Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	**1613**
Land:	Irak
Kilde:	Amnesty International
Titel:	Death Sentences and Executions 2024
Udgivet:	8. april 2025
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	8. august 2025

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL REPORT

DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS 2024

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights. Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations. We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better.

© Amnesty International 2025

Except where otherwise noted, content in this document is licensed under a Creative Commons (attribution, non-commercial, no derivatives, international 4.0) licence.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode

For more information please visit the permissions page on our website: www.amnesty.org

Where material is attributed to a copyright owner other than Amnesty International this material is not subject to the Creative Commons licence.

First published in 2025 by Amnesty International Ltd
Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK

Index: ACT 50/8976/2025
Original language: English

amnesty.org

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

CONTENTS

EXECUTING COUNTRIES IN 2024 **4**

NOTE ON AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S FIGURES ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY 6

THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2024 **7**

GLOBAL TRENDS 7

EXECUTIONS 9

METHODS OF EXECUTION IN 2024 11

DEATH SENTENCES 12

COMMUTATIONS, PARDONS AND EXONERATIONS 13

THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2024: IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW 13

REGIONAL OVERVIEWS **15**

AMERICAS 15

ASIA PACIFIC 21

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA 28

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA 29

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 34

ANNEX I: RECORDED EXECUTIONS AND DEATH SENTENCES IN 2024 **40**

RECORDED EXECUTIONS IN 2024 40

RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES IN 2024 41

ANNEX II: ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024 **42**

ANNEX III: RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024 **44**

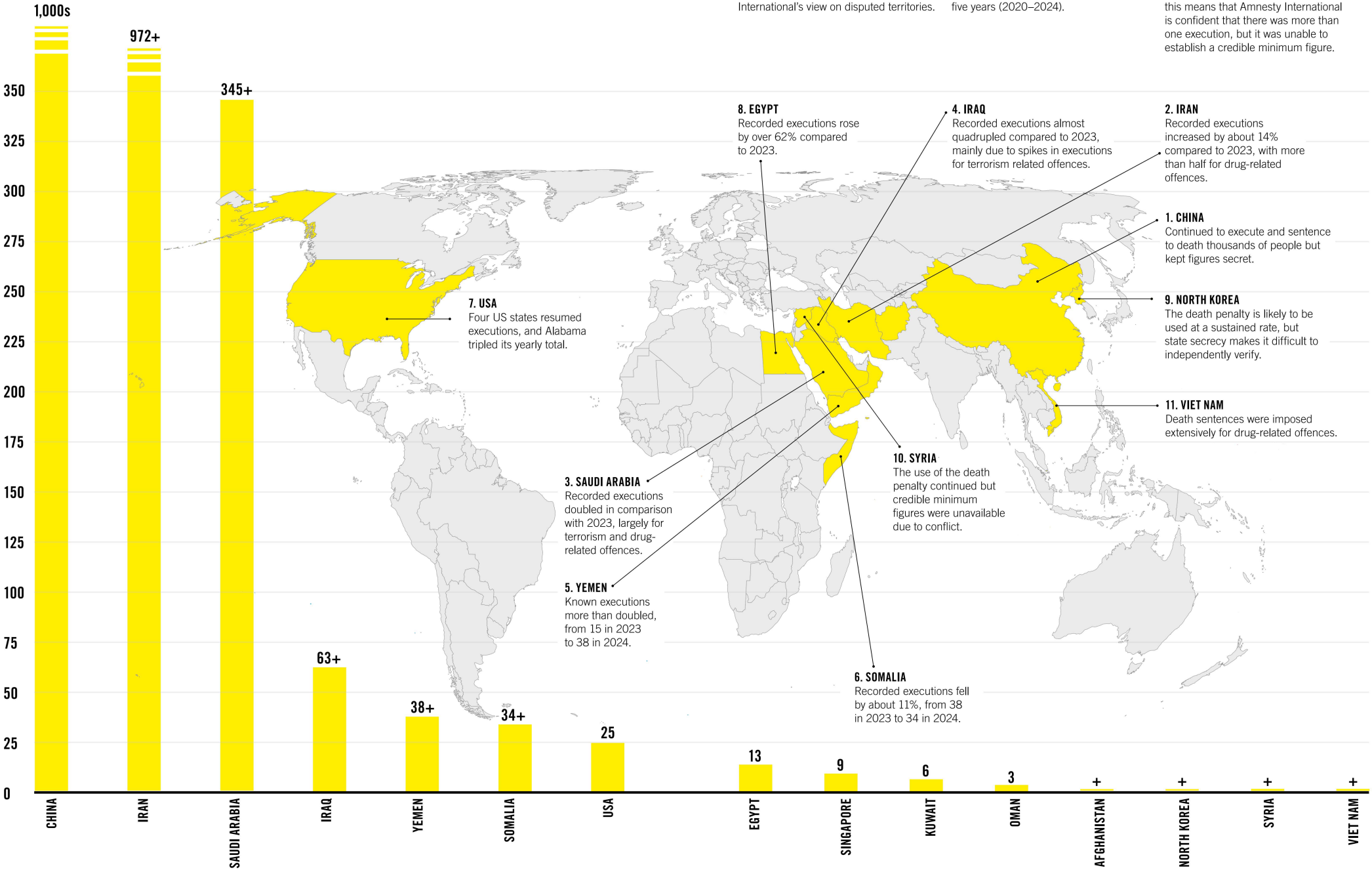
ANNEX IV: VOTING RESULTS OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 79/179, ADOPTED ON 17 DECEMBER 2024 **46**

EXECUTING COUNTRIES IN 2024

This map indicates the general locations of boundaries and jurisdictions and should not be interpreted as Amnesty International's view on disputed territories.

Of the executing countries in 2024, the 11 countries listed on the map have persistently executed people in the past five years (2020–2024).

+ indicates that the figure that Amnesty International has calculated is a minimum. Where + is not preceded by a number, this means that Amnesty International is confident that there was more than one execution, but it was unable to establish a credible minimum figure.



DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS 2024
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

NOTE ON AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S FIGURES ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY

This report covers the judicial use of the death penalty for the period January to December 2024. As in previous years, information is collected from a variety of sources, including: official figures; judgments; information from individuals sentenced to death; their families and representatives; media reports; and, as specified, other civil society organizations.

Amnesty International reports on executions, death sentences and other aspects of the use of the death penalty, such as commutations and exonerations, where there is reasonable confirmation. In many countries, governments do not publish information on their use of the death penalty. In China and Viet Nam, data on the use of the death penalty is classified as a state secret. During 2024, little or no information was available on some countries – in particular Belarus, Laos and North Korea – due to restrictive state practice. Therefore, for a significant number of countries, Amnesty International's figures on the use of the death penalty are the minimum recorded. The true overall figures are likely to be higher.

In 2009, Amnesty International stopped publishing its estimated figures on the use of the death penalty in China, a decision that reflected concerns about how the Chinese authorities misrepresented Amnesty International's numbers. Amnesty International always made clear that the figures it was able to publish on China were significantly lower than the reality, because of the restrictions on access to information. China has yet to publish any figures on the death penalty; however, available information indicates that each year thousands of people are executed and sentenced to death. Amnesty International renews its call on the Chinese authorities to publish information on the use of the death penalty in China.

Where Amnesty International receives and is able to verify new information after publication of this report, it updates its figures online at amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/death-penalty

In tables and lists, where "+" appears after a figure next to the name of a country – for example, Iraq (63+) – it means that Amnesty International confirmed 63 executions, death sentences or persons under sentence of death in Iraq but believes that there were more than 63. Where "+" appears after a country name without a figure – for instance, Oman (+) – it means that Amnesty International has corroborated executions, death sentences or persons under sentence of death (more than one) in that country but had insufficient information to provide a credible minimum figure. When calculating global and regional totals, "+" has been counted as two, including for China.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the individual; or the method used by the state to carry out the execution. The organization campaigns for total abolition of the death penalty.

THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2024

> ***"This Act [on abolition] is more than a legal reform; it is a statement of our commitment to justice and humanity [...] We recognise the importance of rehabilitation and the need to move away from retribution."***
>
> Ziyambi Ziyambi, Minister of Justice and Parliamentary Affairs of Zimbabwe [1]

GLOBAL TRENDS

Amnesty International's figures on the global use of the death penalty in 2024 showed a sharp increase in recorded executions, while the number of executing countries remained at a record-low point.

Amnesty International recorded a 32% rise in known executions from 2023, bringing the 2024 total to the highest yearly figure since 2015. The spike was driven primarily by increases in three countries – Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

The known totals did not include thousands of people believed to have been executed in China, which remained the world's lead executioner; and North Korea and Viet Nam, countries believed to continue to carry out executions extensively but where access to information is restricted.

In 2024, the death penalty remained a prominent tool used by several governments to exert control on the population and stifle dissent, particularly targeting human rights defenders, protesters, dissidents, and political opponents, and having a disproportionate impact on those belonging to ethnic or religious minorities and from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Among other examples, the Iranian authorities used the death penalty to punish individuals who had challenged, or were perceived as having challenged, the Islamic Republic establishment and its politico-religious ideologies during the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022. The Saudi authorities continued to weaponize the death penalty to silence political dissent and punish nationals from the country's Shi'a minority who supported "anti-government" protests between 2011 and 2013. Resort to the death penalty for broadly defined "security" or terrorism related offences was significant across several countries.

[1] The Herald, "Zimbabwe abolishes death penalty", 31 December 2024, https://www.herald.co.zw/zimbabwe-abolishes-death-penalty/

The false perception that the death penalty has a unique deterrent effect on crime also continued to drive dangerous and dehumanizing narratives. In March, the Minister of Justice of the Democratic Republic of the Congo formally announced that the government decided to resume executions to combat "treason" within the army at a time when armed conflict in the country was escalating, and to end deadly gang violence in several cities. The military authorities of Burkina Faso announced plans to reintroduce the death penalty for ordinary crimes, which was abolished in the Penal Code in 2018, highlighting security concerns. As President Trump prepared to take office in early 2025, he repeatedly invoked the death penalty as a tool to protect people "from violent rapists, murderers, and monsters".[2]

The promotion of the death penalty was also part of ill-founded narratives and punitive responses promoted by governments in several countries to end the use and sale of drugs. Drug-related offenses do not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" to which the use of this punishment must be restricted under international human rights law and standards; and the use of this punishment continued to disproportionately impact those from minority groups or disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Of all known executions of 2024, 42% were unlawfully carried out for drug related offences in four countries (China, Iran, Singapore and Saudi Arabia).[3] During the year, several countries considered introducing the death penalty to punish drug related offences, including in Maldives, Nigeria, and Tonga.

Despite this, developments in 2024 confirmed that the use of the death penalty is reserved to an ever-increasing minority. For the second consecutive year, Amnesty International recorded executions in the lowest number of countries – 15.

On 31 December, President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe signed into law a bill that abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes. Earlier in the month, Zambia, which fully repealed the death penalty in 2023, made abolition irreversible by ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Together with the adoption by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights of its fifth resolution calling for a moratorium on executions, these advances indicated that Africa remained the beacon of hope of abolition.

