



Stephen Akinsanya

Year of call: 1993

‘Stephen is an excellent and experience advocate with a thoughtful and careful manner. He is a barrister of high integrity and dedication who secures the trust of judge and jury. His advocacy combines intellectual rigour with emotional intelligence. He is a talented criminal barrister who is always determined to do his best for his client and to go that extra mile to help those who are in need of his help.’ (Legal 500 2025)

Stephen has been in private practice as a criminal barrister for 29 years. He is an experienced advocate in criminal law and has appeared in many complex and serious criminal cases including murder and fraud. He has been led in a number of high-profile criminal cases from the Central Criminal Court to the Supreme Court.

Stephen was previously a member of the Turks and Caicos Islands Bar and he appeared as lead counsel in a high-profile murder trial, coroner’s inquest and regularly defended in cases there.

He recently successfully completed his LLM in International Dispute Resolution with Merit at Queen Mary’s London and advises on some aspects of arbitration and commercial disputes as well as providing a second opinion in appellate work.

Stephen has built a reputation as an approachable, conscientious professional with courteous and sensitive treatment of his solicitors and clients, both professional and lay. He has a noticeable skill of quickly putting his client at ease from the first meeting and throughout the trial process. He provides clear practical advice and presents his client’s case with clarity and simplicity. He is regarded as a passionate and persuasive advocate. Stephen was a visiting advocacy adviser and trainer on the annual legal workshop panel at his former University for over 5 years. He is also an accredited advocacy trainer for the Inner Temple since 2015.

Practice Areas

Criminal defence work – Complex and serious criminal cases with particular emphasis on fraud, cross border

money laundering and alleged proceeds of criminal conduct.

Military courts martial

Advising on death row and life sentence appeals from Jamaica to the Privy Council

Advising on matters of commercial and contractual disputes and arbitration

Appearing before regulatory bodies for those accused of misconduct

Coroner's inquests

Confiscation and cash forfeiture

Direct access accredited

Arbitration and sports disciplinary hearings

Notable Cases

R-v- Braybrooks (Luton Crown Court)-Murder -administering heroin to friends or acquaintances) [2003] 1 Cr.App.R. (S.) 114- appeared as junior counsel

R-v- Ali (Manchester Crown Court)-Role of agent provocateur in importation of 10 kilos of heroin)- appeared as junior counsel

R-v- Nawaz (Birmingham Crown Court)-Murder of two children in revenge arson attack by rival Asian groups)-appeared as junior counsel

R -v-El Mawas (St Albans Crown Court)-False imprisonment and kidnap- Ghanaian drug gang kidnap and rape of victim. Appeared as leading counsel

R-v- Mutede (Luton Crown Court and Court of Appeal)-False instruments; Immigration offences; obtaining pecuniary advantage by deception [2005]. 2 Cr. APP.R. (S)22.

R-v- Carth (Central Criminal Court)-Murder of a former British Heavyweight boxing champion-appeared as junior counsel

R-v- Celaire (Central Criminal Court)-Murder- only the third case of double jeopardy; prosecution application to Court of Appeal to quash previous acquittal for murder; ;re-tried for murder and subsequent attempted murder; confession to both offences on first day of trial; life sentence minimum term of 23 years-appeared as junior counsel

R-v- Draper (St Albans Crown Court)-Manslaughter-Former soldier admitted manslaughter of a friend following drug induced psychotic episode-appeared as junior counsel

Wounding with intent- successfully represented Iraq war veteran charged with two section 18 wounding offences; argued post- traumatic stress disorder following road side blast causing loss of left leg and death of two colleagues.

R-v- Ibori (Southwark Crown Court)-Junior defence counsel representing the wife of the former Governor of Delta State accused of conspiracy to defraud the Nigerian Government of 2.3 million dollars.

R- v- Ibori (Southwark Crown Court)- 2nd junior counsel representing a former Governor of Delta State accused of a conspiracy to defraud Delta State of \$2.3 billion.

R -v- Belzaire (Supreme Court of Turks and Caicos)- Murder and rape- victim was raped and murdered before the body was destroyed by fire

successfully appeared as lead counsel in the Turks and Caicos Islands taking a point of law on DNA evidence obtained from the accused-appeared as leading counsel.

R-v- Arthur (Supreme Court of Turks and Caicos)- Armed robbery of jewellery store.

