



# Michel Massih QC

Called 1979 (QC 1999)

## Legal Career

He read Law at London University.

In 1979 he was called to the Bar and began to practise soon after in criminal defence work.

In 1999 Michel was appointed **Queen's Counsel**.

**He recently was awarded the prestigious 'Outstanding Criminal Lawyer' of year award** by the Society of Asian Lawyers.

## Leading Cases

Over the last 23 years Michel has defended in some of the most notorious **leading criminal cases in the UK and Internationally**.

□ His work has ranged from murder, to terrorist criminal offences, to fraud, to money-laundering, to drugs importations to hijacking. He has also defended in some leading sex cases (including Austen Donellan the leading 'Date-Rape' case).

□ He has also defended in a number of Miscarriage of Justice cases. He acted in a number of extradition cases.

□ Michel has appeared in a number of reported cases in the Court of Appeal and in the **House of Lords**.

□ **Michel won recently a landmark court of Appeal case on the Law of Terrorism. (R v Iqbal & Others).**

□ **Michel recently secured the acquittal of Cuma Goren who had been accused of murdering his niece in the notorious Turkish / Kurdish 'honour-killing' case.**

□ **Michel has been involved in a number of major international cases (See below).**

## tooks chambers

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## International Work

- **United Nations Security Council investigation in the Hariri murder.** Michel is leading an international team of lawyers advising and acting for the Syrian Government and Senior Syrian Officials.
- **Michel has been to the Maldives** retained by Mohammed Nasheed, the Opposition Leader in the Maldives who faces terrorist charges in the Maldives. Mr. Nasheed has recently been elected as president.
- **Michel** has been instructed to advise the **Sudan Government** in relation to the International Criminal Court investigation of alleged war crimes in Darfur.
- Michel has been instructed to advise the Hurndall family after their son was killed in Gaza.

In addition Michel was admitted to **the Paris Bar** to defend in the case of the British Solicitor who drove his car at the crowds in the Champs D'Elysee after the France-Brazil World Cup Final.

## Murders

Michel has defended in a number of notorious headline cases including:

- R v Mercieca (A contract killing where the body of the victim was never found).
- R v Tamplin (The victim unwittingly recording his own Murder on tape. Despite what looked like overwhelming evidence, Michel managed to secure the defendant's acquittal)
- R v Tarpinian
- R v Scott
- R v Francis Joseph
- R v Totman
- R v Demir. (The defendant was alleged to have burnt her former lover alive. Michel secured her acquittal)
- R v June Gordon
- R v Cuma (Turkish/Kurdish 'Honour- Killing'. Michel successfully defended Cuma Goren securing his acquittal in late 2009).

## Terrorism Cases

Michel has been involved in the defence of a large number of cases where people have been tried on terrorism charges. Thus early on in his career he defended the Mujahideen of Iran. He defended the occupiers of the Iranian Embassy. In one such case a large number of defendants refused to be represented by anyone other than Michel and he had to act for over 50 defendants - divided over a number of courts. He also acted for the Mujahideen leader in the Court of Appeal.

- R v Said (**The shooting of the Israeli Ambassador (Shlomo Argov in London.** Said was the gunman)
- R v Hindawi (**The attempted blowing-up of the El-Al plane by using the defendant's pregnant girl friend as innocent carrier of the semtex bomb**)
- **A large number of IRA cases including R v O'Dwyer (the Brighton Bombing) and the Harrods bombing.**
- R v Vella (**IRA case involving the blowing-up of a prison from the inside**).
- R v Abdallah & others - Reported - (**The Hijacking of the Sudanese Airline. This was the 1st hijacking to Stansted airport. It involved Iraqi dissidents escaping from Saddam Hussein.** Michel led the defence of 2 of the alleged hijackers. They were acquitted on appeal)
- R v Safi & others (**the second hijacking to Stansted by Afghani dissidents escaping from the Taleban. On appeal Michel successfully acted for 9 out of the 10 alleged hijackers**).
- R v Bourgass (1). The murder of the special branch officer in Manchester.
- R v Bourgass (2) **This was the Ricin terror trial.** In both cases, Michel defended the principal defendant Kemal Bourgass.
- R v Waheed Mahmood. This is **the 'fertiliser' terror trial** that has just finished. It was the longest and most serious terror trial in the UK. **The Crown's case was that the defendants were linked to the 7/7 bombers.**
- R v A Iqbal. This is terrorist trial that took place at the Old Bailey where the Court of appeal quashed the convictions.
- R v Tanvir Hussain. Michel has been retained to defend one of the alleged principal leaders of the **'airport terror' plot**. The Crown's case is that a number of British nationals had conspired together to blow up a number of aircraft in mid air.

## Extradition

Michel has been involved in a small number of leading extradition cases. These include:

- R v Proulx - Reported (Where the Canadian police used undercover UK police officers to obtain a confession from Proulx on video)
- R v Karpichkow (The requested person was the ex-head of the KGB)
- R v Auchy (This involved the French Government seeking the extradition of Nazmi Auchy the billionaire British national living in the UK. to France to try him regarding his role in the 'Elf scandal').
- R v Solimanpoor (The Iranian Ambassador to Argentina. His extradition was sought by the Argentine authorities in connection with the blowing-up of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires).

In addition to the above cases Michel has defended in a number of notorious '**GANGLAND CASES**'. He defended in the following cases:

- R v Gilbert Wynter (Wynter was the alleged 'hit-man for the Adams' family'),
- R v McDonald (One of the biggest post office robberies in the South-East),
- R v Robery (A contract killing)

## Money Laundering/Fraud

Michel has defended in a large number of cases. The ones below are some of them.

- R v El-Kurd - Reported (Considered the leading case on the money laundering)
- R v Ugur
- R v Ali
- R v Beg
- R v Gordon (1st leading black estate agent to be prosecuted for money-laundering)

## Kidnapping/Extortion

Michel has defended in a number of Triad cases and other gangland kidnappings.

## Drugs Cases

- R v Preston - Reported House of Lords case. (One of the leading cases on phone tapping)
- R v Adiguzel (The biggest drugs importation at the time.)

- R v Al-Sabah (Members of the Kuwaiti Royal family charged with large scale importations of Drugs to the UK)

## Sexual Offences

Michel has defended in a very large number of sexual offences included the leading case of Austen Donellan (the leading date-rape case) in which Michel secured the defendant's acquittal.

- R v Rahmoun (reported Court of Appeal case on Corroboration in Rape cases)

## Reported Cases

A large number of Court of Appeal cases. The following are the ones reported from the House of Lords:

- R v Preston R v Islam R v Naillie

Michel has defended in Miscarriage of Justice cases. He also undertakes **Pro Bono** work. Michel has a special interest in '**Abuse of Process**' and in '**Disclosure**' cases.

## Languages

Michel speaks fluently **French** and **Arabic**. In addition, Michel has a love of languages and can 'communicate' in a number of other languages including **Spanish** and **Italian**.