Progress in other countries also showed that, with continued advocacy, it is just a matter of time before the death penalty will be fully abolished globally. The abolition of the mandatory death penalty in Malaysia in 2023 and a subsequent resentencing process led to a reduction by more than 1,000 in the number of people at risk of execution. Outgoing US President Biden commuted the death sentences of 37 out of 40 people on federal death row; and Roy Cooper, then Governor of North Carolina, commuted 15 death sentences as the year ended, among other notable reductions.

In December, a vote of the tenth General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty saw for the first time more than two thirds of all UN member states voting in favour. Support for this resolution has continued to increase since the first of these resolutions was adopted in 2007 (*Figure 1*), demonstrating that states are steadily moving closer to rejecting the death penalty as a lawful punishment under international human rights law.[4] Antigua and Barbuda, Kenya, Morocco and Zambia voted for the first time in favour of the call for a moratorium, reflecting steady advances and dialogues towards abolition at national level.

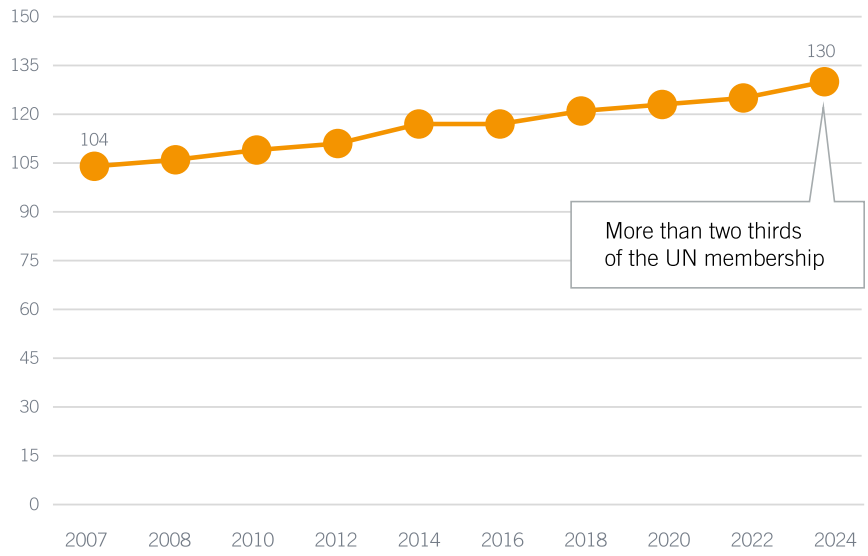
---

[2] Reuters, "Trump says he'll seek the death penalty for 'rapists, murderers, and monsters'", 24 December 2024, https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-says-he-will-seek-death-penalty-rapists-murderers-monsters-2024-12-24/

[3] Due to official secrecy, no confirmation was available for Viet Nam but drug related executions were believed to have taken place.

[4] Amnesty International, "Global: UN member states move closer to rejecting death penalty as lawful punishment under international law", 18 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/global-un-member-states-move-closer-to-rejecting-death-penalty-as-lawful-punishment-under-international-law/#:~:text=Since%202007%2C%20the%20UNGA%20has,with%20increased%20cross%2Dregional%20support.

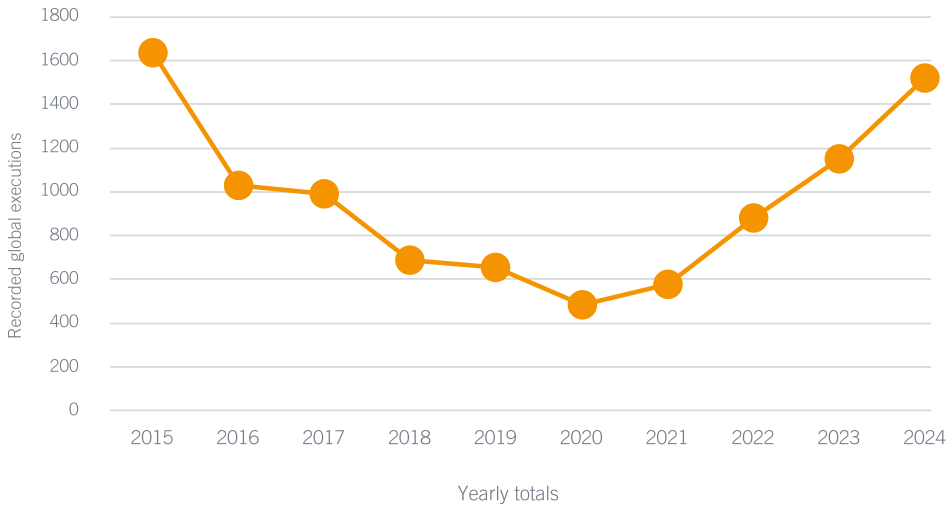
FIGURE 1: VOTES IN FAVOUR OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON A MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY (2007-2024)



EXECUTIONS

Amnesty International recorded 1,518 executions in 2024, an increase by 32% (365) from the 1,153 known executions in 2023. It is the highest figure recorded by Amnesty International since the exceptionally high number of 1,634 in 2015 (see *Figure 2*).

FIGURE 2: RECORDED GLOBAL EXECUTIONS 2015-2024



The known totals do not include the thousands of people believed to have been executed in China, which in 2024 remained the world's lead executioner.[5] In addition, Amnesty International could not determine credible minimum figures for executions carried out in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Viet Nam, countries believed to continue to punish people by death extensively. Due to the ongoing crisis, Amnesty International was unable to confirm a figure for Palestine (State of) and Syria, but believed that executions continued to be carried out and death sentences imposed.

Because of this, the global total presented in this report constitutes a minimum figure that only partially describes the true extent of states' resort to executions during the year.



EXECUTIONS RECORDED GLOBALLY IN 2024

Afghanistan (+), China (+), Egypt (13), Iran (972+), Iraq (63+), Kuwait (6), North Korea (+), Oman (3), Saudi Arabia (345+), Singapore (9), Somalia (34+), Syria (+), USA (25), Viet Nam (+), Yemen (38+).

The significant increase in the known global total was mainly due to a spike in executions in three countries in the Middle East – Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. In Iran, the authorities executed at least 972 people, an increase of 14% from 853 in 2023, and the highest figure recorded since 2015. At least 52% (505) of all known executions in Iran recorded in 2024 were of people convicted of drug-related offences, continuing a disturbing upward trend since the authorities' return in 2021 to a heavily punitive drug policy that has intensified their unlawful use of the death penalty. In Iraq, the number of known executions (at least 63) represented a four-fold increase on 2023 (at least 16) and was the highest recorded since 2019. All known executions involved people convicted of terrorism related offences. The authorities of Saudi Arabia doubled their resort to executions (at least 345) compared to the previous year (172), marking the highest number of executions in any given year on record with Amnesty International.

Known executions in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia accounted for 91% of the total executions recorded globally, with Iran accounting for 64% of them.

Rises in known executions were also recorded, most notably, in Egypt with a two-third increase (from eight in 2023 to 13 in 2024); Singapore, where executions nearly doubled (from five to nine); and Yemen, where the yearly total more than doubled compared to 2023 (from at least 15 to at least 38). The total number of executions in the USA (25) represented the second highest yearly figure since 2015 (28), matching the 2018 total.

Known executions slightly decreased in Somalia, from at least 38 to at least 34.

Women were known to have been executed in China (+), Egypt (2), Iran (30), Iraq (1), Saudi Arabia (9) and Yemen (2).

Executions were recorded in 15 countries, the lowest number for the second consecutive year of executing countries on record since Amnesty International began monitoring. No executions were recorded in Bangladesh, for the first time since 2018. Oman carried out its first known executions since 2021. Due to conflict, no figure was available for Palestine (State of).

[5] In 2009, Amnesty International stopped publishing its estimated figures on the use of the death penalty in China. Instead, the organization has challenged the authorities to prove their claims that they are achieving their goal of reducing the application of the death penalty by publishing the figures themselves. Little or partial information was available for several other countries (see Note on Amnesty International's figures on the use of the death penalty in this report for further information).

2024 KNOWN EXECUTING COUNTRIES BY INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- **Organization of American States:** 1 out of 34 countries carried out executions – USA.
- **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe:** 1 out of 57 countries executed people – USA.
- **African Union:** 2 out of 55 countries carried out executions – Egypt and Somalia.
- **League of Arab States:** 8 out of 22 countries executed people – Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.
- **Association of Southeast Asian Nations:** 2 out of 10 countries carried out executions – Singapore and Viet Nam.
- **Commonwealth:** 1 out of 56 countries executed people – Singapore.
- **Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie**: 2 out of 56 countries carried out executions – Egypt and Viet Nam.
- **United Nations:** 15 out of 193 member states (8% of UN membership) were known to have executed people – Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, North Korea, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, Syria, USA, Viet Nam, Yemen.

METHODS OF EXECUTION IN 2024[6]

Beheading	Saudi Arabia					
Hanging	Egypt	Iran	Iraq	Kuwait	Singapore	Syria
Lethal injection	China	USA	Viet Nam			
Shooting	Afghanistan	China	North Korea	Oman	Somalia	Yemen
Nitrogen gas asphyxiation	USA					

[6] Amnesty International did not receive any reports of judicial executions by stoning in 2024. However, the Taliban de facto authorities in Afghanistan suggested that public stoning to death might be carried out to punish adults for consensual relationships outside marriage.

DEATH SENTENCES

Amnesty International recorded 2,087 new death sentences in 2024, a 14% decrease on the 2,428 known total of 2023. The 2023 total was the highest total on record since 2018, and the decrease seen in 2024 brought the yearly figure closer to that recorded in 2022 (2,016). However, the greater variation in the availability of information on death sentences for some countries renders year-on-year comparisons of global totals methodologically challenging.

Amnesty International recorded new death sentences in 46 countries, six fewer than in 2023 (52). No figure was available for Palestine (State of) due to the ongoing armed conflict.

Courts in eight countries – Cameroon, Gambia, Guyana, Maldives, Qatar, South Korea, Taiwan and Zimbabwe – were not known to have sentenced people to death in 2024 while they had done so in 2023. In South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, people were known to have been sentenced to death in 2024 after a hiatus.



DEATH SENTENCES RECORDED GLOBALLY IN 2024

Afghanistan (+), Algeria (8), Bangladesh (165+), Belarus (1), Botswana (1), China (+), Democratic Republic of the Congo (125+), Egypt (365), Ethiopia (3+), Ghana (6), India (139), Indonesia (85+), Iran (+), Iraq (200+), Japan (3), Jordan (7+), Kenya (3), Kuwait (7+), Laos (2+), Lebanon (2+), Libya (11+), Malaysia (24), Mali (16+), Mauritania (23+), Morocco/Western Sahara (2+), Myanmar (7+), Niger (16+), Nigeria (186+), North Korea (+), Pakistan (117+), Saudi Arabia (+), Singapore (5), Somalia (17+), South Sudan (3+), Sri Lanka (25+), Sudan (30+), Syria (+), Tanzania (12+), Thailand (115), Trinidad and Tobago (1), Tunisia (12+), Uganda (2+), United Arab Emirates (1+), USA (26), Viet Nam (150+), Yemen (152+).

Amnesty International recorded significant rises in the number of death sentences known to have been imposed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (from at least 33 in 2023 to at least 125 in 2024), India (from 120 to 139), Iraq (from at least 138 to at least 200), Mauritania (from at least five to at least 23), Niger (from at least eight to at least 16), Tunisia (from at least three to at least 12) and Yemen (from at least 81 to at least 152).

Significant decreases in the number of imposed death sentences were recorded in the following countries: Algeria (from at least 38 in 2023 to eight in 2024), Bangladesh (from at least 248 to at least 165), Egypt (from 590 to 365), Indonesia (from at least 114 to at least 85), Kenya (from 131 to three), Lebanon (from at least 11 to at least two), Libya (from at least 29 to at least 11), Malaysia (from at least 38 to 24), Myanmar (from at least 19 to at least seven), Nigeria (from at least 246 to at least 186), Somalia (from at least 31 to at least 17) and Sri Lanka (from at least 40 to at least 25).

Women were known to have been sentenced to death in Bangladesh (4), China (+), India (8), Iran (+), Iraq (6), Jordan (2), Pakistan (3), Thailand (20) and Viet Nam (3).

Globally, at least 28,085 people were under sentence of death at the end of 2024, including 11,667 (42%) in the Asia-Pacific region alone.[7]

[7] For several countries where Amnesty International believed a high number of prisoners were under sentence of death, figures were not available or it was impossible to estimate a credible number. These included China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Libya, Myanmar, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

COMMUTATIONS, PARDONS AND EXONERATIONS

Amnesty International recorded commutations or pardons of death sentences in 18 countries: Bangladesh, Belarus, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq (including in the Kurdistan region), Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Maldives, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, USA and Viet Nam.[8]

Amnesty International recorded nine exonerations of individuals under sentence of death in three countries:[9] Japan (1), Malaysia (5) and USA (3).[10]

THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2024: IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW



The death penalty continued to be used in ways that violated international law and standards in 2024. Some examples included:

- At least 8 **public executions** in Afghanistan (4+) and Iran (4).
- At least 8 people – in Iran (4) and Somalia (4)[11] – were executed for crimes that occurred when they were **below 18 years of age**; Amnesty International believed that other people in this category remained on death row in Iran, Maldives and Saudi Arabia.[12]
- People with **mental or intellectual disabilities** were under sentence of death in several countries, including Japan, Maldives and USA.
- Death sentences were known to have been imposed after proceedings that did not meet international **fair trial standards** in several countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Yemen.
- **"Confessions"** that may have been extracted through **torture or other ill-treatment** were used to convict and sentence people to death in Iran and Saudi Arabia.
- Death sentences were imposed **without the defendant being present (in absentia)** in Bangladesh, Lebanon and Yemen.

---

[8] Commutation is the process by which a death sentence is exchanged for a less severe sentence such as a term of imprisonment, often by the judiciary on appeal but sometimes also by the executive. A pardon is granted when the convicted individual is completely exempted from further punishment.

[9] Exoneration is the process whereby, after sentencing and the conclusion of the appeals process, the convicted person is later cleared from blame or acquitted of the criminal charge, and therefore is regarded as innocent in the eyes of the law.

[10] Death Penalty Information Center, deathpenaltyinfo.org/policy-issues/innocence-database

[11] UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict, "Somalia: UN Officials Alarmed at Execution of Four Young People for Crimes Committed as Minor, Call for Release, Reintegration of Children in Detention", 3 September 2024, https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2024/09/somalia-un-officials-alarmed-at-execution-of-four-young-people-for-crimes-committed-as-minor-call-for-release-reintegration-of-children-in-detention/

[12] Often the actual age of the prisoner is in dispute because no clear proof of age exists, such as a certificate of registration at birth. Governments should apply a full range of appropriate criteria in cases where age is in dispute. Good practice in assessing age includes drawing on knowledge of physical, psychological and social development. Each of these criteria should be applied in a way that gives the benefit of the doubt in disputed cases so that the individual is treated as a person who was below 18 years of age at the time of the crime, and accordingly should ensure that the death penalty is not applied in such circumstances. Such an approach is consistent with the principle that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, as required by Article 3(1) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2024: IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW (CONTINUED)



- **Mandatory death sentences** were imposed in Ghana, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Trinidad and Tobago.[13]
- **Military courts sentenced** civilians to death in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar. **Special Courts** imposed death sentences in Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.
- The death penalty was used for **crimes that did not involve intentional killing** and therefore did not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes" under international law,[14] including:
  - **Drug-related offences:** Executions for drug-related offences were recorded in China (+),[15] Iran (505, 52% of the total), Saudi Arabia (122, 35%) and Singapore (8, 89%). In 2024, Amnesty International recorded 637 drug-related executions, which constituted 42% of total executions recorded globally and represented a 25% increase on the total of 2023 (508). Information on Viet Nam, which is very likely to have carried out such executions, was unavailable.
  - There were 337 new death sentences known to have been imposed for drug-related offences in 13 countries: Bangladesh (3, 2% of the total), China (+),[16] Indonesia (64, 75%), Iran (+), Iraq (122, 61%), Kuwait (3, 43%), Laos (2, 100%), Malaysia (9, 38%), Pakistan (2, 2%), Singapore (5, 100%), Sri Lanka (1, 4%), Yemen (1, 1%) and Viet Nam (121, 81%). In Thailand, of the 364 people under sentence of death at the end of 2024, 252 (69%) including 37 women had been convicted of drug-related offences.
  - **Economic crimes,** such as corruption: China and Viet Nam.
  - Acts considered offences against the religion, such as **"apostasy"** or **"blasphemy"**: Pakistan.
  - **Sexual relationships** outside of marriage between consenting adults of the same or opposite sex: Yemen.
  - **Rape:** Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia (with other non-lethal offences), and Yemen (with kidnapping).
  - **Different forms of "treason", "acts against national security", "collaboration" with a foreign entity, "espionage", "questioning the leader's policies", participation in "insurrectional movement and terrorism", "armed rebellion against the state/ruler" and other "crimes against the state",** whether or not they led to a loss of life: Ghana, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

[13] The UN Human Rights Committee has stated that "mandatory death sentences that leave domestic courts with no discretion as to whether to designate the offence as a crime warranting the death penalty, and whether to issue the death sentence in the particular circumstances of the offender, are arbitrary in nature." Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on Article 6: Right to Life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36 [3 September 2019], para. 37.

[14] As prescribed by Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on Article 6: Right to Life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36 [3 September 2019], para. 35.

[15] When calculating global and regional totals, "+" has been counted as two.

[16] When calculating global and regional totals, "+" has been counted as two.

REGIONAL OVERVIEWS

AMERICAS

REGIONAL TRENDS

- Outgoing US President Joe Biden commuted 93% of existing federal death sentences.
- Four US states resumed executions, and Alabama tripled its yearly total.
- For the 16th consecutive year, the USA was the only country in the region to execute people.
- Trinidad and Tobago and the USA were the only two countries in the Americas known to have imposed new death sentences.

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Antigua and Barbuda	0	0	0
Bahamas	0	0	0
Barbados	0	0	4
Belize	0	0	0
Brazil (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Chile (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Cuba	0	0	0
Dominica	0	0	0
El Salvador (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Grenada	0	0	1

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Guatemala (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Guyana	0	0	24
Jamaica	0	0	0
Peru (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0	0	0
Saint Lucia	0	0	0
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0	0	1
Trinidad and Tobago	0	1	37
USA[17]	25 in 9 states: Alabama (6) Florida (1) Georgia (1) Indiana (1) Missouri (4) Oklahoma (4) South Carolina (2) Texas (5) Utah (1)	26 in 11 states: Alabama (3)[18] Arizona (1) California (3) Florida (7) Idaho (1) Louisiana (1) Mississippi (1) Nevada (1) Ohio (1) Tennessee (1) Texas (6)	2,049, including 45 women, in 28 jurisdictions[19] Seven states held more than 100 people: California 601 Florida 277 Texas 176 Alabama 158 North Carolina 122 Ohio 114 Arizona 111

[17] Figures based on Amnesty International's monitoring of information published by Departments of Corrections, courts and media in relevant US states.

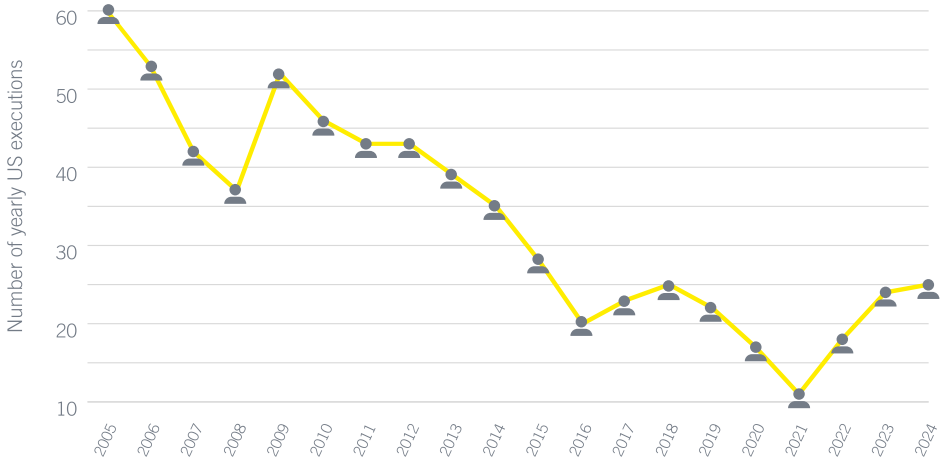
[18] A death sentence that was formally imposed by the judge on 12 January 2024 was included in the total for Alabama in the report covering 2023. The death sentence had been pronounced by the jury on 3 November 2023.

[19] The state of New Hampshire, where the death penalty was abolished in 2019, still held one person under sentence of death.

The steady upward trend in the use of the death penalty recorded in the USA since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic continued in 2024, while the rest of the Americas region saw a decrease in the pursuit of this cruel punishment. While still in line with historically low trends of recent decades, figures of death sentences and executions in the USA marked the highest yearly totals in several years.

The total number of executions (25) in the USA represented the second highest yearly figure since 2015 (28), matching the 2018 total *(Figure 3)*. While the rise was numerically minimal when compared with 2023 (24), it was still reflective of the relentless pursuit of the death penalty by state authorities during the year.

FIGURE 3: EXECUTIONS IN THE USA 2005-2024



The scale of the increase appeared more evident in relation to the number of states that carried out executions in 2024, which nearly doubled compared to 2023 (from five in 2023 to nine in 2024). The authorities of Georgia carried out their first execution since 2020, after litigation on an agreement put in place between the state Attorney General and lawyers of some people on death row during the Covid-19 pandemic concluded.[20] Authorities carried out one execution in Indiana, for the first time since 2009, after the Department of Corrections was able to obtain the chemical pentobarbital for lethal injections from an undisclosed source.[21] Similarly, the authorities of South Carolina executed two men in the first executions since 2011, following the sourcing of pentobarbital.[22] Utah also carried out the first execution since 2010 after the Department of Corrections sourced pentobarbital for an estimated USD 200,000.[23]

---

[20] Associated Press, "Georgia readies to resume executions after a 4-year pause brought by COVID and a legal agreement", 11 March 2024, https://apnews.com/article/georgia-death-penalty-execution-covid-bd1e757ec6999e90a6456cec90ccd48d

[21] Indiana Capital Chronicle, "State seeks execution date for convicted Fort Wayne murderer", 26 June 2024, https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2024/06/26/states-seeks-execution-date-for-convicted-fort-wayne-murderer/ Correction departments across the USA have struggled to find chemicals for lethal injections since the domestic production of some stopped; and pharmaceutical companies also refused to sell their products for executions. For more information see also Indiana Capital Chronicle, "What is pentobarbital? More questions than answers surround Indiana's new execution drug", 5 July 2024, https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2024/07/05/what-is-pentobarbital-more-questions-than-answers-around-indianas-new-execution-drug/

[22] Associated Press, "South Carolina inmate dies by lethal injection in state's first execution in 13 years", 21 September 2024, https://apnews.com/article/south-carolina-execution-freddie-owens-lethal-injection-0e15aef91dfe9ac9667264dce7df0193

[23] KSL.com, "Honie execution cost Utah Department of Corrections over $280,000", 20 August 2024, https://www.ksl.com/article/51105065/honie-execution-cost-utah-department-of-corrections-over-280000

Executions in Alabama rose from two in 2023 to six in 2024, the highest total recorded at state level in 2024. Three executions were implemented by nitrogen gas asphyxiation, a new and cruel method of execution deployed for the first time ever in the world. It was condemned by UN experts as it "may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or even torture" and called for a ban on its use.[24] Together with Texas (five), the two states accounted for almost half of the national total.

A decrease in executions was recorded in Florida, from six in 2023 to one in 2024, and Texas (from eight to five).

Executions in Ohio continued to remain on hold, as Governor Mike DeWine issued further reprieves "due to ongoing problems involving the willingness of pharmaceutical suppliers to provide drugs to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), pursuant to DRC protocol, without endangering other Ohioans."[25]

For the third consecutive year, the number of death sentences in the USA slightly increased, reaching the highest total recorded since 2019 (36). In 2024, the number of new death sentences known to have been imposed by US courts grew by one compared to the previous year (from 25 in 2023 to 26 in 2024).

The number of states known to have imposed new death sentences in 2024 also increased slightly, from 10 to 11. The courts of Idaho imposed the first recorded death sentence since 2017; Mississippi, since 2022; Nevada, since 2018; and Tennessee, since 2021. Amnesty International did not record any new death sentences in North Carolina, Pennsylvania and by US federal courts, which imposed death sentences in 2023.

The number of death sentences imposed in Texas doubled compared to 2023 (from three to six). An increase was also recorded in Florida (from five in 2023 to seven in 2024), where a 2024 law allowed for death sentences to be imposed when at least eight of 12 jurors vote in favour.

THE DEATH PENALTY IN THE USA

As of the end of 2024, 23 US states had abolished this punishment for all crimes, including 11 since the beginning of the millennium.[26] Of the 27 remaining states, California, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Wyoming (11, or 41% of all states that retained the death penalty in law) had not carried out executions for at least 10 years. Of these, California, Oregon and Pennsylvania continued to observe governor-ordered moratoriums on executions.

At the federal level, US military authorities had not carried out any executions since 1961. The Biden administration continued to observe a temporary moratorium on executions of people convicted under ordinary federal capital laws, put in place in July 2021. Under the previous Trump administration, executions resumed with 13 death sentences carried out between July 2020 and January 2021, after a 17-year hiatus.

[24] UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "United States: Experts call for urgent ban on executions by nitrogen gas in Alabama", 20 November 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/united-states-experts-call-urgent-ban-executions-nitrogen-gas-alabama

[25] Office of the Governor of Ohio, "Governor DeWine Issues Reprieves", 18 October 2024, https://governor.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/governor/media/news-and-media/governor-dewine-issues-reprieves-10-18-2024

[26] The states of Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Virginia and Washington. The District of Columbia has also abolished the death penalty.

The number of people reported to be under sentence of death across the USA lowered by 149 compared to 2,198 in 2023. Among the most notable reasons for the decrease was the commutation by outgoing President Joe Biden of 37 out of 40 federal death sentences.[27] The presidential order left seven men, including four sentenced to death by military courts, at risk of execution.[28] Roy Cooper, then Governor of North Carolina, followed suit and commuted the death sentences imposed on 15 men as the year ended.[29]

The authorities of California concluded in May the transfer of people sentenced to death, including 20 women, to various institutions across the state to hold them together with the general prison population.[30]

Violations of international human rights law and standards continued in several cases, frequently made worse by procedural restrictions limiting admission of new evidence or appeals. Among other examples, **Joseph Corcoran**, who had long been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, was executed in Indiana on 18 December 2024.[31] In 2005, he missed the deadline for signing a petition for post-conviction review. His lawyers repeatedly sought to have the case reviewed noting that his mental disability had severely affected his defence throughout the case. Nonetheless, the authorities allowed the execution to proceed.

Racial bias and discrimination continued to affect US capital cases. These included that of **Richard Moore**, a 59-year-old Black man who was executed in South Carolina on 1 November 2024 for the murder of a white convenience store clerk in 1999. At the trial, the prosecutor dismissed the only two prospective Black jurors, resulting in an all-white jury.[32] **Marcellus Williams**, a 55-year-old Black man, was executed in Missouri on 24 September 2024 despite serious questions about the quality of his legal representation at trial, the credibility of key prosecution witnesses and the state's handing of DNA evidence. At his trial, in a county with a notorious record of discriminatory prosecutorial jury selection tactics and significant racial disparities in application of the death penalty based on the race of the murder victim, the prosecutor dismissed six of the seven Black would-be jurors.[33]

In California, a federal judge ordered the District Attorney of Alameda County on 22 April to review 35 death penalty convictions, after it was disclosed that several prosecutors intentionally excluded Black and Jewish people from serving on capital murder trials in 1995 through discriminatory jury selection tactics.[34]

Legislation to repeal or restrict the death penalty was adopted in 2024. On 26 September, Governor John Carney of Delaware signed into law a bill to remove from state legislation the death penalty, which the state Supreme Court had already found to be unconstitutional in 2016.[35] Two days later, Governor Gavin Newsom of California signed into law a bill to exclude people with intellectual disabilities from the use of death penalty.[36]

---

27 US Department of Justice, "Executive Grant of Clemency", 23 December 2024, https://www.justice.gov/pardon/media/1382291/dl?inline

28 Amnesty International USA, "Amnesty International Welcomes President Biden's Decision to Commute 37 Federal Death Sentences but Urges for Death Row to be Fully Cleared", 23 December 2024, https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/amnesty-international-welcomes-president-bidens-decision-to-commute-37-federal-death-sentences-but-urges-for-death-row-to-be-fully-cleared/

29 Office of the Governor of North Carolina, "Governor Cooper Takes Capital Clemency Actions", 31 December 2024, https://governor.nc.gov/news/press-releases/2024/12/31/governor-cooper-takes-capital-clemency-actions

30 California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Condemned Inmate Transfer Program (CITP), https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/capital-punishment/condemned-inmate-transfer-program/

31 Amnesty International, *USA: Further Information: Indiana carries out its first execution since 2009* (AMR 51/8874/2024), 20 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/8874/2024/en/

32 Amnesty International, *USA: Racial bias as South Carolina execution set* (AMR 51/8606/2024), 8 October 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/8606/2024/en/

33 Amnesty International, *USA: Execution would violate International Law* (AMR 51/8530/2024), 13 September 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/8530/2024/en/

34 Los Angeles Times, "Federal judge orders Alameda County to review death penalty cases", 23 April 2024, https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-04-23/federal-judge-orders-alameda-county-to-review-death-penalty-cases

35 Delaware General Assembly, *House Bill 70 – 152nd General Assembly (2023 - 2024)*, https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail/129979

36 California Legislative Information, *SB-1001 Death penalty: intellectually disabled persons*, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billHistoryClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB1001

At the opposite end of this progress, three states adopted legislative amendments to facilitate executions: in Louisiana, a bill to allow for executions by nitrogen hypoxia and for confidentiality of records or information relating to the execution became effective on 1 July;[37] in Utah, Governor Spencer Cox signed a bill on 16 February prohibiting the disclosure of information and records related to an execution.[38] On 9 May, Governor Bill Lee of Tennessee expanded the scope of the death penalty to allow its imposition for "rape of a child, aggravated rape of a child, or especially aggravated rape of a child" – in violation of international restrictions requiring the death penalty only to be imposed, pending its abolition, for crimes involving intentional killing.[39]

Five men continued to face capital prosecution before unfair military commissions at the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, charged in two separate cases. Three of them, all charged with plotting the attacks of 11 September 2001, sought to enter in guilty pleas agreements with the prosecution that would have seen the death penalty removed as a possible sentence. Although the deal was approved by military commission panels, the Department of Defence intervened to cancel the deal.[40] Judicial appeals on the pleas remained unresolved at the end of the year.[41]

According to figures from the Death Penalty Information Center, three men were exonerated from death rows in California, Pennsylvania and Texas, bringing the total number of exonerations recorded since 1973 to 200.[42]

Outside the USA, Trinidad and Tobago was the only country in the region known to have sentenced people to death in 2024 (one death sentence in total). Trinidad and Tobago remained the only country in the region to retain the mandatory death penalty for murder, holding 55% of the 67 people known to be under sentence of death in the region outside the USA.

Eight countries that still retained the death penalty for ordinary crimes, such as murder – Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia – did not hold anyone under sentence of death and did not impose any new death sentences. Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continued to hold one person each under sentence of death, but these cannot be implemented due to judicial standards in both countries prohibiting the implementation of a death sentence after five years since its imposition. Similarly, the High Court of Trinidad and Tobago commuted the death sentence of one man who had been held on death row for more than five years.

On 2 August 2024, the National Advisory Committee on Constitutional Reform of Trinidad and Tobago submitted to the Prime Minister its report on its public consultations. Disappointingly, the report includes a recommendation to keep a provision that allows for the death penalty to be retained.[43] However, it also proposes to remove from the new Constitution the "savings clause" that protected from legal challenges laws that existed at independence. This clause has had the effect of maintaining the mandatory death penalty in place, despite repeated attempts to have it declared as inconsistent with fundamental freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution.

---

37 Louisiana State Legislature, 2024 Second Extraordinary Session HB6 – by Representative Nicholas Muscarello, https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=245598

38 Utah State Legislature, *S.B. 109 Corrections Modifications*, https://le.utah.gov/~2024/bills/static/SB0109.html

39 Tennessee General Assembly, *House Bill 1663 / Senate Bill 1834*, https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/default.aspx?BillNumber=SB1834&GA=113

40 Associated Press, "Plea deals revived for alleged 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and others", 7 November 2024, https://apnews.com/article/guantanamo-plea-deal-911-austin-death-penalty-073c3455e27ecbfd0f7dd524ccffdef3

41 New York Times, "Pentagon Appeals Court Upholds Plea Deals in Sept. 11 Case", 30 December 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/30/us/politics/911-case-plea-deals.html

42 Death Penalty Information Center, *Innocence Database*, available at https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/facts-and-research/data/innocence?page=4

43 We The People - Report of the National Advisory Committee on Constitutional Reform, July 2024, https://constitutionalreform2024.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Report-of-the-National-Advisory-Committee-on-Constitutional-Reform.pdf

ASIA-PACIFIC

REGIONAL TRENDS

- Secrecy continued to shroud the use of the death penalty in China, where thousands were believed to have been executed and sentenced to death, as well as in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Viet Nam, which also resorted to the death penalty extensively.
- Punitive efforts to curb trafficking and possession of drugs continued to drive the resort to this cruel punishment in China and several countries in South-East Asia.
- The Federal Court and Court of Appeal of Malaysia commuted more than 1,000 death sentences.

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Afghanistan	+	+	+
Bangladesh	0	165+	2,000+
Brunei Darussalam	0	0	+
China	+	+	+
India[44]	0	139	564
Indonesia	0	85+	+
Japan	0	3	106[45]
Laos	0	2+	+
Malaysia	0	24	99+[46]
Maldives	O	0	20[47]
Myanmar	O	7+	+
North Korea	+	+	+
Pakistan	0	117+	6,161[48]

[44] Project 39A, Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics Report 2023, January 2023, https://www.project39a.com/annual-statistics-report-2023; Amnesty International gathered reports relating to 110 new death sentences imposed during 2023.

[45] With their death sentences upheld by the Supreme Court.

[46] Figures by the Prison Department released in March 2025 indicated that, as of 22 January 2025, 140 people were under sentence of death in Malaysia, including 40 for drug related offences. Parliament of Malaysia, First session, Fourth term of the Fifteenth Parliament, 3 February to 6 March 2025, Written question no.552.

[47] Including four with their death sentences upheld by the Supreme Court.

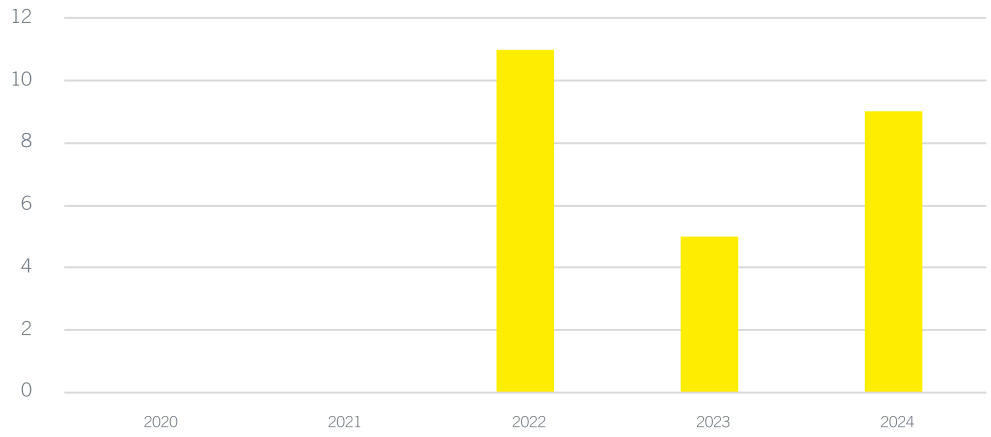
[48] Justice Project Pakistan, "Death Penalty in Pakistan: Data Mapping Capital Punishment", October 2024, https://jpp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Death-Penalty-2024.pdf

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Singapore	9	5	40+
South Korea	0	0	57[49]
Sri Lanka	0	25+	1,000+
Taiwan[50]	0	0	42[51]
Thailand	0	115	364
Tonga	0	0	0
Viet Nam	+	150+	1,200+

The Asia-Pacific region continued to hold the highest number of executions in the world, but secrecy and restrictive state practices made it impossible for Amnesty International to put forward complete figures. In particular, figures on the use of the death penalty remained classified as a state secret in China and Viet Nam; and access to information on North Korea remained very restricted, rendering figures for the region and globally gross underestimates of the reality of the resort to this punishment.

Additionally, Amnesty International recorded executions in Afghanistan and Singapore. In Singapore, the government almost doubled its executions compared to 2023 (from five to nine), carrying out six of these over a two-month period (*Figure 4*).

FIGURE 4: EXECUTIONS CARRIED OUT IN SINGAPORE (2020-2024)



[49] Including four convicted under military law.

[50] Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty.

[51] Including 37 with their death sentences upheld by the Supreme Court.

In Bangladesh, where a new interim government took office in August, no executions were recorded for the first time since 2018. In September, reports indicated that the military authorities in Myanmar executed two people, but Amnesty International was unable to verify this information.

At least 843 new death sentences were known to have been imposed in the region during the year. This represented a decrease by 105 or 11% compared to 2023 (at least 948). However, the overall variation is likely linked to changes to access to information, including official data, for some countries. Most notable increases were recorded in India (from 120 in 2023 to 139 in 2024) and Pakistan (from at least 102 to at least 117).

Known death sentences decreased in Bangladesh (from at least 248 in 2023 to at least 165 in 2024), Indonesia (from at least 114 to at least 85), Laos (from at least four to at least two) and Myanmar (from at least 19 to at least seven). Amnesty International did not record any new death sentences in the Maldives, South Korea and Taiwan, resulting in a lower number of countries (15) known to have sentenced people to death in 2024 compared to 2023.

Throughout the region, the death penalty continued to be used in violation of international law and standards, including after unfair proceedings; as the mandatory punishment; and to punish drug-related and other offences that do not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" (intentional killing) to which the imposition of the death penalty must be restricted.

Media and the UN reported that the Taliban de-facto authorities in **Afghanistan** carried out at least four public executions.[52] In March, Hibatullah Akhundzada, the Taliban leader, suggested that public stoning to death might be carried out to punish consenting adults for relationships outside marriage.[53]

Of the 165 new death sentences recorded by Amnesty International in **Bangladesh**, three were imposed for drug related offences, including on a woman; 12 for rape; and the remaining for offences involving intentional killing. Five of these were imposed without the defendant being present; and 32 were imposed by special courts, including Speedy Trial Tribunals. Four women in total were sentenced to death.

The authorities of **China** continued to balance secrecy on information on the death penalty with occasional disclosures around certain types of cases, seemingly to send a message that crime and dissent would not be tolerated.

During the year, information on executions was shared through judicial guidance and in state media with commentary illustrating the gravity of the circumstances of the offences, to remind the population that certain crimes would be harshly punished.[54] In some instances, the death penalty was used to punish non-lethal sexual offences against children and trafficking of children.[55] Other crimes punished by death were drug related offences and economic crimes, such as corruption. Amnesty International recorded seven death sentences imposed for corruption, six of which allowed for the possibility of commutation after two years (suspended death sentences).

---

[52] UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, "Comment by UN Human Rights spokesperson Jeremy Laurence on public executions in Afghanistan", 28 February 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/02/comment-un-human-rights-spokesperson-jeremy-laurence-public-executions

[53] Amu TV, "Taliban leader suggests implementing Sharia law could lead to stoning, beating of women", 24 March 2024, https://amu.tv/88500/

[54] Global Times, "China's top court and women's federation release typical cases to raise awareness to prevent domestic violence", 25 November 2024, https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202411/1323746.shtml

[55] China Daily, "SPC approves executions of 3 high-profile killers", 1 February 2024, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202402/01/WS65baebc9a3104efcbdae906f.html; "Three child rapists executed after top court approves sentence", 13 November 2024, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202411/13/WS67348aa7a310f1265a1cd2f1.html;Global Times, Court in SW China upholds death sentence of Yu Huaying for child abducting and trafficking, 19 December 2024, https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202412/1325369.shtml; China Daily, "Wuxi campus killer Xu Jiajin executed after court approval", 20 January 2025, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202501/20/WS678dff9ea310a2ab06ea8137.html

Disclosures in relation to these offences also highlighted how the death penalty was used as a tool to make an example of officials found guilty of crime. Among others, reports indicated that a public official was executed in Shaanxi Province in July for drug trafficking.[56] A former secretary of a Party working committee was executed in Inner Mongolia in December after he was convicted of corruption, bribery, misappropriation of public funds and collusion with a criminal syndicate.[57] The death penalty for all these offences violated international law and standards as they did not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" to which the use of this punishment must be restricted.

The death penalty also continued to be used to send a political message and target opponents. On 5 February, Chinese-Australian writer Yang Hengjun was sentenced to death (with the possibility of reprieve after two years) on espionage charges, following an unfair trial held behind closed doors.[58] On 21 June, the Supreme People's Court of China jointly issued with the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice the "Opinions on Punishing 'Taiwan Independence' Diehards for Conducting or Inciting Separatism in Accordance with Law". The guidance encourages lower courts and various government and law enforcement agencies to prosecute and punish as national security offences various acts, including peaceful ones, aimed at the pursuit of the independence of Taiwan from China.[59]

In **India,** figures from Project 39A at the National Law University in Delhi indicated that the number of people under sentence of death at the end of 2024 reached the highest number in nearly two decades.[60] On 2 September 2024, the Aparajita (Women and Child) Protection Act, 2024, came into effect in the state of West Bengal.[61] The amendments introduced the mandatory death penalty for aggravated rape resulting into death or persistent vegetative state, and the discretionary death penalty for rape of a woman.[62]

Of the 85 new death sentences recorded by Amnesty International in **Indonesia**, 64 were for drug related offences and 21 for murder. In December, agreements between the Indonesian government and those of Australia and the Philippines saw five men and one woman held under sentence of death return to their country of origin.[63]

No executions were recorded in **Japan** for the second consecutive year. On 26 September 2024, the Shizuoka District Court acquitted Hakamada Iwao, described as the world's longest-serving person on death row.[64] During his first trial in 1968, Hakamada was convicted of the murder of his employer and his employer's family largely based on a forced "confession" that had been extracted through torture

---

[56] mw.cn, 一公职人员贩毒被执行死刑 [Public official executed for drug trafficking], 22 July 2024, https://m.gmw.cn/2024-07/22/content_1303798043.htm

[57] China Daily, "Former Inner Mongolia official executed for corruption-related crimes", 17 December 2024, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202412/17/WS67610ab2a310f1265a1d35f8.html

[58] BBC News, "Yang Hengjun: Australian writer given suspended death sentence in China", 5 February 2024, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-68201475

[59] Amnesty International, "China: Judicial guidelines to curtail activism for Taiwan a further blow for human rights protections" (ACT 50/8276/2024), 11 July 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/8276/2024/en/

[60] Project 39A, "Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics Report", January 2025, p.6, https://www.project39a.com/annual-statistics-2024

[61] Kolkata Gazette, No. WB(Part-IV)/2024/SAR-14 of 2 September 2024, https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_states/west-bengal/2024/Bill14of2024WB.pdf

[62] Project 39A, "What is the 'Aparajita Women and Child Bill'?", 20 December 2024, https://p39ablog.com/2024/12/aparajita-bill-explained/

[63] The Guardian, "'Human body can only take so much': home in Australia, remaining Bali Nine face their new normal", 16 December 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/dec/16/bali-9-australia-return-scott-rush-michael-czugaj-townsville-bishop-timothy-harris; Amnesty International Indonesia, "Indonesia: Transfer of woman on death row to the Philippines must be a pivotal moment towards abolishing death penalty", 19 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/indonesia-transfer-of-woman-on-death-row-to-the-philippines-must-be-a-pivotal-moment-towards-abolishing-death-penalty/12/2024/

[64] Amnesty International, "Japan: Acquittal of man who spent 45 years on death row pivotal moment for justice", 26 September 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/09/japan-acquittal-of-man-who-spent-45-years-on-death-row-pivotal-moment-for-justice/

or other ill-treatment and which he had retracted at trial. After new DNA evidence surfaced questioning the reliability of his conviction, in March 2014, Hakamada was granted a retrial by Shizuoka District Court and was released from prison. As the prosecution repeatedly appealed the decision, it took close to ten years for the retrial to begin in October 2023, with the state still seeking the death penalty as possible punishment.

