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Abolitionist and Retentionist Countries

More than half the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice. The numbers are as follows:

Abolitionist for all crimes: 75
Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only: 14
Abolitionist in practice: 20

Total abolitionist in law or practice: 109

Retentionist: 86

Following are lists of countries in the four categories: **abolitionist for all crimes**, **abolitionist for ordinary crimes only**, **abolitionist in practice** and **retentionist**. (The lists include a few territories whose laws on the death penalty differ significantly from those of the country with which they are associated.)

At the end is a list of **countries which have abolished the death penalty since 1976**. It shows that in the past decade, an average of over three countries a year have abolished the death penalty in law or, having done so for ordinary offences, have gone on to abolish it for all offences.

1. Abolitionist for all crimes

Countries whose laws do not provide for the death penalty for any crime

ANDORRA, ANGOLA, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, AZERBAIJAN, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CAMBODIA, CANADA, CAPE VERDE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, COTE D'IVOIRE, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, DJIBOUTI, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, EAST TIMOR, ECUADOR, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GREECE, GUINEA-BISSAU, HAITI, HONDURAS, HUNGARY, ICELAND, IRELAND, ITALY, KIRIBATI, LIECHTENSTEIN, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MACEDONIA (former Yugoslav Republic), MALTA, MARSHALL ISLANDS, MAURITIUS, MICRONESIA (Federated States), MOLDOVA, MONACO, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA, NEPAL, NETHERLANDS, NEW ZEALAND, NICARAGUA, NORWAY, PALAU, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SAN MARINO, SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, SEYCHELLES, SLOVAK REPUBLIC, SLOVENIA, SOLOMON ISLANDS, SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TURKMENISTAN, TUVALU, UKRAINE, UNITED KINGDOM, URUGUAY, VANUATU, VATICAN CITY STATE, VENEZUELA

2. Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only

Countries whose laws provide for the death penalty only for exceptional crimes such as crimes under military law or crimes committed in exceptional circumstances

ALBANIA, ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, BRAZIL, CHILE, COOK ISLANDS, CYPRUS, EL SALVADOR, FIJI, ISRAEL, LATVIA, MEXICO, PERU

3. Abolitionist in practice



Countries which retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes such as murder but can be considered abolitionist in practice in that they have not executed anyone during the past 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions. The list also includes countries which have made an international commitment not to use the death penalty

BHUTAN, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, BURKINA FASO, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CONGO (Republic), GAMBIA, GRENADA, MADAGASCAR, MALDIVES, MALI, NAURU, NIGER, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SAMOA, SENEGAL, SRI LANKA, SURINAME, TOGO, TONGA, TURKEY

4. Retentionist

Countries which retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes

AFGHANISTAN, ALGERIA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ARMENIA, BAHAMAS, BAHRAIN, BANGLADESH, BARBADOS, BELARUS, BELIZE, BENIN, BOTSWANA, BURUNDI, CAMEROON, CHAD, CHINA, COMOROS, CONGO (Democratic Republic), CUBA, DOMINICA, EGYPT, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, GABON, GHANA, GUATEMALA, GUINEA, GUYANA, INDIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, IRAQ, JAMAICA, JAPAN, JORDAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KENYA, KUWAIT, KYRGYZSTAN, LAOS, LEBANON, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, LIBYA, MALAWI, MALAYSIA, MAURITANIA, MONGOLIA, MOROCCO, MYANMAR, NIGERIA, NORTH KOREA, OMAN, PAKISTAN, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY, PHILIPPINES, QATAR, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, RWANDA, SAINT CHRISTOPHER & NEVIS, SAINT LUCIA, SAINT VINCENT & GRENADINES, SAUDI ARABIA, SIERRA LEONE, SINGAPORE, SOMALIA, SOUTH KOREA, SUDAN, SWAZILAND, SYRIA, TAIWAN, TAJIKISTAN, TANZANIA, THAILAND, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TUNISIA, UGANDA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, UZBEKISTAN, VIET NAM, YEMEN, YUGOSLAVIA (Federal Republic), ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE

Countries which have abolished the death penalty since 1976

1976: PORTUGAL abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1978: DENMARK abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1979: LUXEMBOURG, NICARAGUA and NORWAY abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **BRAZIL, FIJI and PERU** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1981: FRANCE and CAPE VERDE abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1982: The NETHERLANDS abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1983: CYPRUS and EL SALVADOR abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1984: ARGENTINA abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1985: AUSTRALIA abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1987: HAITI, LIECHTENSTEIN and the GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (1) abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1989: CAMBODIA, NEW ZEALAND, ROMANIA and SLOVENIA (2) abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1990: ANDORRA, CROATIA (2), the CZECH AND SLOVAK FEDERAL REPUBLIC (3), HUNGARY, IRELAND, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA and SAO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1992: ANGOLA, PARAGUAY and SWITZERLAND abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1993: GREECE, GUINEA-BISSAU, HONG KONG (4) and SEYCHELLES abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1994: ITALY abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1995: DJIBOUTI, MAURITIUS, MOLDOVA and SPAIN abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1996: BELGIUM abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1997: GEORGIA, NEPAL, POLAND and SOUTH AFRICA abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **BOLIVIA** and **BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1998: AZERBAIJAN, BULGARIA, CANADA, ESTONIA, LITHUANIA and the UNITED KINGDOM abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1999: EAST TIMOR, TURKMENISTAN and UKRAINE abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **LATVIA (5)** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2000 : COTE D'IVOIRE and MALTA abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **ALBANIA (6)** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2001: CHILE abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

Notes:

(1) In 1990 the German Democratic Republic became unified with the Federal Republic of Germany, where the death penalty had been abolished in 1949.

(2) Slovenia and Croatia abolished the death penalty while they were still republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The two republics became independent in 1991.

(3) In 1993 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic divided into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

(4) In 1997 Hong Kong was returned to Chinese rule as a special administrative region of China. Amnesty International understands that Hong Kong will remain abolitionist.

(5) In 1999 the Latvian parliament voted to ratify Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty for peacetime offences.

(6) In 2000 Albania ratified Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty for peacetime offences.

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