



# Sareta Ashraph



Sareta specialises in international criminal, humanitarian, and human rights law. Since 2013, she has consistently been listed as a ranked practitioner in the field of International Criminal Law by Chambers and Partners.

"Sareta's investigative work is renowned. She is fearless, brilliant and someone you'd want on any team."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024

"Sareta leads with confidence and expertise. Of particular note are her strong interpersonal, organisational and communication skills."

CHAMBERS UK, 2023

"Her publications in the field of gender-based violence in conflict are at the forefront of the developments this area has seen in recent years."

CHAMBERS UK, 2022 (INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW)

"Regarded an authority in international criminal law but what makes her stand out is her dedication to the work and to the victims of international crimes."

LEGAL 500, 2022 (INTERNATIONAL CRIME AND EXTRADITION)

"Incredibly dedicated and hard-working, she shows fantastic attention to detail."

CHAMBERS UK, 2021 (INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW)

"Sareta has acquired significant experience in the field and combines academic rigour with excellent legal understanding."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (INTERNATIONAL CRIME & EXTRADITION)

If you would like to get in touch with Sareta please contact the clerking team:

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## INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Sareta specialises in international criminal, humanitarian, and human rights law. She is currently a Senior Legal Consultant on projects directed towards furthering accountability efforts for crimes committed in Syria and Iraq, as well as on projects and litigation concerning the crime of genocide. She is a Visiting Scholar with the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict at the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford.

From February to August 2019, Sareta was based in Iraq as the Senior Analyst on UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh (UNITAD). Prior to this, she was a senior legal consultant with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, established in December 2016 by UN General Assembly resolution 71/248. She also was a consultant to the Global Justice Center in New York, researching and writing on "Gender, Genocide, and Obligations Under International Law", as well as with the International Bar Association on a project on complementarity.

From May 2012 to November 2016, Sareta served as the Analyst on the International Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, documenting violations of international law in the

context of the ongoing conflict in Syria. While there, Sareta led the investigation and drafting of the Commission's June 2016 report "[They Came to Destroy: ISIS's Crimes Against the Yazidis](#)", which determined that ISIS was committing the crime of genocide, as well as crimes against humanity and war crimes, in its attack on the Yazidis of northern Iraq.

Immediately prior to her work on the Commission of Inquiry on Syria, Sareta served as the Analyst on the International Independent Commission of Inquiry on Libya, examining alleged violations of international law by pro-Ghadhafi forces, anti-Ghadhafi armed groups, and NATO. In 2010 and 2011, Sareta was a Legal Adviser to the Office of the Public Counsel for the Defence in the International Criminal Court. In 2009, Sareta worked as a Legal Consultant to the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, also known as the Goldstone Inquiry.

From 2004 to 2009, Sareta was Co-Counsel on the Defence team representing Issa Sesay (interim Leader of the Revolutionary United Front) at trial and on appeal before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. She has a continuing interest in access to justice issues in Sierra Leone and, in 2010, worked in Sierra Leone as a consultant to the Open Society Justice Initiative.

Sareta was a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics Middle East Centre in 2018, the Global Practitioner-in-Residence at Stanford Law School in 2017, and the Wasserstein Fellow at Harvard Law School in 2015. She is a member of the Advisory Council of the [International Legal Assistance Consortium](#), and serves on the Board of the [Iran Human Rights Documentation Center](#). Sareta is also a HEAT-trained Deployable Civilian Expert (Gender, Conflict and Stability) with the UK's Stabilisation Unit, and is a rostered expert in the investigation of sexual- and gender-based violence with Justice Rapid Response.

## **BACKGROUND**

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Sareta is particularly interested in the gendered strategies and impact of serious crimes under international law. She has particular expertise on the gendered commission and impact of the crime of genocide.

Sareta is a national of Trinidad and Tobago and is also called to the Bar there.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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## **Books**

[The Syrian War: Between Justice and Political Reality](#) (eds. Khen, Boms & Ashraph) (Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press) (forthcoming, Dec 2019)

## **Reports**

[“A demographic documentation of ISIS’s attack on the Yazidi village of Kocho”](#), LSE Middle East Centre reports (June 2019)

[“Beyond Killing: Gender, Genocide, and Obligations Under International Law”](#), Global Justice Center (December 2018)

## **Articles**

[“Transitional Justice Without The Transition: Considering A Path To Reparations for the Syrian People”](#), [Reparations for Victims of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity](#) (eds. Ferstman and Goetz) (Brill | Nijhoff) (forthcoming, March 2020)

“What Justice for the Yazidi Genocide?: Voices from Below”, Vol. 42, Number 1, Human Rights Quarterly, University of Cincinnati, (forthcoming, February 2020)

“Vanishing Nation: Enforced Disappearance in Syria” (eds. Zahedi & Heath) (forthcoming, 2020)

“All the Red Lines: The Syrian Conflict and its Assault on International Humanitarian Law”, [The Syrian War: Between Justice and Political Reality](#) (eds. Khen, Boms & Ashraph) (Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press) (forthcoming, Dec 2019)

[“Act of Annihilation: The Role of Gender in Shaping the Crime of Genocide”](#), The Cairo Review of Global Affairs, Issue No. 24, Winter 2017.

“The Naked Defence Office: How an unclear mandate, poor staffing and Registry disinterest stripped the Office of the Principal Defender”, [The Sierra Leone Special Court and Its Legacy: The Impact for Africa and International Criminal Law](#) (Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press, 2013)

[“Old Tricks, Young Guns: Elections and Violence in Sierra Leone”](#), Africa Research Institute Briefing Note, April 2011.

## **Blogs**

[“Who Can Commit Genocide? Non-state entities as perpetrators”](#), Opinio Juris, 20 September 2019

[“Justice for Syria: Lessons from Innovative Tools for Accountability”](#), PeaceLab, October 2018

[“What the Rohingya may learn from the Yazidis’ struggle for justice”](#), JusticeInfo, October 2018

[“The Akayesu Judgment at 20: Looking Back, Pushing Forward”](#), IntLawGrrls, September 2018

[“Asylum and the Duty to Protect the Yazidis from Genocide”](#), Opinio Juris, August 2018

[“Never again, again: The Yazidi Genocide”](#), IntLawGrrls, 15 August 2017.

## Podcasts

[“Genocide and Justice: Part II”](#), That's Illegal!, Global Justice Centre, 24 June 2017.

[“Genocide and Justice: Part I”](#), That's Illegal!, Global Justice Centre, 20 June 2017.

[“Pursuing Accountability in Syria”](#), ATHA/ Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, 20 February 2017.

[“The Battle for Aleppo: Achieving Accountability for Syrian War Crimes”](#), World Affairs Council (San Francisco) & Center for Justice & Accountability, 13 February 2017.

[“Practitioner Profile: Sareta Ashraph”](#), ATHA/ Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, 23 August 2016.

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