On 29 October, the Federal Court of **Malaysia** concluded its review of mandatory death sentences of people who had already exhausted their ordinary appeals when this punishment was made discretionary in July 2023.[65] Following the repeal of the mandatory death penalty, the Federal Court was given special jurisdiction to carry out the review, with 936 people on death row reported to have applied.[66] Figures shared by the Federal Court with Amnesty International indicated that 761 men and 93 women had their death sentences commuted under the temporary resentencing process (854, or 91% of the applicants); and a further 46, including 3 women, under the ordinary review process. In total, the Federal Court commuted 900 death sentences. Additionally, the Court of Appeal commuted 116 death sentences in 2024. Before the repeal of the mandatory death penalty, 1,337 people were under sentence of death in the country.[67]

The Federal Court affirmed 43 death sentences, all involving men convicted of murder, under its temporary jurisdiction; and a further four for murder under its ordinary jurisdiction. Figures shared in Parliament in February 2025 indicated that a further 22 cases had their application administratively cancelled and four people died before the resentencing process in their cases concluded.

Official figures shared with Amnesty International indicated that 24 new death sentences were imposed during the year, including six by the Court of Appeal. Of these, nine related to men convicted of drug trafficking.

During the year, Ali Ihusaan, Minister of Homeland Security and Technology, repeatedly announced that the Government of the **Maldives** was taking steps to resume the implementation of the death penalty.[68] In August, he also stated that his Ministry had sent draft legislative amendments to the Attorney General to introduce the death penalty for drug trafficking.[69]

The death penalty continued to be used by the military authorities of **Myanmar** as a tool against political opponents amidst concerns of unfair proceedings. At least seven new death sentences were imposed on activists accused of the murder of two women.[70] The NGO Assistance Association for Political Prisoners gathered reports of an additional five death sentences imposed by military tribunals under the Counter-Terrorism law.[71]

---

[65] Parliament of Malaysia, Answer to Parliament, First session, Fourth term of the Fifteenth Parliament, February 2025, Question no.86. The mandatory death penalty was abolished under the Abolition of Mandatory Death Penalty Act 2023 (Act 846).

[66] Under the Revision of Sentence of Death and Imprisonment for Natural Life (Temporary Jurisdiction of The Federal Court) Act 2023 (Act 847). An additional 120 people had their cases reviewed as they had been sentenced to imprisonment for natural life and had already exhausted their ordinary judicial proceedings. Figures included in answer to Parliament, First session, Fourth term of the Fifteenth Parliament, February 2025, Question no.86.

[67] Written answer to Parliament, Third meeting, fifth term, fourteenth Parliament, 4 October 2022.

[68] The Sun, "Maldives readies introducing death penalty: Home Minister", 22 October 2024, https://english.sun.mv/92733

[69] PSM Maldives, "Proposed law amendment to impose death penalty for drug smugglers", 15 August 2024, https://www.psmnews.mv/en/142188 The death penalty was not included in draft amendments introduced in February 2025.

[70] Radio Free Asia, "Myanmar's junta imposes multiple death sentences on activists", 7 March 2024, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/death-penalty-03072024185517.html

[71] Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, *Sentenced database*, https://airtable.com/appHDJLeiPsMGFJ7s/shriEaQw2eWEEU7zr/tbldh7ajAunXjn6eP

The lack of transparency and access to independent media sources, as well as restricted access to the country, made it once again impossible for Amnesty International to verify information on the use of the death penalty in **North Korea**. Foreign media reported several executions being carried out, including for acts that either did not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" to which the use of the death penalty must be restricted under international law or which did not constitute recognizable criminal offences complying with international human rights law.[72]

Of the 117 new death sentences recorded by Amnesty International in **Pakistan**, 103 were imposed for offences involving murder; nine for "blasphemy", an act that does not constitute a recognizable criminal offence complying with requirements under international human rights law and does not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes"; three for terrorism-related offences and two for drug trafficking. Three women were among those sentenced to death, two for murder and one for "blasphemy". Anti-terrorism courts sentenced 14 men to death; and other special courts – including Model Criminal Trial Courts, special courts established in 2019 to deal with the backlog of criminal cases – accounted for 10.

All nine men executed in **Singapore** had been sentenced to the mandatory death penalty. Eight had been convicted of drug related offences, including two who had been found by the judge to have been "couriers" but were not entitled to sentencing discretion as the prosecution did not issue a certificate of assistance in disrupting drug trafficking activities.[73] This violated the right to a fair trial and undermined the independence of the judiciary, as it effectively placed the decision between a life-or-death sentence in the hands of an official who is not a neutral party in the trial and should not have such powers. During the year, five new death sentences were imposed, all as mandatory punishment for drug related offences. In one case, the judge found the defendant to have met the "courier" requirement, but the prosecution did not issue a certificate of assistance thereby removing the possibility of sentencing discretion.

Throughout the year, the government of Singapore displayed a chilling determination to pursue executions. In four cases in August and October, the executions went ahead despite the men being parties to pending civil applications, with one of them also having a pending criminal review application.[74] This violated UN Safeguards prohibiting executions when appeals are pending.[75] Additionally, in June the Ministry of Home Affairs reviewed the practice of providing notification of a set execution to shorten the notice period for those who had previously been issued an execution warrant and had received a stay after half of their notification period had passed.[76]

Legislative changes further restricted the ability of those on death row to file applications to stay their executions and seek the review of their cases.[77] The Post-appeal Applications in Capital Cases Act 2022 came into effect on 28 June 2024, setting out the procedure for review applications in death

---

[72] Among other examples, Korea Times, "N. Korea ramps up public executions of people distributing S. Korean movies: unification ministry", 27 June 2024, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2025/02/103_377602.html; Radio Free Asia, "North Korea executes 2 women who fled and were forcibly repatriated from China", 17 September 2024, https://www.rfa.org/english/news/korea/north-korea-china-forced-repatriation-escapees-execution-09172024143449.html

[73] For more information on the requirements needed to avoid the mandatory death penalty in Singapore, see Amnesty International, Singapore: Cooperate or die: Singapore's flawed reforms to the mandatory death penalty (ACT 50/7158/2017), October 2017, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/7158/2017/en/

[74] Transformative Justice Collective, "Urgent: Imminent execution in Singapore", 1 August 2024, transformativejusticecollective.org/2024/08/01/urgent-imminent-execution-in-singapore/ ; Joint statement, "Singapore: Authorities must end executions and stop targeting anti-death penalty activists to curb criticism" (ACT 50/8446/2024), 22 August 2024, amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/8446/2024/en/

[75] Adopted without a vote by the UN Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1984/50 of 25 May 1984; and endorsed by the UN General Assembly, without a vote, in resolution 39/118 of 14 December 1984.

[76] Court of Appeal of Singapore, *Mohammad Azwan bin Bohari v. Public Prosecutor*, [2024] SGCA 38, para.12(b), elitigation.sg/gd/s/2024_SGCA_38

[77] Amnesty International, "Singapore: Authorities must end human rights crackdown and unlawful drug related executions" (ACT 50/8704/2024), 31 October 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/8704/2024/en/

penalty cases after the ordinary appeal process has concluded.[78] The new procedure effectively restricts the grounds and circumstances for the appeals, including to request a stay of execution.[79] The Administration of Justice (Protection) (Amendment) Bill, which was introduced in Parliament on 14 October 2024, sought to expand the scope of the circumstances that could amount to contempt of court under the Administration of Justice (Protection) Act 2016, to include any party or advocate, or any other person supporting a party or advocate, beginning one or several court proceedings when they know or ought to know that the proceedings are deceptive, fictitious or manifestly groundless; or involve the court being employed for some ulterior motive or improper purpose. [80]

On 20 September 2024, the Constitutional Court of **Taiwan** issued its decision on a challenge on the constitutionality of the death penalty brought by 36 men and one woman on death row. The Court recognized the fundamental flaws that characterized the use of this punishment in Taiwan, but found the death penalty constitutional for serious offences such as murder.[81] As part of its decision, the Court ruled that the death penalty may only be imposed following unanimous judgments and for the prosecution to disclose information on how the decisions were reached; prohibited its imposition on anyone with a severe mental disability; and determined that those facing the death penalty must be provided with legal counsel during criminal investigation, trial and appeal, and that oral arguments should be allowed at the Supreme Court.[82] The Court gave the authorities two years to amend the law in order to comply with the judgment.

Official figures provided to Amnesty International indicated that in 2024 the courts of first instance of **Thailand** imposed 115 new death sentences, including on 20 women and three foreign nationals. As of January 2025, 364 people were held under sentence of death, including 20 who had exhausted their judicial appeals. More than two thirds (252, or 69%) were convicted of drug related offences in contravention of international law and standards. The death penalty for drug related offences disproportionately affected women, as 37 out of 39 (95%) women on death row were for these offences.

On 28 May 2024, the Legislative Assembly of **Tonga** held the Lord Speaker's First Ever Debate on the death penalty and its effectiveness as deterrent for drug related offences.[83] Legislators rejected a proposal to introduce the death penalty for drug related offences by 38 votes against eight.[84]

Figures on executions in **Viet Nam** continued to be concealed as a state secret. Of the 150 death sentences recorded by Amnesty International, 121 were imposed for drug related offences, including three on women and five on foreign nationals. A further two were imposed for economic crimes, such as corruption.

---

[78] Act 41 of 2022, https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Acts-Supp/41-2022/Published/20230109?DocDate=20230109

[79] Ministry of Law of Singapore, "Operationalisation of the Post-Appeal Applications in Capital Cases Act 2022", 27 June 2024, https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/operationalisation-of-the-post-appeal-applications-in-capital-cases-act-2022/#:~:text=The%20Post%2DAppeal%20Applications%20in%20Capital%20Cases%20(%E2%80%9CPACC%E2%80%9D,effect%20on%2028%20June%202024.&text=2.,and%20the%20rule%20of%20law.

[80] Bill no.34/2024 of 14 October 2024. It came into effect on 25 January 2025.

[81] Taiwan Constitutional Court, Judgment 113-Hsien-Pan-8 (2024), delivered on 20 September 2024.

[82] Constitutional Court of Taiwan, "The TCC delivers its Judgment 113-Hsien-Pan-8 (2024)", 20 September 2024, https://cons.judicial.gov.tw/en/docdata.aspx?fid=5506&id=353656&_sm_au_=isVp6WPqZqL5QQRjWKKGvK7v4Q2s6

[83] Parliament of Tonga, "Capital punishment as a deterrent for illicit drug offences?", 24 May 2024, https://www.parliament.gov.to/media-centre/press-releases/capital-punishment-as-a-deterrent-for-illicit-drug-offences

[84] Radio New Zealand, "Tonga legislators reject death penalty proposal", 31 May 2024, https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/518323/tonga-legislators-reject-death-penalty-proposal

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

REGIONAL TRENDS

- Belarus remained the only country in Europe to use the death penalty.
- Russia and Tajikistan continued to observe moratoriums on executions.

