

[1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

More than two thirds of countries in the world have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice:¹

- **112** countries² abolished the death penalty **for all crimes**.
- **9** countries³ abolished the death penalty **for ordinary crimes only**, with exceptions placed on crimes committed in times of war.
- **23** countries⁴ can be considered **abolitionist in practice** as they have not held an execution for the last 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions.
- In total **144** countries have abolished the death penalty **in law or in practice**.
- **55** countries and territories **still uphold and use the death penalty**.
- **20** countries⁵ carried out **executions** in 2022.
- In 2022, the top five executioners were **China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt** and the **USA**.

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

While the number of countries known to have carried out executions has increased – **20** in 2022 as compared to **18** in 2021, numerous countries continue to take steps towards abolition, solidifying the international trend. Important legislative steps have been taken to reduce the scope of the death penalty or abolish it altogether in **Liberia, Malaysia, and Indonesia** in 2022 and early 2023. In March 2023, **Niger** took

concrete steps to amend its penal code and abolish the death penalty.

Gambia, Maldives, and Sri Lanka are still observing an official moratorium on executions.

Last but not least, **Kazakhstan, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, and the Central African Republic** abolished death penalty for all crimes while **Equatorial Guinea** and **Zambia** abolished for ordinary crimes only. Additionally, **Kazakhstan** ratified the Second Optional protocol to the ICCPR aiming at the abolition of the death penalty without any reservations. In June 2023, **Côte d'Ivoire** also passed a law authorizing ratification of the Protocol, a significant first step.

[3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

2022 saw the highest number of executions in the past five years, with at least **883** executions recorded while at least **2,016** death sentences were handed down in **52 countries** (compared to approx. **2,052** in **56 countries** in 2021).

According to Amnesty International, **13** women were known to have been executed: **12** in **Iran** and **1** in **Saudi Arabia**. Because of a lack of information and/or transparency from many retentionist governments, such as China whose figures could not be incorporated in the above number, those figures are the lowest that could be determined. As such, the number of executions and death sentences are likely to be underestimated. At the end of 2022, **28,282** people were known to be under a sentence of death.

[Americas]

For the 14th consecutive year, the **United States** was the only nation to carry out executions in the Americas.

The number of executions carried out in the country increased by **64%**, rising from **11** in 2021 to **18** in 2022. Also, the number of death sentences handed down

¹ For 2022 figures shown in this document, see: Amnesty International, Global Report Death sentences and executions. 2022 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/6548/2023/en/>

² Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Fiji, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niue, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome And Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye,

Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vatican City, Venezuela.

³ Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Israel, Peru, Zambia

⁴ Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco/Western Sahara, Niger, Russia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia.

⁵ A figure followed with a "+" indicates the lowest reliable number of people executed although it is believed by Amnesty International that more people have been executed in reality; a "+" without any figure means Amnesty International have corroborated more than one executions but had no sufficient information to provide a credible: Afghanistan (+), Bangladesh (4), Belarus (1), China (+), Egypt (24), Iran (576+), Iraq (11+), Japan (1), Kuwait (7), Myanmar (4), North Korea (+), Palestine (State of) (5), Saudi Arabia (196), Singapore (11), Somalia (6+), South Sudan (5+), Syria (+), USA (18), Viet Nam (+), Yemen (4+).

increased compared to previous years going from **18** in both 2020 and 2021 to **21** in 2022. **Six** US states has proceeded to executions in 2022, minus one state compared to 2021. **Six** men are still facing capital punishment before unfair military commissions at the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The military authorities had not carried out executions since 1961. Notably, Oregon's incumbent governor, Kate Brown, has commuted all death sentences remaining in the state. Outside the United States, only **Trinidad and Tobago** and **Guyana** handed down respectively **5+** and **4** new death sentences in 2022.

[Asia]

Human rights organizations working in and on **China** estimate the number of its executions in 2022 was in the thousands; figures pertaining to the death penalty remain a state secret in China, as in **North Korea** and **Viet Nam**. Recorded death sentences are also increased in India and Pakistan. Overall, **eight countries**⁶ recorded executions, an increase from **five** in 2021. The region saw a large increase in the number of new death sentences- **861** recorded in 2022, as compared to **819** in 2021. In **Myanmar**, military authorities have carried out executions for the first time in 40 years; among them, two high-profile opposition politicians. In the same line, **Afghanistan** and **Singapore** have resumed executions after a hiatus. For the second consecutive year, **Taiwan** and **India** have not carried out executions.

[Middle East & North Africa]

In **Middle East and North Africa**, known executions went up by **59%**, with **8 countries** carrying out **825 recorded** executions in 2022 while it was **520** in 2021. This sharp increase is largely due to the practice of judicial executions used among repression in **Iran (70%)** and **Saudi Arabia (24%)** which carried out **94%** of recorded executions in the region. In both countries, death penalty was highly used for drug-related offences. Executions in **Kuwait** and **the State of Palestine** resumed for the first time since 2017. Recorded death sentences decreased slightly in the region, going from **834** in 2021 to **827** in 2022 and were imposed in **16** countries compared to **17** in 2021. Additionally, significant reductions in death sentences were recorded in **Iraq (91 to 41)**, **Jordan (11 to 4)**, **Lebanon (12 to 2)** and **Yemen (298 to 78)**.

[Sub Saharan Africa]

In 2022, the only countries to carry out executions in Sub-Saharan Africa were **Somalia**, and **South Sudan** - The lowest number of executing countries recorded by Amnesty International in the region since 2017. Overall, there was a significant decrease in executions and in handing down of death sentences. In 2021, **373** death sentences were handed down in **19** countries and **33** individuals executed - compared to **298 convictions** in **16** countries and **11 executions**, respectively in 2022. Nevertheless, convictions increased in Kenya (from **14** to **79**) and Nigeria (from **56** to **77**).

[4] EXECUTION METHODS

Executions in 2022 were carried out primarily through **beheading** (Saudi Arabia), **hanging** (Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Myanmar, Singapore, South Sudan, Syria), **lethal injection** (China, United States, Vietnam) and **shooting** (Afghanistan, Belarus, China, Kuwait, North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), Palestine (State of), Somalia, Yemen).

[5] 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** has been ratified by **90** States as of May 2023.

• **Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights on the abolition of the death penalty**, has been ratified by **13** States in the Americas.

• **Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** has now been ratified by **46** European States.

• **Protocol No. 13 to the European Human Rights Convention concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances** has been ratified by **44** European States and signed, but not ratified by 1 other. Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms provides for the abolition of the death penalty in times of peace, whereas Protocol No. 13 provides for its total abolition. The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well the Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights also provide for the total abolition of the death penalty but give the party States the possibility to make an exception during times of war.

⁶Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Myanmar, North Korea, Singapore, Viet Nam