

Amal Clooney



Call: 2010 (2002 - New York Bar)

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Profile

Amal represents clients before international courts, including the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. Alongside court work, she provides advice to governments and individuals on legal issues in her areas of expertise.

Amal is ranked in the legal directories **Legal 500** and **Chambers and Partners** as a leading barrister in international human rights law, public international law, and international criminal law. She is described as 'a brilliant legal mind', a 'first-class international lawyer', a 'natural lead advocate' who is 'tactically first class' and 'a rare combination of intellectual depth and pragmatism'. The directories also spotlight her 'superb advocacy' and 'commanding presence before courts' and describe her as 'a dream performer before international tribunals'. They also emphasize that she is 'fantastically innovative', 'very sophisticated in pushing the boundaries' with an ability to galvanize 'heads of state, foreign ministers and business ... in a way that is very effective' for victims of human rights abuses.' She is described in the legal rankings as having a 'passionate commitment to the law and compassion for the people it serves', 'one of the finest advocates for the rights of victims in the sphere of international criminal prosecution' and 'in a league of her own at the Bar'.

Amal frequently represents victims of mass atrocities, including genocide and sexual violence. She has acted in many landmark human rights cases in recent years including the world's first and only trials in which ISIS members have been convicted of genocide against Yazidis. Amal also represents over 400 Yazidis in the first civil case in a U.S. court seeking to hold ISIS financiers responsible for supporting the terror group while it was committing its well-documented genocide.

She has represented Armenia in a case involving the Armenian genocide and was recently counsel to 126 victims of the genocide in Darfur, Sudan, at the International Criminal Court. She has also led a Legal Task Force on **Accountability for Crimes Committed in Ukraine**, established at the request of the government of Ukraine to advise on delivering justice for victims of crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. And she is a member of the **Working Group on Compensation for Damage Cause to Ukraine**, a group of international legal experts appointed by President Zelenskyy to advise on legal mechanisms for survivors of the conflict to claim compensation. In 2021 she was appointed Special Adviser to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Amal also represents political prisoners around the world and has helped to secure the freedom of journalists arbitrarily detained for their work across the globe. In 2020 Amal was the recipient of the Gwen Ifill Award for 'extraordinary and sustained achievement in the cause of press freedom' from the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Amal has served as a senior advisor to Kofi Annan when he was the UN's Envoy on Syria, as Counsel to the UN Inquiry on the use of armed drones and as a rapporteur for the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute on independence of the judiciary. She is a member of the UK's team of experts on preventing sexual violence in conflict zones and the UK Attorney General's panel of experts on public international law. From 2019-2021 she also served as deputy chair of an International Bar Association Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom chaired by former UK Supreme Court President Lord Neuberger.

Prior to joining the London bar, Amal completed a clerkship in The Hague at the International Court of Justice and worked as a prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. She is admitted to the New York Bar and practiced as a litigation attorney at Sullivan & Cromwell LLP in New York.

Amal is an Adjunct Professor at Columbia Law School and a Senior Fellow at the Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute. She is the co-founder of the Clooney Foundation for Justice, which provides free legal support to victims of human rights abuses in over 40 countries.

Selected Cases

Genocide, Sexual Violence, Torture and other Mass Atrocities

Iraq and Syria (representative cases)

- **Yazidi genocide perpetrated by ISIS (legal advice and advocacy before United Nations).** Representing a group of Iraqi victims from the Yazidi community seeking accountability for genocide and other crimes perpetrated by ISIS. Provide ongoing legal advice and successfully advocated for creation of a UN investigation of ISIS' crimes in Iraq, now operational pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2379. Clients include Nadia Murad, who was awarded the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, other female survivors of sexual violence, and the charity Yazda, which represents Yazidi survivors worldwide. Selected remarks at the UN can be accessed [here \(2016\)](#), [here \(2017\)](#) [here \(2019\)](#), and [here\(2021\)](#). A transcript of her remarks to the UN General Assembly is available [here](#). Her CNN interviews with Nadia Murad can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).
- ***Murad v. Lafarge (US District Court, Eastern District of New York)*.** Representing over 400 Yazidi-Americans in a civil case against French conglomerate Lafarge S.A. for conspiring to provide material support to ISIS. The lawsuit, filed under the civil provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act, seeks to hold Lafarge accountable for its admitted criminal conspiracy with ISIS and obtain compensation for the Yazidi people. Nadia Murad is the lead plaintiff in the case. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#) and her CNN interview with Nadia Murad can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).
- ***United States v. Nisreen Assad Ibrahim Bahar (a/ka "Umm Sayyaf") (US District Court, Eastern District of Virginia)*.** Representing five Yazidi women under the US *Crime Victims' Rights Act* in a criminal case involving crimes committed by 'the ISIS widow' (wife of Abu Sayyaf, who was a senior leader within ISIS) currently pending in the Eastern District of Virginia. Further information can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v. LafargeHolcim (French Supreme Court)*.** Represented a group of Yazidi women in landmark criminal proceedings against a French multi-national, LafargeHolcim. The company is charged with financing terrorism and complicity in crimes against humanity for allegedly providing funds and other support to ISIS. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v. Taha A-J (Higher Regional Court of Frankfurt)*.** Represented a Yazidi woman in a criminal case against a member of ISIS who purchased, enslaved, tortured and killed the client's five-year old daughter. This is the first known case in the world where a member of ISIS was convicted of genocide under universal jurisdiction laws. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#).

- ***Prosecutor v. Jennifer W (Higher Regional Court of Munich)***. Represented a Yazidi woman in a criminal case against an ISIS member who was found guilty of aiding and abetting crimes against humanity following the enslavement and abuse of the client and the killing of her five-year-old Yazidi girl at the defendant's home. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v. Sarah O (Higher Regional Court of Dusseldorf)***. Represented a Yazidi survivor in a case against a German ISIS member who was convicted of aiding and abetting rape, enslavement and religious and gender-based persecution as crimes against humanity for abuses against seven Yazidi women. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v. Nurten J (Higher Regional Court of Dusseldorf)***. Represented a Yazidi survivor in a case against a German ISIS member who was convicted of committing war crimes and aiding and abetting crimes against humanity against a Yazidi woman. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v. Omaima A (Higher Regional Court of Hamburg)***. Represented a Yazidi survivor in a case against a German ISIS member who was found guilty of aiding and abetting crimes against humanity for her involvement in the enslavement of two Yazidi women. Further information about the case can be accessed [here](#).
- ***Prosecutor v Jalda A (Higher Regional Court of Hamburg)***. Represented a Yazidi survivor in a case against a German ISIS member who was found guilty of aiding and abetting genocide as well as of crimes against humanity and war crimes for the enslavement and abuse of a Yazidi woman.
- ***Prosecutor v Nadine K (Higher Regional Court of Koblenz)***. Represented a Yazidi survivor in a case against a German ISIS member who was found guilty of aiding and abetting genocide as well as of crimes against humanity and war crimes for the enslavement and abuse of a Yazidi woman.

Myanmar

- ***The Gambia v. Myanmar (International Court of Justice)***. Instructed by a state party to the Genocide Convention to intervene in the ongoing case between The Gambia and Myanmar before the International Court of Justice, addressing Myanmar's alleged responsibility for genocide against the Rohingya and seeking remedies for the victims. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#), and [here](#).

Darfur

- ***The Prosecutor v. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman ('Ali Kushayb')*** (**International Criminal Court**). Represented a group of over 100 Darfuri victims in a criminal case against a commander of the Janjaweed militia in the Darfur region of Sudan charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

Ukraine

- ***Legal Task Force on Accountability for Crimes Committed in Ukraine (established at the request of the government of Ukraine to advise on delivering justice for victims of crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine)***. Ms Clooney led a **Legal Task Force** created at the behest of the Government of Ukraine that provided advice to the government of Ukraine in relation to legal avenues to secure criminal accountability and/or reparations in national jurisdictions, the International Criminal Court and the United Nations, including in relation to the establishment of a 'register of damage' and Claims Commission for Ukraine. The Task Force included Lord Neuberger, former President of the UK Supreme Court, Baroness Helena Kennedy, head of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, and other leading barristers.

Armenia

- ***Perinçek v. Switzerland (European Court of Human Rights)***. Represented the Republic of Armenia intervening as a third party in a case concerning the denial of the Armenian genocide. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#) and a video of submissions can be accessed [here](#).

