



DEATH PENALTY AND DRUG CRIMES FACTS AND FIGURES

13th World Day against the Death Penalty

[1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

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

- **100 countries**ⁱⁱ have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- **6 countries**ⁱⁱⁱ have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except extraordinary crimes such as those committed in times of war;
- **34 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, **140 countries have abolished** the death penalty in law or in practice.
- **58 countries** and territories still uphold the death penalty and use this punishment;
- **22 countries** carried out **executions**^v in 2014;
- **33 countries** and territories retain the **death penalty for drug crimes**;
- **13** of the 33 countries^{vi} have carried out an **execution for drug offences** in the past five years.

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

173 of the 193 member states of the UN were execution-free in 2014.

Madagascar, Fiji and Suriname adopted legislation to abolish the death penalty. Similar bills remain pending before legislative bodies in Benin, Chad, and Mongolia. The Parliament of Barbados began considering draft legislation aimed at abolishing the mandatory death penalty. The governors of the US states of Washington and Pennsylvania imposed a moratorium on executions in February 2014 and 2015 respectively. In May 2015, the US state of Nebraska abolished the death penalty.

In the Americas, the USA was the only nation to carry out executions in 2014. However, fewer executions were recorded and fewer states executed.

In Europe, Belarus was the only country where executions took place in 2014.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 46 executions were recorded in three countries compared to 64 executions in five countries in 2013 – a 28% drop.

[3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

During 2014 at least **607** prisoners (excluding China) were executed in **22** countries and at least **2466** 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 2014, the nations with the highest number of executions were **China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the United States of America**.

[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 2014.

In Asia, there were no executions in Mongolia for the sixth year in a row. Pakistan executed 7 people in 2014, Vietnam at least 3 and Indonesia which did not in 2014, executed 14 people in the beginning of 2015.

[Middle East]

The number of executions recorded in the **Middle East and North Africa** decreased by approximately 23%, from 638 in 2013 to 491 in 2014.

According to Amnesty International, **Iranian** authorities acknowledged executing at least **289** individuals in 2014. According to Iran Human Rights' annual report, at least **753** people were executed in 2014, with at least **53 public executions**. The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation reports **688 executions for 2015** as of June 22.

Saudi Arabia executed **102** individuals for the 1st semester of 2015 and at least **90** in 2014, more than half of execution were carried out for non-lethal crimes.

In **Iraq**, at least **61** executions took place in 2014 and over 38 people are reported to have been sentenced to death in 2014.

[North America]

In the United States **7 states** carried out executions in 2014, taking the lives of **35 people**.

19 states have abolished the death penalty; 31 retain it. Of these, seven states have not conducted any executions for at least 10 years. 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:

- **decapitation** (Saudi Arabia);
- **hanging** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Singapore, Sudan);
- **lethal injection** (China, United States, Vietnam);
- **shooting** (Saudi Arabia, Belarus, China, North Korea, UAE, equatorial Guinea, Palestine, Somalia, Taiwan, Yemen);
- **stoning** (there were no reports of judicial executions carried out by stoning in 2014);
- **gas chamber** (in April 2015, Oklahoma introduced death by nitrogen gas as an alternative to lethal injection if the necessary drugs cannot be found or if that method is found unconstitutional.)

[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 **14 people** were **executed in Iran** for crimes they allegedly committed when they were under 18 years of age in 2014. Juvenile offenders are also believed to be under a death sentence in **Iran, Maldives, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Yemen.**

[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 **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 fifth resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The number of votes in favour of resolution 69/186 increased by six, from 111 in 2012 to 117 in 2014, while 38 voted against and 34 abstained.

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

ⁱⁱ Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, 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, Ukraine, UK, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela.

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

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

^v Afghanistan (6), Belarus (3+), China (+), Egypt (15+), Equatorial Guinea (9), Iran (289+), Iraq (61+), Japan (3), Jordan (11), Malaysia (2+), North Korea (+), Pakistan (7), Palestine (State of) (2+, Hamas authorities, Gaza), Saudi Arabia (90+), Singapore (2), Somalia (14+), Sudan (23+), Taiwan (5), UAE (1), USA (35), Viet Nam (3+) and Yemen (22+).

^{vi} High application states: China, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Viet Nam

Low application states: Egypt, Kuwait, Pakistan, Taiwan, Thailand, Yemen

Symbolic application states: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei-Darussalam, Cuba, Gaza, India, Laos, Myanmar, Oman, Qatar, South Korea, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, USA

Insufficient data: Iraq, Libya, North Korea, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria