



Nina Tavakoli

Call: 2014



Nina began her legal career as a solicitor at the leading international law firm Hogan Lovells. She has 13 years' experience as a lawyer, having qualified as a solicitor in 2003 before recently transferring to the bar where she specialises in international and domestic criminal law and human rights.

Nina possesses a clear advantage having been a lawyer for 13 years. Her experience is both unique and vast, giving her the ability to better meet client needs, *"gaining their confidence right from the first consultation."* She is able to apply her expertise not only in the UK but in multiple jurisdictions and legal systems.

She both defends and prosecutes domestically and internationally. Internationally at the Special Court for Sierra Leone Nina was prosecution appeals counsel on the case of Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia who was convicted of war crimes. At the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda Nina was a legal adviser to international judges on numerous trials in which members of the Rwandan establishment were tried for genocide. She also worked in the defence office at the Bosnian War Crimes Chamber. Domestically Nina defends and prosecutes in the Crown Court. She brings her wealth of experience internationally to bear on her UK cases where she routinely achieves excellent results for her clients.

Alongside court work Nina undertakes a wide variety of consultancies providing specialist advice to clients including governments, international and multilateral organisations, NGOs and individuals.

Crime

Nina defends and prosecutes, appearing regularly in the Crown Courts of London and the South East of England. Recent work includes offences of serious violence including s.18 OAP, sexual offences, arson, perverting the course of justice, fraud, dishonesty, weapons, drugs, robbery, public disorder and driving. Nina also assisted lead defence counsel, Edmund Vickers,

in the first ever prosecution of FGM in the UK. Nina also accepts instructions in all areas of extradition.

Nina is a very able and intelligent barrister who is hard working and personable. She is a persuasive advocate both before juries and judges and an excellent legal draftsman. A significant number of her cases have involved representing young and/or vulnerable clients with mental health issues and her maturity and experience have enabled her to re-assure them and ensure their best evidence. She achieves excellent results for her clients on a regular basis. A list of her most recent domestic cases can be obtained from the clerking team.

International Representation

Nina has practiced extensively at several of the international criminal tribunals as a prosecutor and legal adviser, specifically at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the War Crimes Chamber of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on a number of high profile cases. Additionally, Nina holds a masters' degree in international public law from the London School of Economics. Nina is a chapter author in the forthcoming edition of the leading practitioner textbook on international criminal law Blackstone's International Criminal Practice, (OUP).

Nina is recognised as an expert on sexual and gender based violence crimes and has been appointed and deployed by the UK Foreign Office as a member of its team of experts on preventing sexual violence in conflict. She has also been appointed by the UK Government's Stabilisation Unit as a justice expert in post-conflict and fragile states.

Nina is consulted by a range of institutions and non-governmental organisations to advise and provide training on a wide range of international criminal law and human rights issues within her expertise.

International Courts

Special Court for Sierra Leone (2011-2013)

The Prosecutor v Charles Taylor

Prosecution appeals counsel in the case of Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia. Taylor was convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity including the use of child soldiers, murder, rape and torture committed by rebel forces in the Sierra Leonean civil war. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24279323>

United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (2007-2011)

Legal adviser to international judges including the Tribunal President and Vice President in numerous trials including:

The Prosecutor v. Bizimungu et. al.

Four ministers in the Rwandan Government acquitted of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Prosecutor v. Nchamihigo

Nchamihigo, a deputy prosecutor, was convicted of instigating, ordering and aiding and abetting genocide, and crimes against humanity.

The Prosecutor v. Bikindi

Bikindi, a Rwandan singer, was convicted of direct and public incitement to genocide arising from hate speech.

The Prosecutor v. Dominique Ntawukulyayo

Ntawukilyayo, a regional politician, was convicted of aiding and abetting and ordering

genocide.

The Prosecutor v. Gatete

Gatete, a regional politician, was convicted of genocide and crimes against humanity.

The Prosecutor v. Munyakazi & The Prosecutor v. Kayishema

In these two cases, the Chamber denied the prosecution's application to extradite the accused to Rwanda on the basis that they would not face a fair trial. These decisions were subsequently relied on by the English High Court in extradition proceedings in *Bajinya et. al v. The Government of Rwanda and the Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2009] EWHC 770. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-35070220>

War Crimes Chamber of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, BiH (2005)

Legal advisor in the defence office.

Advisory work includes:

Advising the Albanian government on its international legal obligations in respect of human trafficking.

Publications, Lectures and Training

Publications

Blackstone's International Criminal Practice, chapter author, OUP, (forthcoming).

A crime that offends the conscience of humanity: a proposal to reclassify trafficking in women as an international crime, *International Criminal Law Review* 9 (2009).

Lectures/Presentations

2015 - Participant and speaker at Expert Meeting on Customary International Law, Geneva Academy of International Law and Human Rights, Geneva.

2014 - Expert participant at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, hosted by former Foreign Secretary William Hague, London.

2014 - Guest speaker and panelist at United Nations Symposium on the Legacy of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Tanzania.

2013 - Guest speaker at the 2013 Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Conference on combatting sexual violence crimes in the Arab world in the context of the 'Arab Spring', Amman, Jordan.

2013 - Lecturer at American University of Paris on international criminal law.

Training includes:

Training Middle Eastern NGOs on the establishment of national mechanisms to combat impunity for sexual violence crimes committed in conflict.

Assisting the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime in Abuja, to train Nigerian lawyers from the Nigerian National Police Force and Department of State Security on the successful prosecution of terrorism.

Additional Information

Education

LLM Public International Law - London School of Economics

BA History (Hons) - University of Birmingham

Professional Appointments

Criminal justice expert in UK Government's panel on preventing sexual violence in conflict (2012).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/preventing-sexual-violence-initiative-uk-team-of-experts>

Justice expert in UK Government's team of experts in international justice and security (2014).

Memberships

Bar Human Rights Committee

Criminal Bar Association

South Eastern Circuit

Languages

French

Farsi