Other

- ***Ireland v. UK (European Court of Human Rights)***. Represented the 'hooded men' in an application by the Republic of Ireland for revision of a 1978 decision by the European Court of Human Rights holding that the 'five techniques', including hooding, food and drink deprivation and sleep deprivation did not amount to torture. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#).
- ***Mutua et al. v. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (High Court of England and Wales)***. Legal advice on international law aspects of claim by 5 members of the Mau Mau Kenyan tribe alleging torture in detention camps during British Colonial rule in Kenya. A historic settlement was reached in this case - the UK government agreed to pay £19.9 million in compensation to over 5,000 claimants and they issued an apology for the abuses that took place.

- ***Johnson v. Ghana (African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights)***. Represented a Ghanaian citizen on death row before the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights in a case arguing that the mandatory death penalty imposed for certain categories of crimes amounts to a violation of the defendant's rights to life, to a fair trial and the prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- ***R (Bancoult) v. FCO (No.2) (UK Supreme Court)***. Represented Mr. Bancoult in proceedings concerning the removal of Chagossians from the Chagos Islands in 1971 and their right to return (instructed by Clifford Chance). More information about the case is available [here](#) and [here](#).
- ***Roma Lead Poisoning (United Nations Secretariat)***. Advised and represented members of the Roma community in claims for compensation against the United Nations arising from their lead poisoning in Kosovo's IDP camps (instructed by Leigh Day).
- ***Prosecutor v. Ayyash et al (Special Tribunal for Lebanon, The Hague)***. Member of the prosecuting team at the first UN-created court dealing with terrorism. The case concerned five persons accused of assassinating former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri and others in a terrorist attack in Beirut.
- ***UNIIIC (UN International Independent International Investigation Commission)***. Legal adviser to the head of the investigative team created by UN Security Council to investigate terrorist attacks on pro-western politicians and journalists in Lebanon. Interviewed witnesses and built prosecution case files that led to indictments for terrorism being issued against 5 members of the Hezbollah group.
- ***Prosecutor v. Milosevic (UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia)***. Judicial assistant to Judge Patrick Robinson, Presiding Judge in the first trial of a head of state -- the ex-President of the former Republic of Yugoslavia -- for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Other Cases involving Gender-based Violence

- ***AAA v. Camellia PLC et al. (High Court of England and Wales)***. Represented 36 women alleging rape, other gender-based violence and sexual harassment during the course of their work on tea estates in Malawi. A ground-breaking settlement was secured, including compensation for the claimants and a range of measures designed to improve conditions for women in the wider community such as a Women's Empowerment Initiative, a Female Leadership Training Programme, and funding of civic education programmes concentrating on sexual harassment and gender equality.

- **AAA v. Camellia PLC et al. (High Court of England and Wales).** Represented 85 Kenyans in a claim against a UK-based company for human rights abuses committed by security guards in Kenya, including killings, rape, and false imprisonment over a ten-year period. The settlement included compensation and the introduction of measures such as new community roads, community infrastructure, land distribution, and the introduction of a Human Rights Defender policy.

Freedom of Expression, Journalists and other Media Professionals

- **People of the Philippines v. Maria Ressa and Rappler (Manila Regional Trial Court, Philippines).** International counsel for Filipino journalist facing decades in prison in Manila based on spurious charges and a conviction for ‘cyber-libel’. In 2021, Ms Ressa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her ‘courageous fight for freedom of expression in the Philippines’. Maria Ressa and Amal Clooney’s interview with CNN can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#). Additional media coverage is available [here](#) (NYT), [here](#) (Guardian) and [here](#) (Guardian). Amal Clooney’s op-eds and interviews with Maria can be accessed [here](#) (Washington Post) and [here](#) (CPJ) and press releases from the legal team are available [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Prosecutor v. Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo (Insein District Court in Yangon, Myanmar).** Counsel for two Reuters journalists convicted and sentenced to 7 years in prison in Myanmar following their reporting on crimes committed against Rohingyas by the Myanmar forces, including the execution of 10 Rohingya men in Rakhine State. The two journalists were released in May 2019. Ms Clooney’s comments on their release can be accessed [here](#) and her remarks at the UN can be accessed [here](#). Media coverage can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Khadija Ismayilova v. Azerbaijan (European Court of Human Rights).** Represented award-winning journalist subject to politically-motivated prosecution by the Azeri regime following her reporting of corruption by the President and his family. The European Court ruled in her favour and she was released in 2016. Further information can be accessed [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Prosecutor v. Mohamed Fahmy (Cairo Court of Appeal and Egypt Supreme Court).** Represented journalist from Al Jazeera English television network detained in Egypt following an unfair trial for the crimes of ‘terrorism’ and ‘fake news’. Fahmy was released in 2015. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

- **Sweden v. Assange (City of Westminster Magistrates' Court, London).** Represented Julian Assange, head of Wikileaks, in extradition proceedings.

