

JOINT BULLETIN

Making justice work: Connecting Congolese communities to European courts

*BRIDGING FORMAL AND
INFORMAL JUSTICE IN
THE LANDMARK ROGER
LUMBALA TRIAL*



Presented by:



**Global Initiative
Against Impunity**
Making Justice Work



**Co-funded by
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AT A GLANCE

WHO IS ROGER LUMBALA?

Roger Lumbala Tshitenga is a Congolese national and former leader of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie – National (RCD-N)* armed group. He later became Minister of Foreign Trade and a Member of Parliament in the DRC.

WHAT WAS HE CHARGED WITH?

He was charged with complicity in crimes against humanity committed during the 2002 '*Effacer le tableau*' (*Erasing the Board*) military operation in north-eastern DRC, during the Second Congo War.

On 15 December 2025, the Paris Assize Court found Roger Lumbala guilty and sentenced him to 30 years' imprisonment.



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BY THE NUMBERS

5

Weeks of
hearings

65

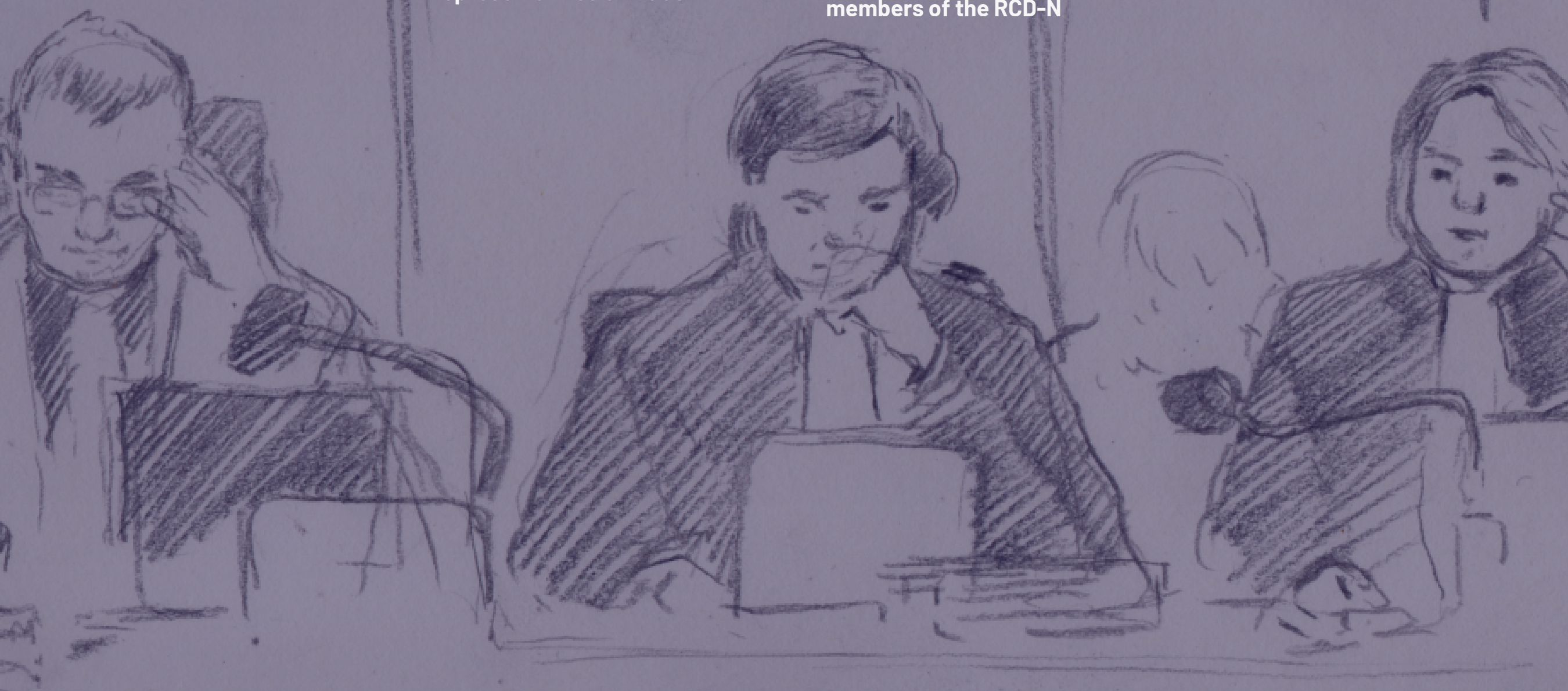
Testimonies
Including 20+ Congolese
survivors and victims, and
representatives of NGOs

30

Witnesses
Including United Nations
investigators, journalists,
experts, and former
members of the RCD-N

35

Civil parties
Including civil society
organisations, including
TRIAL International



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The verdict against Lumbala is historic as it challenges over two decades of impunity.

He is the first Congolese national to be tried before a national court for crimes against humanity committed during the Second Congo War (1998-2003). It is the first universal jurisdiction (UJ) case in France related to events in the DRC. By convicting Lumbala, the French court reaffirmed a fundamental principle: **the gravest crimes know no borders.**

“FOR THE FIRST TIME, A NATIONAL COURT HAS DARED TO CONFRONT THE ATROCITIES OF THE SECOND CONGO WAR AND SHOW THAT JUSTICE CAN BREAK THROUGH EVEN AFTER DECADES OF IMPUNITY.”

–Daniele Perissi, Legal Advisor and Head of DRC Program, TRIAL International

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BRINGING THE TRIAL CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES

Through community reporting, media engagement, and dialogue with survivors, Impunity Watch and TRIAL sought to bridge the gap between a courtroom in Paris and communities in eastern DRC. We collaborated to improve access to information for Congolese communities affected by the crimes judged in the Lumbala trial.



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WHAT'S NEXT?

“THIS SHOULD NOT REMAIN AN ISOLATED CASE. THERE ARE MANY OTHER WARLORDS WHO ARE FREE AND CONTINUE TO COMMIT ATROCITIES.”

–Resident of Beni

Explore reflections from survivors and affected Congolese communities, and lessons we have learned, in our joint bulletin.

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