

# WORLD COALITION

AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

www.worldcoalition.org

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# THE DEATH PENALTY FACTS AND FIGURES

## [1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

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

- **98** countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- **7** countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except **extraordinary crimes** such as those committed in times of war;
- **35** countries are in **practice abolitionists**: the death penalty is still provided for in legislation but no executions have been carried out for at least ten years and there is an established practice not to carry out executions.

Therefore, **140** countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice.

However, **58** countries and territories still uphold the death penalty and use this punishment. That said, 'only' **22** countries carried out executions in 2013.

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

Since 2002, **22** countries have abolished capital punishment for all crimes: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Bhutan, Bolivia, 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 2013.

In **sub-Saharan Africa** only five countries executed prisoners in 2013: Botswana, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

In **Europe**, only Belarus continues to use the death penalty and to execute prisoners. In 2013, Belarus did not carry out any executions.

## [3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

During 2013 at least **778** prisoners (excluding China) were executed in **22** countries and at least **1925** people were sentenced to death in **57** countries. These figures only reflect cases of which Amnesty International was aware and the actual number is certainly higher.

In 2013, the nations with the highest number of executions were **China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United States of America.**

### [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 2013.

In Asia, there were no executions in Mongolia for the fifth year in a row and Pakistan once again suspended its application of the death penalty. However, the resumption of executions in Indonesia and Viet Nam were of grave concern.

## [Middle East]

According to the information gathered by Amnesty International, Iranian authorities acknowledged executing at least **369** individuals in 2013. According to Iran Human Rights' annual report, at least **687** people were executed in 2013, with at least **59 public executions**.

In Iraq, at least **169** executions took place in 2013 and over 35 people are reported to have been sentenced to death in 2013.

In Yemen, at least **13** people were executed in 2013. Saudi Arabia executed at least **79** individuals in 2013, three of whom for crimes committed when they were below 18 years of age.

## [North America]

In the United States 9 States carried out executions in 2013, taking the lives of 39 people, therefore bringing the total number of people executed since capital punishment was reinstated in 1977 to 1,359.

Maryland became the 18<sup>th</sup> 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 2002 the following methods have been used:

- **decapitation** (Saudi Arabia);
- **electrocution** (United States);
- **hanging** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Botswana, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestinian Authority [Hamas Authorities, Gaza], South Sudan, Sudan);
- **lethal injection** (China, United States);
- **shooting** (Belarus, China, Gambia, North Korea, Palestinian Authority [Hamas Authorities, Gaza], Somalia, Taiwan, United States, UAE, Yemen);

## [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. In 2013, Saudi Arabia 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, Pakistan and the Maldives.

## [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 **81** States. 3 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 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.

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