

## ALLISON TURNER

Bar: QC 1993

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At Delegatus since 2022



*What draws me most to the practice of law is being able to defend my client's rights and interests with integrity in a structured, well-rounded, and personalized way.*

### Biography

Allison Turner is unique among Quebec bilingual lawyers with a developing practice in Business and Human Rights built on years of complex commercial litigation, insurance, and class action work, and almost a decade as trial, appellate and post-appellate counsel in genocide and other international cases.

She advises on Canada's new Supply Chains Act (Bill S-211, *An Act to enact the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act and to amend the Customs Tariff*) and, more broadly, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and related statutory and soft law instruments.

Allison brings to the table the rare perspective of a practitioner with wide-ranging hands-on experience leading investigations involving state entities as well as lay, government and expert witnesses most notably from the African Great Lakes region. She also conducted extensive research into the root causes of atrocity crimes and human rights abuses in this region.

### Areas of practice

- Governance and ethics
- Civil and commercial litigation
- Insurance law
- Professional liability, administrative law
- International criminal law and international humanitarian law

### In-house experience

Allison worked as a lawyer-analyst for Axa Boreal Insurance for over two years in the Specialty Lines division where she handled hundreds of E&O, D&O and CGL policies claims files. Her responsibilities

included identifying and analyzing coverage issues, establishing reserves, delegating and supervising mandates to law firms and adjusters, and negotiating and resolving a variety of claims files. Allison also served as in-house counsel at the Professional Liability Insurance Fund for the *Chambre des notaires du Québec*.

## Experience in private practice

Allison began her career at Blakely Gascon and Larose & Associates as a civil and commercial litigator. In 1997, she made the move to insurance law at Robinson Sheppard Shapiro where she managed the broad research and disclosure components of complex cases against insurers (clients) sued in the context of class action lawsuits against the insureds.

After working at the United Nations, Allison returned to private practice at Savonitto & Associates, and then GWBR, practicing civil and commercial litigation and professional liability. She then served a diverse client base in local and international human rights law as a sole practitioner for several years before joining Delegatus.

## Important mandates

- Lawsuits filed against tobacco companies by smokers suffering from chronic respiratory diseases.
- Litigation against the Canadian Red Cross Society in the "tainted blood" affair that led to the reform of Canada's blood distribution system.
- Prosecutor v. Théoneste Bagosora *et al*s (UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda).
- Expert mandate in Rwanda extradition case (High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench, London, United Kingdom).
- First, and possibly only, successful lawsuit in the world against the United Nations.

## Education

- LL.M., University of Montreal | 2005
- B.C.L., McGill University | 1991
- LL.B., McGill University | 1991
- Studies in Political Science, International Schiller University, Paris, France | 1985

## Professional affiliations and community involvement

- Member of the Access to Justice in the English Language Committee, Montreal Bar | Since 2023
- Candidate, Federal Elections, Riding of *Ville-Marie—Le-Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs* | 2015
- Member of the International Association of Lawyers (*UIA*) | 2009-2012
- Founding member of Montreal women's advisory board, *Conseil des Montréalaises* | 2004-2006

## Conferences and publications

Allison has a master's degree in international law, published peer-reviewed articles in international journals and has been invited to present at numerous universities and international law conferences.

- Publication: *An ICTR Witness Protection Legacy*, African Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law, University of Johannesburg, South Africa (2013)
- Publication: *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Art. 70)*, Code of International Criminal Law and Procedure, Annotated, Larcier Law Annotated 2013, Brussels, Belgium (2013)

- Publication: *Tribunal Ambivalence and Rwanda's Rejection of Functional Immunity for the ICTR Defence*, "Revue québécoise de droit international", Special Edition (2010)
- Conference: *Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War*, Panelist, School of Community and Public Affairs and Political Science Student Association, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec (2016)
- Conference: *An ICTR Witness Protection Legacy*, presentation, Legacy Conference of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Madibeng Council Chambers, University of Johannesburg, South Africa (2013)
- Conference: *Representing Persons Accused of Atrocities*, Canadian Centre for International Justice, Continuing Legal Education, University of Ottawa, Law Faculty, Ottawa, Ontario (2012)
- Conference: *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the ICTR from the Defence Perspective (But Were Afraid to Ask)*, Lecture, Hans and Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in International Law Series of Lectures and Activities, McGill Faculty of Law, Montreal, Quebec (2011)
- Conference: *International Criminal Justice and the Role of the Defence*, Continuing Legal Education, Canadian Centre for International Justice, Montreal and Ottawa (2010-2011)
- Conference: *Integrity in the Administration of Justice at the ICTR*, Presentation, International Association of Lawyers Conference, The Hague, Netherlands (2010)
- Conference: *The Problem of Recanting Prosecution Witnesses and Contempt at the ICTR*, Presentation, International Criminal Law Defence Conference, Brussels, Belgium (2010)
- Conference: *Peddling Influence: Rwanda's Influence over the ICTR*, Lecture, Transitional Justice Research Group Seminar, lecture, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom (2010)
- Conference: *Challenges Facing Defence Counsel at the ICTR*, Lecture, International Criminal Law Committee, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom (2010)
- Conference: *Post-Judgment Remedies at the ICTR and ICTR Witness Protection?* Presentations, International Criminal Law Defence Conference, The Hague, Netherlands (2009)