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Belarus	0	1	1+
Russia	0	0	0
Tajikistan	0	0	0

In **Belarus**, a German national was convicted of an "act of terrorism" under several articles of the Criminal Code in proceedings held behind closed doors at the Minsk Regional Court. He was sentenced to death on 24 June 2024,[85] but President Alexander Lukashenka later pardoned him on 30 July.[86] He was subsequently released to the German authorities as part of a prisoner exchange that took place between the United States, Germany and other EU countries on the one hand, and Russia and Belarus on the other.[87]

Due to state secrecy in relation to the use of the death penalty, Amnesty International was unable to confirm how many people remain under sentence of death in Belarus. However, it is known that a Belarusian man sentenced to death on 19 October 2023 appealed his sentence at the Supreme Court and was heard and rejected on 9 January 2024.[88] It is believed that he remained under sentence of death at the end of 2024 since there was no available information to the contrary nor on his possible execution. Against this backdrop, Amnesty International believes that at least one person was on death row in Belarus at the end of 2024.[89]

[85] Human Rights Center Viasna, "Rico Krieger returns to Germany after Belarusian death sentence", 5 August 2024, https://spring96.org/en/news/115910; BBC, "Belarus sentences German medic to death, activists say", 19 July 2024, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c06ke3p0pz8o.

[86] BBC, "Belarus pardon for German hints at wider prisoner swap", 30 July 2024, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce78xl8r2xlo.

[87] The Insider, "Russia exchanges spies for political prisoners: Gershkovich, Kara-Murza, Whelan, Yashin, Kurmasheva, Chanysheva, Orlov released", 1 August 2024, https://theins.ru/en/news/273542.

[88] Human Rights Center Viasna, "Human rights situation in Belarus. July 2024", 8 August 2024, https://spring96.org/en/news/115947.

[89] Amnesty International has not been able to ascertain the status of Viktar Serhel, who was sentenced to death on 25 October 2019. After Viktar Serhel's appeal was turned down by the Supreme Court on 31 January 2020, his fate and whereabout have since remained shrouded in secrecy, https://spring96.org/en/news/110810.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

REGIONAL TRENDS

- Recorded executions increased to alarming numbers in three countries, reaching the highest figures since 2015 in Iran; and on record in any given year in Saudi Arabia.
- Recorded executions in Yemen more than doubled compared to 2023; and almost quadrupled on 2023 in Iraq.
- Oman carried out its first known executions since 2021.
- The Moroccan government was the latest in the region to vote in favour of the UN General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Algeria	0	8	262+
Bahrain	0	0	26[90]
Egypt	13	365[91]	+
Iran	972+[92]	+	+
Iraq	63+	200+	8,000+
Israel (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Jordan	0	7+	223+
Kuwait	6	7+	32+
Lebanon	0	2+	78
Libya	0	11+[93]	+
Morocco/Western Sahara	0	2+	88[94]
Oman	3	0	+

[90] Bahrain Center for Human Rights, "Bahrain: Joint Letter on Human Rights Priorities to All Member States of the United Nations General Assembly", 25 September 2024, https://bahrainrights.net/?p=136999

[91] The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR). Amnesty International also consulted with two other Egyptian rights groups, namely the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF) and the Egyptian Front of Human Rights (EFHR).

[92] Amnesty International worked closely with Abdorrahman Boroumand Centre for the 2024 figures, drawing from open sources, which includes other human rights organizations based outside of Iran. Amnesty International also received information from Iran Human Rights on executions carried out in 2024.

[93] The number of death sentences is likely to be significantly higher, as these figures only capture known executions in western Libya under the control of the Government of National Unity (GNU). In areas under the de facto control of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces armed group in eastern Libya, military courts issued convictions, sentenced to terms of imprisonment and death sentences in closed trials, inaccessible to the public including the families of the defendants.

[94] Morocco World News, "Morocco Votes in Favor of UN Death Penalty Moratorium After 17 Years of Abstention", 18 December 2024, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2024/12/167065/morocco-votes-in-favor-of-un-death-penalty-moratorium-after-17-years-of-abstention/

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Palestine (State of)[95]			
Qatar	0	0	1+
Saudi Arabia	345+	+	71+
Syria	+	+	+
Tunisia	0	12+	148
United Arab Emirates	0	1+	+
Yemen	38+	152+	233+

In a year marked by devastating new and protracted armed conflicts, crisis and upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa region, the death penalty remained in 2024 a prominent tool of choice for several governments to exert control and stifle dissent. The pursuit of this cruel punishment for vaguely defined terrorism and security related offences, as well as to harshly punish drug related activities, drove a significant rise in known executions, with the regional total reaching the highest figure on record in more than ten years. The use of the death penalty continued to disproportionately affect those belonging to ethnic and religious minorities and from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. It was often imposed and carried out in violation of international law and standards, including those that restrict the use of the death penalty to the "most serious crimes" (interpreted as intentional killing), frequently following grossly unfair proceedings, including by special and military courts.

The number of recorded executions in the region grew by an alarming 369 or 34%, from 1,073 in 2023 to 1,442 in 2024; and continued the year-on-year increase seen since 2020 primarily as a result of spikes in the yearly totals of three countries. In Iran, the authorities executed at least 972 people, an increase of 14% from 853 in 2023, and the highest figure recorded since 2015. In Iraq, the number of known executions (at least 63) represented a four-fold increase on 2023 (at least 16) and was the highest recorded since 2019. The authorities of Saudi Arabia doubled their resort to executions (at least 345) compared to the previous year (172), marking the highest number of executions in any given year on record with Amnesty International.

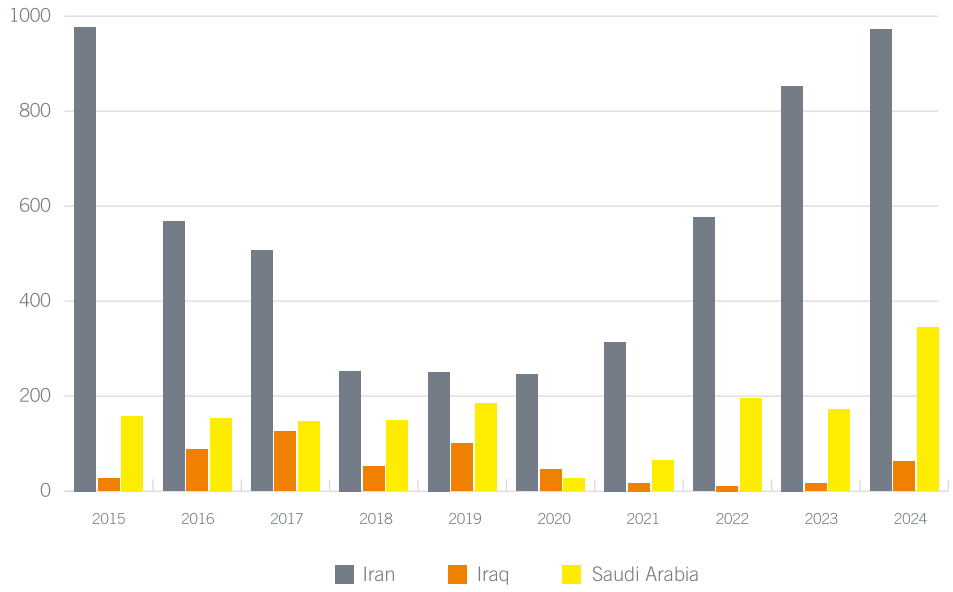
These three countries alone accounted for 96% of all recorded executions in the region, with Iran accounting for 67% of them. Five other countries – out of 18 that retained the death penalty for ordinary crimes–[96] were known to have carried out executions in 2024, with slight increases on their 2023 figures. The authorities of Egypt carried out 13 executions, an increase from eight in 2023; six executions were recorded in Kuwait, up from five. In Yemen, the number of known executions was the highest registered by the organization since 2011. The authorities of Oman were known to have executed people for the first time since 2021. Due to the ongoing crisis, Amnesty International was unable to confirm a figure for Palestine (State of) and Syria, but believed that executions continued to be carried out and death sentences imposed.

[95] Figures unavailable due to conflict.

[96] In addition, Israel has abolished the death penalty for murder, but retains it for some offences under exceptional circumstances.

Courts across the Middle East and North Africa were known to have imposed at least 773 new death sentences, a decrease of 19% from 2023 (950). The drop in recorded figures was linked primarily to a decrease in the yearly figure of Egypt, which lowered from at least 590 in 2023 to 365 in 2024. At the opposite end, the number of people known to have been sentenced to death increased by 45% in Iraq compared to the previous year (from at least 138 to at least 200); and close to doubled in Yemen, from at least 81 to 152.

FIGURE 5: RECORDED EXECUTIONS IN IRAN, IRAQ AND SAUDI ARABIA (2015-2024)



More than half of the executions recorded in **Iran** (972) took place for acts that should never result in the death penalty under international law, including drug-related offences and overly broad and vaguely worded charges that do not meet the principle of legality such as "enmity against God" (*moharebeh*) and "corruption on earth" (*efsad-e fel-arz*). At least 52% (505) of recorded executions in 2024 were of people convicted of drug-related offences, continuing a disturbing upward trend recorded since the authorities' return in 2021 to a heavily punitive drug policy that has intensified their unlawful use of the death penalty, in a flawed attempt to stem the use and trafficking of drugs and to continue their use of the death penalty as a tool of oppression.

Death sentences and executions continued to be imposed and carried out arbitrarily, in violation of the right to life after grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts. These courts lack independence, operate under the influence of security and intelligence bodies, and routinely rely on torture-tainted forced "confessions" to issue convictions and death sentences.[97]

[97] See also Amnesty International, "'Don't let them kill us': Iran's relentless execution crisis since the 2022 uprising" (MDE 13/7869/2024), 4 April 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7869/2024/en/

The use of the death penalty further disproportionately impacted Iran's oppressed minorities, particularly those belonging to the Kurdish, Baluchi, and Afghan communities, with executions of Baluchis accounting for at least 10% of all executions while constituting only about 5% of Iran's population.[98] In particular, the number of Afghan nationals and people of Afghan origin executed in 2024 rose significantly compared to 2023, from 25 to 80, with around half executed for drug-related offences. This rise coincided with the escalation of hateful and dehumanizing language and treatment of Afghan nationals by Iranian authorities.[99]

Iranian authorities also continued to resort to the death penalty to punish individuals who challenged, or were perceived as having challenged, the Islamic Republic of Iran establishment and its politico-religious ideologies during the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022. In 2024, authorities executed at least two people, including a youth with a mental disability, in connection with the protests after unfair trials and based on torture-tainted "confessions". Several others remained under sentence of death at the end of the year in connection with the protests.[100]

Furthermore, the authorities used politically motivated charges carrying the death penalty against women human rights defenders. Women's rights activist Sharifeh Mohammadi was sentenced to death in June 2024,[101] and Kurdish humanitarian worker Pakhshan Azizi in July 2024.[102]

The authorities sentenced to death and executed at least four individuals who were under the age of 18 at the time of the crime; scores of others remained on death row.[103]

In **Iraq,** all known executions involved people convicted of terrorism related offences, among concerns of violations of the right to a fair trial and allegations of torture or other ill-treatment to extract "confessions". On several occasions, groups of people were executed at the same time in mass executions. Legal representatives and family members did not receive notification of the set executions.[104] Amnesty International received information that it could not independently verify indicating that 30 additional people were executed in secret at the same time in Nasriya on 20 June, but the Ministry of Justice denied the report in a statement.[105]. Of the 181 new death sentences known to have been imposed by Iraqi courts, 40 were imposed for terrorism-related offences; 19 for murder; and 122 for drug-related offences, including 11 on foreign nationals.