Right to a Fair Trial and Political Prisoners

- **Mohamed Nasheed v. The Maldives (UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and UN Human Rights Committee).** Represented the Maldives' former president who had been subject to an unfair and politically-motivated trial to exclude him from the Presidential elections. Mr. Nasheed was released in 2016. Media coverage can be accessed [here](#) and Ms Clooney's interviews about the case can be accessed [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Tymoshenko v. Ukraine (European Court of Human Rights).** Represented the former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko in a human rights claim challenging her politically-motivated prosecution and detention in Ukraine. The case was settled with an acknowledgement by Ukraine of the violations raised in the European Court claim. Ms Clooney's BBC interview can be accessed [here](#).
- **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo v. Philippines (UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention).** Represented the former President of the Philippines in a human rights claim challenging her detention in Manila. The UN committee ruled in her favour and Ms. Macapagal-Arroyo was released in 2016.
- **Fuchs v. Georgia.** Legal advice on the violation of a businessman's human rights arising from his entrapment by Georgian officials (instructed by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP).
- **John Doe v. Algeria.** Advice concerning a politically-motivated INTERPOL arrest warrant and travel ban imposed as a result of malicious prosecution by Algerian authorities (instructed by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP).
- **Merck v. Ecuador (Permanent Court of Arbitration, The Hague).** Assistant to the Tribunal in UNCITRAL arbitration concerning a claim by a US investor of denial of justice in the Ecuadorian courts.

Other Cases Involving Public International Law, International Criminal Law and Human Rights

- ***Cambodia v. Thailand (International Court of Justice)***. Represented Cambodia in an inter-state territorial claim concerning the Temple of Preah Vihear brought before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Click **here** for the judgment, and **here** for media coverage.
- ***Parthenon Marbles (Advice to the Greek Government)***. Advised the Greek Government on the return of cultural property - the Parthenon Marbles - from the United Kingdom to Greece. Media coverage can be accessed **here**.
- ***Prosecutor v. Senussi and Gaddafi (International Criminal Court)***. Participated in litigation on the appropriate venue for the trial of a former Libyan intelligence chief. Argued that the trial for alleged crimes against humanity should take place in The Hague, not Libya, due to lack of fair process in Libya and the application of the death penalty.
- ***Young v. A-G of New Zealand (Supreme Court of New Zealand)***. Advice on the scope of state immunity under domestic and international law in claims alleging human rights abuses by members of the armed forces.

Selected Recent Honours and Awards

- 2022 Article 3 'Human Rights Global Treasure Award'
- 2021 NYU Law Alumni Achievement award
- 2021 Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press 'Freedom of the Press Award'
- 2020 Committee to Protect Journalists Gwen Ifill Award for 'extraordinary and sustained achievement in the cause of press freedom'
- 2019 American Society of International Law 'Champion of the International Rule of Law' Award
- 2018 United Nations Correspondents Association Global Citizen of the Year Award
- 2016 World Economic Forum Young Global Leader

Selected Appointments

Amal has also been appointed to a number of international human rights investigations and conflict-resolution panels including:

- **Special Adviser to the International Criminal Court Prosecutor, Karim Khan QC, on Darfur;**
- Senior Adviser to Kofi Annan, the **Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the Arab League on Syria;**
- Appointed to the **UK Attorney General's Public International Law Panel**(since 2020), a small panel of experts in international law who may be asked to represent the UK Government in cases involving public international law in international courts and in the courts of England and Wales;
- Member of Expert Panel on **Preventing Sexual Violence** formed by UK Foreign Office to gather evidence of sexual crimes committed in conflict zones;
- Deputy Chair of the Independent High-Level Panel on Media Freedom, appointed by the Chair of the Panel, Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury, former President of the UK Supreme Court. Selected remarks about the Panel can be accessed **here**, **here** and **here** and selected policy advice issued while she was a member is available **here**.
- UK Special Envoy on Media Freedom (2019-2020), appointed by the former UK Foreign Secretary.
- Counsel to the **Inquiry led by UN Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights**, Ben Emmerson QC, into the use of drones in conflict zones. Watch CNN coverage **here**.
- Legal adviser to the head of the **UN commission investigating the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri** and other terrorist attacks in Lebanon; and
- Rapporteur for the **International Bar Association Human Rights Institute**, focusing on the independence of the judiciary in Egypt following the 2011 revolution. The report and an interview are available **here**.

