

[1] ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

More than two thirds of countries in the world have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice¹.

- **106** countries² abolished the death penalty for all crimes.
- **8** countries³ abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes only, with exceptions placed on crimes committed in times of war.
- **28** 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 **142 countries** have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice.
- **56** countries and territories still uphold and use the death penalty.
- **20** countries⁵ carried out executions in 2018.
- In 2018, the top five executioners were **China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam** and **Iraq**.

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

In June 2018, **Burkina Faso** removed the death penalty from its criminal code for ordinary crimes. Two moratoria have been passed- one in **the Gambia** (on February) and the other in **Malaysia** (on June). In September, **the Gambia** became the 86th country that ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. In the United States, **Washington State** became the 20th

State to abolish the death penalty after it was declared unconstitutional in October 2018.

In the world, 173 United Nation Member States out of 193 did not carry out any executions in 2018.

In the Americas, the United States was the only state to carry out executions for the tenth year in a row.

In Europe, Belarus was the only country to carry out executions in 2018 – at least 4 executions were recorded.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 24 executions were carried out, four fewer than in 2017. The number of death sentences dropped down to 212, compared to 878 in 2017. However, the number of countries that issued a death sentence increased from 15 to 17.

[3] DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

In 2018, the number of executions reached its lowest level for the past 10 years: **690** executions were recorded, falling by almost a third (except in China) and the number of death sentences handed down slightly decreased, arriving at **2,531** in 54 countries (compared to 53 countries in 2017). Those figures only reflect cases in which Amnesty International could confirm. As such the actual number of executions and sentences may be higher.

[Asia]

Amnesty International estimates the number of executions in **China** in 2018 was in the thousands; figures pertaining to the death penalty remain a state secret. **Pakistan** recorded a decrease in the number of executions (77% fewer than in 2017) while **Bangladesh** did not carry out any executions for the first time since 2014. However, 1 individual was executed in **Taiwan** as well as in **Thailand**, 3 in **Afghanistan**, 13 in **Singapore**, 15 in **Japan**, and

¹ Sources: Amnesty International, 2019, *Global Report Death sentences and executions. 2018*, <<http://www.amnesty.org/fr/death-penalty>>.

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

³ Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Guatemala, Israel, Kazakhstan, Peru, El Salvador.

⁴ Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, South Korea (Republic of Korea), Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia, Western Sahara, Zambia.

⁵ Afghanistan (3), Antigua and Barbuda (0), Bahamas (0), Bahrain (0), Bangladesh (0), Barbados (0), Belarus (4+), Belize (0), Botswana (2), China (several thousand), Comoros (0), Saudi Arabia (149), North Korea (DPRK) (+), Cuba (0), Dominica (0), Egypt (43+), Egypt (43+), Ethiopia (0), Gambia (0), Equatorial Guinea (0), Guyana (0), India (0), Indonesia (0), Iran (253+), Iraq (52+), Jamaica (0), United Arab Emirates (25), Japan (15), Jordan (0), Kuwait (0), Democratic Republic of the Congo (0), Lesotho (0), Lebanon (0), Libya (0), Malaysia (0), Nigeria (0), Oman (0), Pakistan (14+), Palestine (State of) (0), Qatar (0), Saint Lucia (0), Uganda (0), Saint Kitts and Nevis (0), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (0), Singapore (13), Somalia (13), Sudan (2), South Sudan (7+), Syria (+), Taiwan (1), Chad (0), Thailand (1), Trinidad and Tobago (0), Viet Nam (85+), Yemen (4+), Zimbabwe (0).

Vietnam reached the 4th position in the top five executioners.

[Middle East & North Africa]

The number of executions recorded by Amnesty International in the Middle East and North Africa decreased again, from **847** in 2017 to **501** in 2018. Yet, the number of death sentences handed down almost doubled and now sits at **1,170**, compared to 619 in 2017; more than the half of which have been issued in **Egypt** (61%). **Iran** executed more than **253** people in 2018 and continues to apply the death penalty for charges related to same-sex relationships or religious offenses. **Saudi Arabia** executed **149** people, prior to which most of whom were denied the right to a fair trial. **Individuals under 18 years of age at the time of the crime can also be sentenced to death** for religious offenses.

[North America]

In the **United States**, in 2018, **25** death sentences have been handed down in **8** states. Between 1973 and 2018, **164** individuals were sentenced to death before ultimately being exonerated of the crime in which they were found guilty. The death penalty is still used against people with mental or intellectual disabilities. With the abolition of the death penalty in Washington State, **20** states⁶ in total have now abolished capital punishment and **30** continue to retain it; **11** of which have not carried out any executions for the last 10 years⁷. The federal authorities have not carried out any executions since 2003, and the military since 1961.

[4] EXECUTION METHODS

No executions by stoning have been officially recorded in 2018, however Amnesty International was unable to verify information concerning the potential stoning of two women in Iran who received death sentences. Executions in 2018 were carried out primarily through **beheading, electrocution, hanging, lethal injection** and **shooting**.

[5] USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY AGAINST JUVENILE OFFENDERS

International human rights standards forbid the application of the death penalty on individuals under 18 years of age at the time of the offense. This ban is codified in the **International Covenant on Civil and**

Political Rights (1966), the American Convention on Human Rights (1969) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Most of the countries that still uphold the death penalty forbid its use against juveniles in their domestic law, but a few countries continue to execute juvenile offenders. In 2018, **at least 7 people were executed in Iran for crimes committed while they were under the age of 18, and at least 1 person in South Sudan.** According to Amnesty International, juvenile offenders are believed to be under sentence of death in **Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan and South Sudan.**

[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** has now been ratified by 86 States and signed by 1 other.
- **Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights on the abolition of the death penalty**, has now 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 and signed by 1 other.
- **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 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 two other protocols 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**.

In December 2018, the United Nation's General Assembly adopted its **7th Resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty**, with a clear majority of **121 out of 193 States in favor**.

⁶ 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.

⁷⁷ California, North Carolina, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Wyoming.