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[1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

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

- **97 countries** have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- **8 countries** have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except extraordinary crimes such as those committed in times of war;
- **35 countries** are *de facto* abolitionists: the death penalty is still provided for in legislation but no executions have been carried out for at least ten years.

Therefore, **140 countries** have abolished the death penalty *de jure* or *de facto*.

However, **58 countries** and territories still uphold the death penalty and use this punishment. That said, 'only' **21 countries** carried out executions in 2012.

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

Since 2002, **21 countries** have abolished capital punishment for all crimes: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Bhutan, Burundi, Cook Islands, Cyprus, Gabon, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Mexico, Montenegro, the Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, Senegal, Serbia, Togo, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

In the Americas, the USA was the only nation to carry out executions in 2012.

In sub-Saharan Africa only five countries executed prisoners: Botswana, Gambia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

In Europe, only Belarus continues to use the death penalty and to execute prisoners.

[3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

During 2012 at least **682 prisoners** (excluding China) were executed in **21 countries** and at least **1722 people** were sentenced to death in **58 countries**. These figures only reflect cases of which Amnesty International was aware and the actual number is certainly higher.

In 2012, the nations with the highest number of executions were **China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United States**.

[Asia]

Amnesty International has not given any estimates on the number or 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 2012.

In Asia, there were no executions Mongolia for the fourth year in a row. However, the resumption of executions especially in India, Indonesia, Japan and Pakistan is a grave concern.

[Middle East]

According to the information gathered by Amnesty International, **Iran** executed at least **314** individuals in 2012. According to Iran Human Rights' annual report, at least **580** people were executed in 2012, with at least **60 public executions**.

In **Iraq**, at least **129** executions took place in 2012 and over 81 people are reported to have been sentenced to death in 2012.

In **Yemen**, at least **28** people were executed in 2011. **Saudi Arabia** executed at least **79** individuals compared to 82 in 2011 and 27 in 2010.

[North America]

In the United States **9** States carried out executions in 2012, taking the lives of **43** people (as in 2011, compared to 46 in 2010 and 52 in 2009), therefore bringing the total number of people executed since capital punishment was reinstated in 1977 to 1,320.

Maryland became the 18th State to abolish death penalty during the spring 2013, closely following Connecticut in April 2012, Illinois in 2011, New Mexico in 2009, and New Jersey in 2007.

[4] METHODS OF EXECUTION

Since 2000 the following methods have been used:

- **decapitation** (Saudi Arabia);
- **electrocution** (United States);
- **hanging** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Botswana, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Pakistan, Palestinian Authority [Hamis Authorities, Gaza], South Sudan, Sudan);
- **lethal injection** (China, United States);
- **execution by firing squad** (Belarus, China, Gambia, North Korea, Palestinian Authority [Hamis Authorities, Gaza], Somalia, Taiwan, UAE, Yemen);
- **stoning** (Afghanistan, Iran).

[5] USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY AGAINST JUVENILE OFFENDERS

International human rights treaties 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. In 2012, **Yemen and Iran** executed people who were below 18 years of age when the crimes were committed. Juvenile offenders are also believed to be under a death sentence in **Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Yemen, Iran and Pakistan**.

[6] INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS SUPPORTING ABOLITION

One important aspect of the progress which has been made recently is the adoption of international treaties through which States pledge not to use capital punishment:

- **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, which aims to abolish the death penalty and has been ratified by **76** States. 4 other countries have signed the Protocol, thereby signalling 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 **43** European States and signed by 2 others.

The object 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.

[Source: Amnesty international
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty>]