Publications

Books

- *Freedom of Speech in International Law*, co-edited with D. Neuberger (Oxford University Press, 2024).
- *The Right to a Fair Trial in International Law*, with P. Webb (Oxford University Press, 2020), winner of ASIL 2022 Certificate of Merit for high technical craftsmanship and utility to lawyers and scholars. The book is considered "a formidable reference tool"

(Judge Sir Howard Morrison, Judge formerly at the International Criminal Court); "a tour de force" (Karim Khan QC, Chief Prosecutor, International Criminal Court); "a must-read book for everyone in the field" (Judge Françoise Tulkens, former Vice-President of the European Court of Human Rights) and "the definitive work now on fair trial rights" (Professor Beth van Schaack, Stanford University).

- *The Special Tribunal for Lebanon: Law and Practice*, co-edited with D. Tolbert and N. Jurdi (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Selected Book Chapters and Journals

- *Human Rights*, chapter in I. Roberts (ed.), *Satow's Diplomatic Practice*, (8th Edition, Oxford University Press, 2023).
- *The Right to Insult in International Law?* with P. Webb, in *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 2017, Vol. 48, No. 2.
- *The UN Investigation of the Hariri Assassination*, with A. Bonini, chapter in *The Special Tribunal for Lebanon: Law and Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2014).
- *The Role of the Security Council at the International Criminal Court*, chapter in A. Zidar and O. Bekou (eds), *Contemporary Challenges for the International Criminal Court* (British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 2014).
- *Expanding Jurisdiction over War Crimes under Article 8 of the ICC Statute*, with P. Webb, in *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, 2010, Vol. 8. No. 5, 1219-1243.
- *Collection of Evidence*, chapter in K. Khan, C. Buisman, and C. Gosnell practitioner's manual *Principles of Evidence in International Criminal Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

Selected Articles and Op-eds

- **Why We're Helping Yazidi Americans Get Justice**, New York Times, 17 December 2023
- **Amal Clooney and Rupert Skilbeck on why Britain fails to hold war criminals to account**, The Economist, 19 October 2023
- **Remarks at UN Security Council Meeting on Ensuring Accountability for Atrocities Committed by Russia in Ukraine**, Just Security, 28 April 2022
- **Don't Let the Autocrats Win – How Biden Can Use the Democracy Summit to Build Back Media Freedom**, Just Security, 29 July, 2021

- **Yazidis Deserve Justice for Genocide: How Biden's Team Can Lead the Way**, Just Security (17 May 2021).
- **An ISIS torturer was complicit in genocide. The U.S. is making it hard to bring her to justice.**, Washington Post (11 May 2021).
- **A test for democracy in the Philippines**, Washington Post (12 June 2020).
- **Finally, We Have A Coordinated Effort to Bring ISIS to Justice**, Huffington Post, (22 September 2017).
- **Maldives Backslides Into Repression as the World Calls for President Nasheed's Release**, Huffington Post (14 October 2015).
- **It Is Time for Sisi to Set Al Jazeera Journalist Mohamed Fahmy Free**, Huffington Post (2 August 2015).
- **Egypt Should Send Canadian Journalist Mohamed Fahmy Home**, Huffington Post (26 February 2015).
- **The Anatomy of an Unfair Trial**, Huffington Post (18 August 2014).
- **Will Syria go to the ICC?**, The Lawyer magazine (December 2012).
- **Does Libya have an obligation to Surrender Saif Gaddafi to the ICC?** (prepared for and published online by Lawyers for Justice in Libya) (2012)

Direct Access

Amal can be instructed directly in suitable cases under the **Bar's Direct Access scheme**.

Contractual Terms

Amal accepts instructions under the **Bar Council Standard Contractual Terms**. For enquiries regarding potential legal representation, please email Callum Stebbing at c.stebbing@doughtystreet.co.uk.

Education

St. Hugh's College, Oxford University, B.A./LL.B.

(Exhibitioner, Shrigley Award)

New York University School of Law, LL.M.

(Jack J. Katz Memorial Award)

Languages

French

(conversational) Arabic

Related practice areas

Business and Human Rights and Modern Slavery

International Law

International Criminal Law

Public International Law

International Human Rights Law

International Media Law

Sanctions