48
<b>Passive personality</b> Bashar al-Assad, Maher al-Assad, Ghassan Abbas, Bassam al-Hassan, Talal Shafiq Makhluף	France	Syria		•	•			Under investigation; arrest warrants issued	49
<b>Passive personality</b> Bashar al-Assad, Fahed Jassem al-Fraj, Ali Abdallah Ayoub, Ahmad Balloul, Ali Safetli, Nadim al-Jourdi, Ibrahim al-Chaher	France	Syria			•			Investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge; arrest warrants issued	50
<b>Passive personality</b> Bashar al-Assad, Ali Ayoub, Ali Mamluk, Ghassan Bilal, Maher al-Assad, Mohamed Dib Zaitoun, Rafik Mahmoud Shahadah	France	Syria		•	•			Under investigation; arrest warrants issued	51
<b>Active personality</b> Lafarge SA and top executives	France	Syria		•				Trial concluded for financing terrorism and violation of international sanctions; verdict pending; Lafarge SA charged while under investigation for complicity in crimes against humanity	52
<b>Active personality</b> Lolita C.	France	Syria	•	•				Charged while under investigation; investigation completed; awaiting the formal decision of the investigating judge; detained	55
Majdi Nema (alias Islam Alloush)	France	Syria			•			Convicted; sentenced to 10 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained	55
<b>Active personality</b> Sonia Mejri	France	Syria	•	•				Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	57

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
<b>Active personality</b> Abdelnasser Benyoucef (alias Abou Mouthana)			●	●				Indicted; presumed dead in Syria	57
<b>Passive personality</b> Unknown – killing of journalist Antoni Lallican	France	Ukraine			●			Under investigation	58
Anwar S.	Germany	Syria		●				Under investigation; detained	59
Fahad A.	Germany	Syria		●				Indicted; detained	59
Alaa M.	Germany	Syria		●	●			Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment and subsequent preventive detention; awaiting appeal trial; detained	60
Ammar A.	Germany	Syria		●	●			Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; awaiting appeal trial; detained	61
Jihad A., Mahmoud A., Sameer S., Wael S. and Mazhar J.	Germany	Syria		●	●			On trial; detained	62
Ahmad A. A.	Germany	Syria		●	●			Indicted; detained	63
Amer Tarak A.	Germany	Syria			●			Convicted of war crimes and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; sentenced to nine years and ten months in prison; detained	64
Basel O.	Germany	Syria						Convicted of membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; sentenced to four years and six months in prison; detained	64
Sohail A.	Germany	Syria			●			Convicted of war crimes and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; sentenced to seven years in prison; detained	64

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Mohammad A. and Asmael K.	Germany	Syria						Convicted of membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes; sentenced to seven and six years in prison; detained	65
<b>Active personality</b> Nadine K.	Germany	Syria and Iraq		•	•			Conviction partly overturned by the Federal Court of Justice; sentenced to eight years and six months in prison; detained	66
Ossama A.	Germany	Syria			•			Convicted of war crimes against property and membership in a foreign terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes against persons, crimes against humanity and aiding and abetting genocide; sentenced to five years in prison; detained	67
Twana H. S. and Asia R. A.	Germany	Syria and Iraq	•	•	•			On trial; detained	67
<b>Active personality</b> Murat Dernjani	Kosovo	Syria		•				Convicted; sentenced to 20 years in prison; detained	69
<b>Passive personality</b> Unknown – member of the Russian Armed Forces	Lithuania	Ukraine			•			Under investigation; detained	70
<b>Active personality</b> Abdul Razaq Arif	Netherlands	Afghanistan						Case closed due to the death of the suspect	71
Abu Khuder	Netherlands	Syria			•			Convicted; sentenced to 23 years and six months in prison; confirmed on appeal; detained	72

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Ahmad al-Y.	Netherlands	Syria						Convicted of membership in a terrorist organisation; acquitted of war crimes; sentenced to five years and four months in prison; awaiting new ruling from the Court of Appeal on charge of membership in a terrorist organisation; detained	73
Mustafa A.	Netherlands	Syria		●	●			Convicted; confirmed on appeal; sentenced to 13 years in prison; detained	74
Name withheld – Syrian national	Netherlands	Syria		●				Indicted; detained	75
Adi Karni	Peru	Palestine	●	●	●			Under investigation	77
<b>Passive personality</b> Unknown – representatives of Israeli arms companies	Poland	Palestine, Israel and Poland						Case dismissed; on appeal	78
Ammar Ameen	Portugal	Iraq			●			Convicted of war crimes and membership in a terrorist organisation; sentenced to 16 years in prison; confirmed by the Court of Appeal; on appeal before the Supreme Court; detained	79
Yaser Ameen	Portugal	Iraq						Convicted of membership in a terrorist organisation; sentenced to ten years in prison; confirmed by the Court of Appeal; on appeal before the Supreme Court; detained	79
<b>Active personality</b> José Antonio Jainaga and two other executives of steelmaker Sidenor	Spain	Palestine	●	●				Under investigation	80

