



JUDICIARY OF  
ENGLAND AND WALES

PRESS SUMMARY

22 JUNE 2026

**Crown Court at Woolwich:** Mr Justice Johnson

THE KING

-and-

- (1) CHARLOTTE HEAD
- (2) SAMUEL CORNER
- (3) LEONA KAMIO
- (4) FATEMA ZAINAB RAJWANI

AND IN THE MATTER OF POTENTIAL CONTEMPT PROCEEDINGS  
AGAINST RAJIV MENON KC

**Note:** *This summary is provided to assist in understanding the Court's decision. It does not form part of the reasons for the decision. The full judgment of the Court is the only authoritative document. Judgments are public documents and are available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments>*

*[References in square brackets are to paragraphs in the judgment of the Court].*

### **The issue**

The issue for the court to decide was what steps, if any, should be taken in respect of findings that a closing speech given by Rajiv Menon KC, who was leading counsel for one of the defendants, breached earlier rulings of the court, and whether those matters should give rise to contempt proceedings.

### **Decision**

The court did not make a finding of contempt against Rajiv Menon KC, or decide to institute contempt proceedings. The court directed that the matter be referred to a Presiding Judge, who will decide whether to institute contempt proceedings against Mr Menon.

### **Reasons for decision**

Background to the ruling: The court had previously ruled that aspects of Mr Menon's closing speech to the jury breached the court's rulings as to admissibility of evidence, the legal directions to be given to the jury, and the proper role of the jury, and that it

wrongly suggested to the jury that Elbit Systems was being improperly protected by the court. The prosecution had contended that the speech may have amounted to a contempt of court, and had invited the court to take steps to deal with that. The court had referred the papers to the Administrative Court, which had instituted contempt proceedings. The Court of Appeal allowed an appeal, holding that there was no power for the Administrative Court to institute contempt proceedings on a referral from the Crown Court. The Court of Appeal held that left the matter back with the Crown Court, which could decide to refer the alleged contempt to another High Court judge sitting as a judge of the Crown Court, or to refer it to the Attorney General, or to refer it to the Bar Standards Board [1 – 7].

**Case to answer:** The court concluded that Mr Menon has a case to answer in contempt. The conduct identified in the earlier ruling involved repeated non-compliance with the court's directions and was capable of creating a real risk of impeding the proper administration of justice [14 – 26].

**Public interest:** The court recognised that there are factors weighing against contempt proceedings, including the importance of ensuring that advocates are not inhibited in representing their clients. However, it concluded that the balance fell strongly in favour of proceeding, in order to uphold the authority of the court's directions and ensure the proper administration of justice [27 – 39].

**Available options:** The court considered taking no further action, referring the papers to the Attorney General, or referring them to the professional regulator. It concluded that none of these alternatives would adequately meet the public interest [37 – 43].

**Summary proceedings:** The court concluded that the appropriate course was for the court to institute summary contempt proceedings itself. It had power to do so, notwithstanding the passage of time since the events in question [44 – 58]. It considered that such proceedings were more appropriately dealt with by another judge [59 – 61].

**Procedure:** The court determined that the appropriate next step is to refer the matter to a Presiding Judge under the Criminal Procedure Rules, who will decide whether to institute contempt proceedings and, if so, arrange for the matter to be assigned to a High Court Judge sitting in the Crown Court [62 – 70].