R-v- Holloway (Luton Crown Court)- Murder- young defendant accused of being jointly responsible for a knife attack on the deceased-successfully appeared as lead counsel

R-v- Waya (Supreme Court) -Proceeds of Crime- successful appeal on behalf of a Nigerian National from the Court of Appeal before the full 9 man court-appeared as junior counsel. Most significant case in confiscation proceedings. [2012] UKSC 51 on appeal from [2010] EWCA Crim 412

R-v-Misick and others (Jeffrey Hall)(Turks and Caicos Supreme court). Corruption trial involving former Premier and Government Ministers

Re Gibson– Coroner’s inquest into the death of an 18-year-old

R-v- Obadiaru and others- (Central Criminal Court) Conspiracy to traffic women from Nigeria for the purposes of prostitution in Europe

R-v-Leka and others – (Central Criminal Court)- Murder-Successfully defended 15-year-old subsequently convicted of wounding with intent.

R-v- Anca Stefan (Conspiracy to defraud) Blackfriars Crown court Successful acquittal in a large-scale credit card fraud by Romanian conspirators

R-v-Dean (Perverting the course of public justice) Bournemouth Crown Court successfully defended a successful and prominent businessman accused of naming a dead friend as the driver of his vehicle.

R-v- Okoro– (Central Criminal Court) – NHS Dr convicted partially on counts of possessing extreme pornography and an indecent image of a child. Suspended sentence

UKAD-v- Slowey– Successfully represented former Scottish Featherweight boxing Champion at a sports arbitration hearing following an interim ban for using Cocaine out of competition. Successfully argued for a reduction to the mandatory sentence after arguing ‘no significant fault’ – 4 year ban reduced to 2 years.

R-v- Richards (Central Criminal Court)- Murder- Defendant acquitted of the murder of rapper Mdot

R-v- Roye (Croydon Crown Court)- Attempted murder- Successfully defended a 13-year-old defendant

R-v- Lodge Guy(Inner London Crown Court)- Conspiracy to commit grievous bodily harm- Successfully defended an 18 year old defendant

R-v Zvavamwe(Central Criminal Court) Manslaughter- Successfully defended an 18 year old defendant

R-v-Brooker(Canterbury Crown Court) – Historic sexual abuse- Defended 70 year old Father –in- law accused on 17 count indictment

R-v Campbell(Central Criminal Court) – Murder-Clapham South tube- Successfully defended 19 year old defendant.

R-v- Nguyen(Wood Green Crown Court) –Attempted murder-Successfully defended a Vietnamese chef.

R-v- Malinowski(Kingston Crown Court)- 16 week trial involving a Conspiracy to evade the prohibition on the exportation of a controlled drugs of Class A.(street value £45 million)-Successfully represented a Polish defendant.

UKAD –v- Grady– Successfully represented professional basketball player at a sports arbitration hearing facing a four-year ban for a drug violation.

Advising a former F1 driving on a contractual dispute

Advising a UK Chemical Company on contractual and related issues and on merger/acquisition by an industry “giant”

Advising a Turks and Caicos company on a private prosecution of a former director

Work Experience

Visiting advocacy advisor to the Legal Workshop 1993 – University of Buckingham-facilitator in advocacy exercises and mock courtroom scenes to assess the advocacy skills of undergraduate students.

Accredited Advocacy trainer for the Inner Temple 2011 – training of newly qualified and junior barristers in advocacy, conference and negotiator skills on a residential course and at the Royal Courts of Justice.

Visiting advisor with the British Nigerian Lawyers Forum to Lagos Nigeria – part of a delegation that travelled to Lagos Nigeria to host a training programme with the Lagos State Prosecutors.

Active mentor with Urban synergy mentoring scheme for pupils in local schools – Adult mentor to School Children and students with an interest in Further education and law. School visits and personal mentoring.

Legal commentator on Arise TV (Oscar Pistorious trial) – discussion guest with morning breakfast host

Foundation Governor 2015 – at a primary and secondary school- using legal training in the area of governance and legal issues arising from disciplinary issues with staff and contractual matters with school suppliers. Working closing with the SLT to implement school ethos and policies.

Chair of the British Nigeria Law Forum – 2015-2017 – Chair of a professional body of Lawyers with 700 members. Responsible for the direction and progression of the forum through establishing new partners and opportunities for members through training seminars, forums and social events. Co-ordinated a response through specific terms of reference to the

Nigerian Bar Association for proposed changes to rules and regulations governing legal training.

Panel member Inner Temple Scholarship awards Committee – 1997 –

Panel member with other lawyers including Judges engaged in the sifting and interview process of students seeking a scholarship awards from the Inner Temple to continue with their legal training. Awards are decided by discussion and analysis by various panel members to reach an agreed position.

Bar Associations & Memberships

Former Chair of British Nigeria Lawyers Forum 2015 – 2017

Criminal Bar Association (UK)

Turks and Caicos Bar Association

South Eastern Circuit

Member of the Inner Temple Sponsorship & Scholarship Scheme

Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

Mentor for the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple

Fraud Lawyers Association

School governor St Joseph's School

Chair and panel member of Independent review Panel for Octavo

Legal and social commentator against youth violence particularly knife crime

Motivational Speaker