



## UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION UPDATES

**(June – November 2023)**

### **June**

1. On 28 June, the [Paris Assize court handed a life sentence to former Rwandan gendarme Philippe Hategekimana](#) for genocide and crimes against humanity, committed on the territory of the Nyanza gendarmerie in southern Rwanda where he was chief warrant officer. He is the eighth defendant to be tried in France for the Rwandan genocide.

### **July**

2. Madjaliwa Safari, a Rwandan living in France, was [indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity](#) in early July. He allegedly played a leadership role in the roadblock “Chez Premier”, participating in the arrests and killings of Tutsi civilians.
3. The [International Bar Association reported on recent developments in UJ](#) regarding corporate accountability. Dr Priya Pillai, secretariat head, Asia Justice Coalition was quoted as follows:

“There is a need for the exercise of universal jurisdiction “closer to home” and a need to explore in greater depth the potential options in Asia and other regions. But we must also not miss opportunities for justice and accountability only on the basis that these are located far from the region.”

4. [The Paris War Crimes Unit sent Majdi Nema, alias Islam Alloush, to trial](#) for complicity in war crimes, including the enlistment of children and wilful killings. First French trial relating to crimes committed by the Syrian Islamist rebel group Jaysh al-Islam.

### **August**

5. Switzerland [issued an international arrest warrant](#) for the extradition of former Syrian VP Rifaat Al-Assad in relation to the Hama massacre.
6. [Former Algerian Minister of Defence was indicted](#) for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Switzerland. The indictment includes multiple charges relating to torture, inhuman treatment, arbitrary detention, and murder during the early years of the civil war (January 1992-January 1994). He will be the highest-ranking military official ever tried for such crimes based on the principle of universal jurisdiction.

7. [Former member of Lukashenka's hit squad Yuri Harauski brought before a Swiss court](#) for enforced disappearances in Belarus – the first UJ prosecution for this crime. [trial ended in acquittal in late September, but there is the possibility of an appeal]

## September

8. [The Lundin Moment](#): A landmark corporate accountability trial began in Stockholm, Sweden – two executives of Lundin Oil are accused of complicity in war crimes committed by the military in Sudan, after they enlisted the government to secure one of their oilfields.
9. 25 September: Asia Justice Coalition members Global Justice Center and the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK shared a [Q&A about the ongoing UJ case regarding Myanmar](#) authorities' crimes against Rohingya in Argentina.

## October

10. On 25 October, [five Myanmar nationals filed a war crimes complaint in a Philippines Court](#). The complaint specifically refers to a mass arson attack in Thantlang, Chin State in September 2021. It requested the Filipino prosecutors to open an investigation into ten junta officials.

## November

11. Michael Correa, an alleged member of 'the Junglers', former Gambian President Yahya Jammeh's personal hit squad, [is scheduled to stand trial](#) in Denver, US in September 2024. He is charged with torture and the conspiracy to commit torture. This is the first ever trial in the US based on universal jurisdiction.
12. Ousman Sonko, former Minister of Interior of The Gambia, [is scheduled to stand trial for crimes against humanity](#) in Switzerland in January 2024. He allegedly participated in multiple acts of torture, sexual violence, kidnapping, and killing between 2000 and 2016. He will be the highest-ranking official ever tried for international crimes under universal jurisdiction in Europe.
13. On November 8, an investigating judge in France [ordered the trial of Roger Lumbula](#), former MP and rebel chief from the Democratic Republic of Congo. He is charged with complicity in crimes against humanity against the Nande and Twa ethnic groups in 2002. He will be the highest-ranking Congolese national to face justice for atrocity crimes based on universal jurisdiction.
14. November 9: [11 plaintiffs brought a complaint against former Colombian President](#) Álvaro Uribe Vélez in an Argentine court. The complaint concerns a "false positive" policy that misrepresented 6,112 civilian victims of murders and enforced disappearances as casualties of combat. This action could lead to a former Colombian President being investigated for international crimes for the first time.