



UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION UPDATES

(April 2024 - June 2024)

April 2024

1. **Sonia M. Case (France):** [A French Court has charged Sonia M.](#), former wife of the jihadist group's head of external operations Abdelnasser Benyoucef, with crimes against humanity and genocide. She is accused of enslaving a teenage Yazidi girl in Syria.
2. **Amer A. Case (German):** German prosecutors announced on April 11 that [they have filed war crime charges](#) against Amer A., the alleged leader of the rebel group Liwa Jund al-Rahman, which fought in Syria alongside Islamic State. Amer A. is accused of war crimes, including forced displacement, looting, and destruction.
3. **Majdi Nema Case (France):** Syrian national Majdi Nema, former spokesperson of the Jaysh al-Islam armed group, will be tried by the Paris Criminal Court from April 29 to May 23, 2025 for [complicity in the war crime of enlisting minors and for participating in a group formed to prepare war crimes](#). This trial will also address charges related to the kidnapping of four human rights activists, including Syrian lawyer and journalist Razan Zeitouneh, on December 9, 2013. The kidnapped individuals have never been found.

May 2024

1. **Ousman Sonko Case (Switzerland):** Ousman Sonko, a former Gambian Interior Minister, was convicted of crimes against humanity by a Swiss court in May. While his conviction is historic, [the court's decision to dismiss charges of sexual violence](#) has been criticized as a missed opportunity to fully recognize the scope of the crimes committed under his authority. Sonko was sentenced to 20 years in prison.
2. **Ali Mamlouk, Jamil Hassan and Abdel Salam Case (France):** On 30 May, three senior officials of the Syrian security services were found guilty in absentia by the Paris Judicial Court to life imprisonment for complicity in imprisonment, torture, enforced disappearance and murder constituting crimes against humanity, as well as for confiscation of property, qualified as war crimes [against a Franco-Syrian father and son](#). The lawsuit was filed in 2016 by the relatives of the victims, the

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH), with the support of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM).

June 2024

- 1. Emmanuel Nkuduwiye Case (Belgium):** Nkuduwiye was tried in Belgium Court for participating in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. He was accused of having committed an indeterminate number of murders, one rape and an attempted murder in the Amgar complex in Kigali belonging to Rutaganda. Nkuduwiye has been given a [25 years prison sentence, following a universal jurisdiction trial](#).
- 2. Bashar al-Assad Case (France):** A French Court of Appeal validated the [arrest warrant issued against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad](#). He is accused of complicity in crimes against humanity for the deadly chemical attacks of August 2023 occurred in Eastern and Western Ghouta, suburbs of Damascus, primarily against civilian populations. The Court held that no personal immunity shall apply in the case.
- 3. Marcel Bivugabagabo Case (France):** Former Lieutenant-Colonel of Rwandan army, [benefited from a definitive dismissal on June 19 following the investigations carried by French judges](#). He was charged for participation in genocide in 1994, and complicity in crimes against humanity, for his involvement in the attacks against the appeal court of Ruhengeri and the campus in Nyakinama in which hundreds of people were killed.
- 4. Khaled Nezzar Case (Switzerland):** The trial against Khaled Nezzar is scheduled to be held in Bellinzona [between June 17 and July 19, 2024](#). Nezzar, a former Algerian Minister of Defense, was arrested in Geneva in October 2011 based on complaints filed by TRIAL International and victims alleging that Nezzar was responsible for acts of torture and other war crimes committed during the Algerian civil war in the 1990s. The Swiss authorities are pursuing the case under the principle of universal jurisdiction.
- 5. Mohammed Amo Case (Sweden):** On 20 June, [a Swedish Court acquitted](#) a Syrian high ranking official – Mohammed Amo - accused of war crimes during Syrian civil war on the account of the failure of the prosecution to establish guilt.
- 6. Hamid Noury Case (Sweden):** Sweden [has released Hamid Noury](#), an Iranian national who was serving life imprisonment for his role in the 1988 massacre of thousands of political dissidents, primarily members and supporters of the People's Mujahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). The release was in exchange for two Swedish nationals held hostage by the Iranian regime.