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
<b>Passive personality</b> Kayumba Nyamwasa	Spain	Rwanda	●	●				Under investigation; arrest warrant issued; current location unknown	80
<b>Active personality</b> Manuel Terrén	Spain	Sierra Leone			●			Under investigation; under provisional release	81
<b>Active personality</b> Alex Schneider and Ian Lundin	Sweden	Sudan			●			On trial	83
<b>Active personality</b> Lina Laina Ishaq	Sweden	Syria	●	●	●			Convicted; sentenced to 12 years in prison; confirmed on appeal; appeal pending before the Supreme Court; detained	84
<b>Active personality</b> Osama Krayem	Sweden	Syria			●			Convicted; sentenced to life imprisonment; confirmed on appeal; detained	85
<b>Active personality</b> Names withheld – Swedish nationals	Sweden	Syria			●			One individual on trial; detained; investigation into two other individuals completed without indictment	86
Ousman Sonko	Switzerland	The Gambia		●				Convicted; sentenced to 20 years in prison; awaiting appeal trial; detained	88
Name withheld – Rwandan national	Switzerland	Rwanda			●			Under investigation; detained	89
Rifaat al-Assad	Switzerland	Syria		●	●			As of 31 December 2025, indicted; case will be closed in 2026 due to the death of the suspect	90
<b>Active personality</b> Jona Neidhart	Switzerland	Ukraine			●			Under investigation	91
Benjamin Netanyahu and 36 other senior Israeli officials	Türkiye	Palestine		●	●			Under investigation; arrest warrants issued	92

DEFENDANT(S)	COUNTRY OF PROSECUTION	COUNTRY OF COMMISSION	CHARGES / ALLEGED CRIMES*					CURRENT STATUS	PAGE
			Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Torture	Enforced disappearance		
Active personality Name withheld – British national	United Kingdom	Sri Lanka						Case dismissed	93
Active personality Names withheld – five British soldiers	United Kingdom	Syria						Case dismissed	93
Name withheld – Zimbabwean national	United Kingdom	Zimbabwe						Case dismissed	93
Active personality Sead Miljković (or Sead Dukić)	United States	Bosnia and Herzegovina						Acquitted of torture; convicted of passport fraud; sentenced to eight months house of arrest	95
Michael Sang Correa	United States	The Gambia				●		Convicted; sentenced to 67.5 years in prison; under appeal; detained	96
Samir Ousman Alsheikh	United States	Syria				●		Indicted; awaiting trial; detained	97



# Who

# We Are

## TRIAL INTERNATIONAL

TRIAL International is a non-governmental organisation fighting impunity for international crimes and supporting victims in their quest for justice. TRIAL International takes an innovative approach to the law, paving the way to justice for survivors of unspeakable suffering. The organisation provides legal assistance, litigates cases, develops local capacity and pushes the human rights agenda forward.

[www.trialinternational.org](http://www.trialinternational.org)

## THE CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) is a United States-based human rights organisation dedicated to accountability for torture, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other grave abuses. Using innovative litigation and transitional justice strategies, CJA partners with survivors and their communities to seek truth, justice and redress for atrocity.

[www.cja.org](http://www.cja.org)

## CIVITAS MAXIMA

Civitas Maxima, based in Geneva (Switzerland), is an independent non-governmental organisation that supports and assists forgotten victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity, helping them to obtain justice before foreign or international courts in situations where legal actions have failed or are impossible at the domestic level. It documents crimes, initiates legal proceedings and provides assistance to judicial authorities. It shares its knowledge and expertise to strengthen the capacity of civil society groups and legal practitioners. It informs the public and communities in the countries where the crimes were committed about trials and advancements in international justice.

[www.civitas-maxima.org](http://www.civitas-maxima.org)

## THE EUROPEAN CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) is an independent, non-profit organisation based in Berlin that makes use of groundbreaking strategic legal intervention to challenge impunity, injustice and human rights violations worldwide. ECCHR aims to hold the responsible State and non-State actors accountable and to bring about political, economic, legal and social change. In order to achieve that, ECCHR works closely with partners from around the world.

[www.ecchr.eu](http://www.ecchr.eu)

## THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) was established in 1922, and today unites nearly 200 member organisations in 116 countries around the world. It takes action to protect, support and raise the voices of human rights defenders and victims of grave abuses, through investigation, prosecution and advocacy. FIDH influences political decision-makers, intergovernmental organisations, businesses and citizens to ensure that all civil, political, economic, social, environmental and cultural rights are respected.

[www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

## REDRESS

REDRESS is a non-governmental organisation that pursues legal claims on behalf of survivors of torture in the United Kingdom and around the world to obtain justice and reparation for the violation of their human rights. It empowers survivors to access justice through cases against governments, civil cases against individuals and cases where it advocates for law enforcement bodies to prosecute perpetrators under the principle of universal jurisdiction. REDRESS's approach is strategic, so that as well as representing an individual it targets the policy reasons that enabled the torture to take place, by building a campaign that uses advocacy, community engagement and communications to influence change.

[www.redress.org](http://www.redress.org)











**TRIAL**  
International

[www.trialinternational.org](http://www.trialinternational.org)

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the City of Geneva, the European Union, Oak Foundation and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of TRIAL International and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the above-mentioned donors.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

