

[1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

More than two thirds of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practiceⁱ.

- **104 countries**ⁱⁱ have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- **7 countries**ⁱⁱⁱ have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except extraordinary crimes such as those committed in times of war;
- **30 countries**^{iv} can be considered abolitionist in practice in that they have not executed anyone during the last 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions.
- Therefore, **141 countries have abolished** the death penalty in law or in practice.
- **57 countries** and territories still uphold the death penalty and use this punishment;
- **23 countries**^v carried out **executions** in 2016;
- In 2016, the top five executioners were **China, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.**

[2] PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS WORLD ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

In 2016, **2** countries abolished the death penalty in law for all crimes: **Benin** and **Nauru** and one for ordinary crimes only: **Guinea**. 173 of the 193 member states of the UN were execution-free in 2016.

In the Americas, for the eighth consecutive year, the USA was the only nation to carry out executions in 2016.

In Europe, Belarus resumed executions after a 17-month hiatus.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 22 executions were recorded in five countries compared to 43 executions in three countries in 2015. However, the number of death sentences logged rose by 145% from 443 in 2015 to at least **1,086** in 2016 mainly due to an increase in **Nigeria**.

[3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

In 2016 at least 1,032 people (excluding China) were executed in **23 countries** and at least 3,117

people were sentenced to death in **53 countries**. These figures only reflect cases of which Amnesty International was aware and the actual number is certainly higher.

[Asia]

Amnesty International has not given any estimates on the number of executions in **China**. Official national statistics on the application of capital punishment remain a state secret. It is believed that **thousands** of executions took place in 2016. In **Pakistan**, executions decreased by **239 in 2016**. **Indonesia** executed 4 people, **Taiwan** 1 person, **Singapore** 4 people, **Japan** 3 people, **Malaysia** 9 and Amnesty has not given any estimates for **North Korea** and **Viet Nam**. **Maldives** and the **Philippines** took steps in the wrong direction towards the resumption of executions after more than six decades and the reintroduction of the death penalty.

[Middle East]

The number of executions recorded **in the Middle East and North Africa** decreased by 28%, from **1,196** in 2015 to **856** in 2016.

According to Amnesty International, the overall number of executions carried out in **Iran** also dropped by 42% from at least 977 in 2015 to at least **567** in 2016. According to Iran Human Rights' annual report, at least 530 people were executed in 2016, with at least **33 public executions**.

Saudi Arabia executed at least 154 people in 2016 maintaining the high-level set in 2015 (158) which was the highest number recorded for Saudi Arabia since 1995.

In **Iraq**, the number of executions recorded increased with **88** executions in 2016 compared to 26 in 2015.

[North America]

In the United States **5 states** carried out executions in 2016, taking the lives of **20 people**. This was the lowest number of executions recorded since 1991. **19 states**^{vi} have abolished the death penalty; **31** retain it. Of these, 4 states^{viii} have established official moratoriums on executions. The federal authorities have not carried out any executions since 2003 and the military authorities since 1961.

[4] METHODS OF EXECUTION

The following methods have been used:

- **beheading** (Saudi Arabia),
- **hanging** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Botswana, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Sudan, Sudan),
- **lethal injection** (China, USA, Viet Nam)
- **shooting** (Belarus, China, Indonesia, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Taiwan).

There were no reports of judicial executions carried out by stoning in 2016.

[5] USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY AGAINST JUVENILE OFFENDERS

International human rights treaties and customary international law forbid the use of capital punishment for all those under 18 at the time of the crime of which they are accused. This ban is inscribed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The countries which still uphold capital punishment for some crimes are all party to at least one of these treaties which expressly forbid the execution of juvenile offenders.

However, a small number of countries continue to execute juvenile offenders. At least **2 people were executed in Iran** for crimes they allegedly committed when they were under 18 years of age in 2016. Other juvenile offenders are also believed to be under a death sentence in **Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Maldives, Nigeria, Pakistan** and **Papua New Guinea**.

[6] INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS SUPPORTING ABOLITION

Progress towards abolition has been made through the adoption of international treaties,

whereby States pledge not to use capital punishment:

- **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty** and has been ratified by **84** States.² other countries have signed the Protocol, thereby signaling their intention to become party to this instrument at a later date;
- **Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights on the abolition of the death penalty**, has been ratified by **13** States on the American continent;
- **Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Human Rights Convention) on the abolition of the death penalty**, which has been ratified by **46** European States and signed by one other;
- **Protocol No. 13 to the European Human Rights Convention concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances**, which has been ratified by **44** European States and signed by one other.

The objective of Protocol No. 6 to the European Human Rights Convention is the abolition of the death penalty in **peace time** whereas Protocol No. 13 provides for the **total abolition** of the death penalty in all circumstances.

The two other protocols provide for the **total abolition** of capital punishment but gives States the possibility, if they so wish, to use it exceptionally in times of war.

In December, the UN General Assembly adopted its sixth **resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty**. The number of votes in favor of **resolution 71/187** is the same as in 2014 (117), while 40 voted against and 31 abstained.

ⁱ Sources: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty>, <http://www.deathpenaltyworldwide.org> and <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org>

ⁱⁱ Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cabo Verde, Canada, Colombia, Cook Islands, Congo (Republic of), Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Fiji, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niue, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia (including Kosovo), Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela. .

ⁱⁱⁱ Brazil, Chile, Guinea, El Salvador, Israel, Kazakhstan, Peru.

^{iv} Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco/Western Sahara, Myanmar, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation,⁶⁵ Sierra Leone, South Korea (the Republic of Korea), Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia, Zambia.

^v Afghanistan (6), Bangladesh (10), Belarus (4+), Botswana (1), China (+), Egypt (44+), Indonesia (4), Iran (567+), Iraq (88+), Japan (3), Malaysia (9), Nigeria (3), North Korea (+), Pakistan (87+), Palestine (State of) (3: Hamas authorities, Gaza), Saudi Arabia (154+), Singapore (4), Somalia (14: Puntland 1, Somaliland 6, Federal Government of Somalia 7), South Sudan (+), Sudan (2), Taiwan (1), USA (20), Viet Nam (+).

^{vi} Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin and District of Columbia.