



UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION UPDATES **(July 2024 – September 2024)**

July 2024

- 1. Philippe Hategekimana Case (France)** : On June 28, a former Rwandan police officer, naturalized as French under the name Philippe Manier, was sentenced to life imprisonment for genocide and crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda in 1994. Manier was tried in Paris for a 7-week trial under France's universal jurisdiction. [His appeal trial will be held on November 14.](#)
- 2. Jean-Claude Iyamuremye Case (Netherlands and Rwanda)**: On June 30, Iyamuremye, who was extradited from the Netherlands in 2016, was sentenced to [25 years in prison](#) for his role in the 1994 Rwandan genocide by the High Court (Chamber of International and Transnational Crimes), particularly the massacre of Tutsis in Kicukiro. The Dutch courts initially handled his case under universal jurisdiction before his extradition.
- 3. Gibril Massaquoi Case (Finland)**: Gibril Massaquoi, a former Sierra Leonean rebel commander, after being acquitted of war crimes under a universal jurisdiction trial, sought compensation from Finland, [citing harsh detention conditions and media hostility](#). His claim includes €1,000 per day of detention, lost income, and legal costs, totaling €815,000 for his claim of 709 days of unjust detention. On 18 July, [Finland awarded him 390,000 euros in damages](#) for his time spent behind bars.
- 4. Alvaro Uribe Case (Argentina)**: On July 1, 2024, the Federal Criminal and Correctional Court No. 2 of Buenos Aires affirmed the [right of victims to proceed with their complaint](#) against the former Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez under universal jurisdiction. The Court also granted full rights to victims to participate in the proceedings. Velez is accused of extrajudicial killings, which were falsely reported as 'combat killings' and enforced disappearances. The court's decision followed confirmation from the ICC on April 29, 2024, that no investigation was ongoing against Uribe, which was communicated to the victims on July 1.
- 5. Undisclosed Identity Businessman Case (Spain)**: On July 2, 2024, a Spanish businessman living in Brazil was arrested in Málaga, Spain, for allegedly [trading](#)

[blood diamonds and being complicit in crimes during Sierra Leone's civil war](#). The Spanish High Court issued the arrest warrant due to his suspected support of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This case marks the second time a European citizen has been arrested for acts related to the trafficking of blood diamonds from Sierra Leone.

- 6. Samir Ousman al-Sheikh Case (United States):** In July, Samir Ousman al-Sheikh (72 y/o) was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport for immigration fraud. Al-Sheikh, who has lived in the U.S. since 2020, is accused of [lying on his visa and citizenship applications by denying his involvement in human rights abuses](#). As the former head of Syria's infamous Adra prison from 2005 to 2008, al-Sheikh allegedly oversaw severe torture and executions of political dissidents. His arrest followed a tip-off from Syrian activists who identified him as a potential war criminal.

August 2024

- 1. UN Calls for Member States for Application of UJ:** On August 6, UN experts called for the prosecution of Iranian officials for crimes against humanity committed during the 2022 crackdown on protests, which particularly targeted ethnic and religious minorities. Following the death of Mahsa Amini, these experts [urged all UN member states to apply universal jurisdiction](#) to hold those responsible accountable, highlighting severe human rights violations, including lethal force, torture, and persecution based on gender, ethnicity, and religion.

September 2024

- 1. Michael Correa Case (United States):** Michael Correa, a Gambian ex-death squad member, was expected to face trial in the U.S. from September 16 to 27, 2024, for [allegedly torturing individuals in The Gambia in 2006](#). Arrested in 2019 and charged in 2020, Correa is accused of carrying out these acts under orders from former President Yahya Jammeh. However, the presiding judge [granted a defense motion on September 9th](#) to postpone the trial to allow Correa's attorneys to travel to The Gambia to collect videotaped depositions from two witnesses, and the new trial date has not yet been set.
- 2. Lucas Cho Ayaba Case (Norway):** On 25 September, Lucas Cho Ayaba, who identified as a separatist leader and head of the Ambazonia Defence Forces, was arrested in Norway on [suspicion of incitement to commit crimes against humanity](#). He is implicated in atrocities allegedly committed during the ongoing conflict in Cameroon's northwest and southwest regions, which has resulted in over 6,000 deaths and the displacement of at least one million people since the conflict began in 2016. If convicted, Ayaba could face up to 30 years in prison.

- 3. Lina Laina Ishaq Case (Sweden):** Lina Laina Ishaq, a Swedish citizen associated with the Islamic State, faces charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes for her actions against Yazidi women and children in Raqqa, Syria. This trial is significant as it marks the first instance of IS attacks against the Yazidis being prosecuted in Sweden. Prosecutors allege that during IS rule, Ishaq treated Yazidi women and children as property, subjecting them to slavery, sexual slavery, forced labor, deprivation of liberty, and extrajudicial executions.