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq continued to observe a moratorium on executions. Official information received by Amnesty International indicated that 471 people, including 22 women, were under sentence of death as of 31 December 2024.

---

[98] Among other examples, Amnesty International, "Iran: Kurdish dissident sentenced to death in Iran: Verisheh Moradi" (Urgent Action, MDE 13/8788/2024), 26 November 2024 https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8788/2024/en/; Iran: Executions of protester with mental disability and Kurdish man mark plunge into new realms of cruelty, 24 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/01/iran-executions-of-protester-with-mental-disability-and-kurdish-man-mark-plunge-into-new-realms-of-cruelty/

[99] https://x.com/AmnestyIran/status/1846847027902108028

[100] Amnesty International, "Iran: Further Information: Risks of Further Protest-Related Executions" (Urgent Action, MDE 13/8873/2024), 19 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8873/2024/en/

[101] Amnesty International, "Iran: Woman Rights Defender at Risk of Execution: Sharifeh Mohammadi" (Urgent Action, MDE 13/8506/2024), 9 September 2024 https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8506/2024/en/

[102] Amnesty International, "Iran: Kurdish Woman Activist Sentenced to Death: Pakhshan Azizi" (Urgent Action, MDE 13/8585/2024), 30 September 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8585/2024/en/

[103] Amnesty International, "Iran: Youth Arrested at 17 at Risk of Imminent Execution: Mohammad Reza Azizi" (Urgent Action, MDE 13/8673/2024), 24 October 2024 https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8673/2024/en/

[104] Amnesty International, "Iraq: At least 13 people executed amid alarming lack of transparency", 24 April 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/iraq-at-least-13-people-executed-amid-alarming-lack-of-transparency/

[105] The New Arab, "Iraqi ministry of justice denies allegations of 'secret executions'", 16 July 2024, https://www.newarab.com/news/iraqi-justice-ministry-denies-allegations-secret-executions

Despite repeated promises to limit the use of the death penalty, the authorities of **Saudi Arabia** increased their resort to executions, frequently after proceedings that did not meet international standards for a fair trial and other international safeguards that must be observed in all death penalty cases. A leaked draft of Saudi Arabia's Penal Code for Discretionary Sentences analysed by Amnesty International showed that it codified the death penalty as a primary punishment for a range of offences, including several that do not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" under international human rights law and standards, alongside imprisonment and fines, and continued to enable judges to use their discretion to impose death sentences.[106]

More than one third of all executions recorded in Saudi Arabia in 2024 were for drug-related offences (122), as opposed to only two recorded in 2023. Murder accounted for 139 or 40% of the total; terrorism related offences 50 or 14% of the total; and other offences involving murder for 28 or 8%. Other cases included sexual assault (1), drug consumption and rape (2), kidnapping, robbery and rape (2) and kidnapping and rape (1). Foreign nationals made up 41% of the number of those executed (140), including 93 or 66% who were convicted of drug-related offences. At least 50 men convicted of drug-related crimes, the majority Egyptian nationals, remained on death row in Tabuk Prison.[107]

Saudi authorities continued to weaponize the death penalty to silence political dissent and punish nationals from the country's Shi'a minority who supported "anti-government" protests between 2011 and 2013. In August, the Saudi Press Agency announced the execution of Abdulmajeed al-Nimr for terrorism-related offences related to joining Al-Qaeda. However, court documents analyzed by Amnesty International show that he was initially charged with, amongst other things, "seeking to destabilize the social fabric and national unity by participating in demonstrations … supporting riots, chanting slogans against the state and its rulers". The discrepancy in the charges announced by the Saudi Press Agency and al-Nimr's court documents shows a striking lack of transparency in judicial proceedings of death penalty cases.

Individuals who were below 18 years of age at the time of the alleged crime continued to face executions, including for crimes related to participation in anti-government protests and after being sentenced to death following grossly unfair trials that primarily relied on torture-tainted "confessions".[108]

Authorities in **Yemen** increased their resort to the death penalty in 2024. At least 38 people were executed across the country, 23 more than in 2023. All recorded executions were carried out for murder, except for one that related to the rape of a child. The internationally recognized government carried out an increased number of executions in areas under its control. Only one of the recorded executions was carried out by the Huthi de facto authorities, but it is possible that more took place.

The number of new death sentences known to have been imposed in Yemen (at least 152) almost doubled compared to the previous year (at least 81). More than half of these (92) involved security and conflict related offences, 29 related to offences involving murder, 22 were for sexual acts that do not constitute internationally recognized offences – including same-sex sexual relations among consenting adults, one was imposed for drug trafficking and one for kidnapping and rape. The Huthi de facto authorities imposed twice as many death sentences (68) based on security and conflict related offences, compared to the internationally recognized government (34).

---

[106] Amnesty International, "Saudi Arabia: Manifesto for Repression: Saudi Arabia's Forthcoming Penal Code Must Uphold Human Rights in Line with International Law and Standards" (MDE 23/7783/2024), 19 March 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/7783/2024/en/?utm_source=annual_report&utm_medium=pdf&utm_campaign=2024

[107] Amnesty International, "Saudi Arabia: Highest execution toll in decades as authorities put to death 198 people", 28 September 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/09/saudi-arabia-highest-execution-toll-in-decades-as-authorities-put-to-death-198-people/

[108] Amnesty International, "Saudi Arabia: Two young men at imminent risk of execution: Abdullah al-Derazi, Jalal Labbad" (MDE 23/7363/2023), 17 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/7363/2023/en/

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

REGIONAL TRENDS

- Recorded executions decreased by 11% and death sentences decreased by 10%.
- For the second consecutive year, Somalia was the only country in the region known to have carried out executions.
- For the second consecutive year, death sentences were recorded in 14 countries.
- Zimbabwe abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes and Zambia acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.
- Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burkina Faso planned to resume executions and reinstate the death penalty for ordinary crimes, respectively, while Nigeria took steps to make drug-related offences punishable by death.

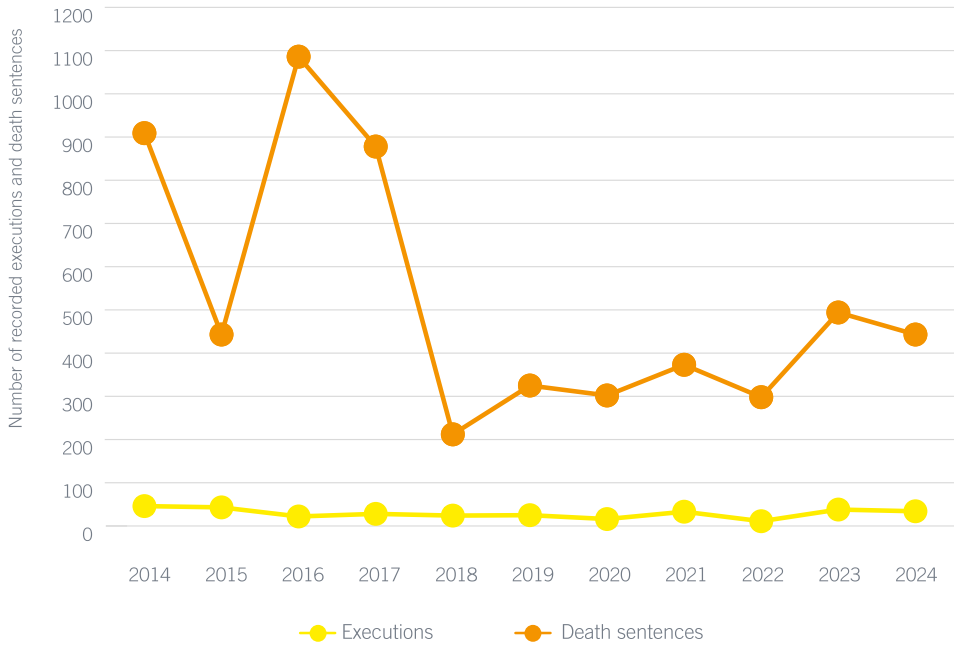
COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Botswana	0	1	16+
Burkina Faso (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Cameroon	0	0	+
Comoros	0	0	+
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0	125+	+
Equatorial Guinea (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	0
Eritrea	0	0	0
Eswatini	0	0	1
Ethiopia	0	3+	+
Gambia	0	0	18

COUNTRY	2024 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2024 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2024
Ghana	0	6	182
Kenya	0	3	117
Lesotho	0	0	0
Liberia	0	0	15+
Malawi	0	0	+
Mali	0	16+	+
Mauritania	0	23+	150+
Niger	0	16+	24+
Nigeria	0	186+	3,484+
Somalia	34+	17+	+
South Sudan	0	3+	221+
Sudan	0	30+	30+
Tanzania	0	12+	703+
Uganda	0	2+	104+[109]
Zimbabwe (Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	0	0	48+[110]

[109] Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, "Is Uganda moving towards the abolition of the death penalty", 16 October 2024, https://fhri.or.ug/is-uganda-moving-towards-the-abolition-of-the-death-penalty/

[110] On 7 March 2025, Amnesty International received information from the Zimbabwean Ministry of Justice confirming that there were 48 people on death row by the end of 2024, although Zimbabwe abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes the same year.

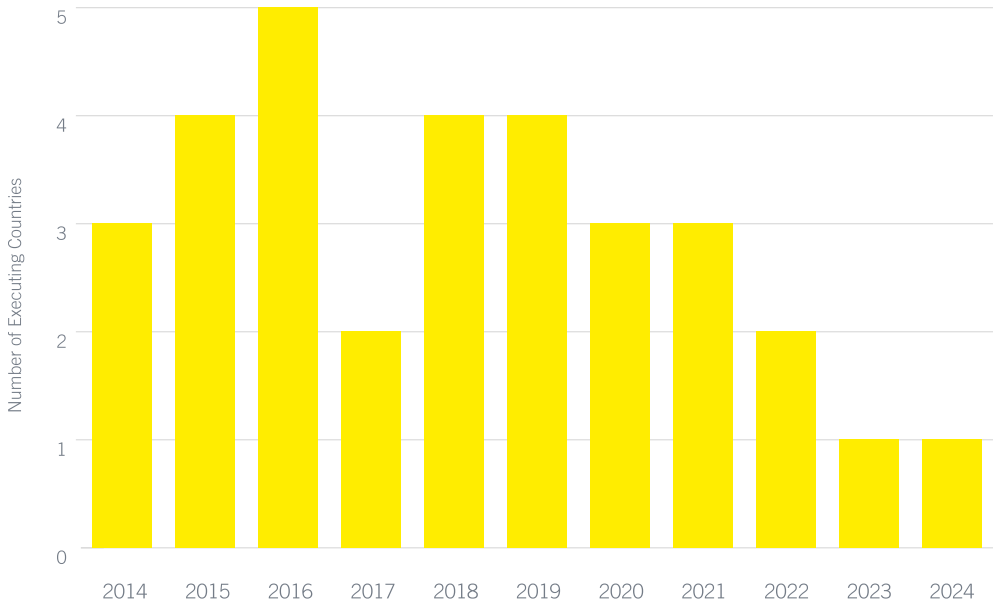
FIGURE 6: EXECUTIONS AND DEATH SENTENCES RECORDED IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2014-2024



In 2024, the sub-Saharan Africa region once again showed a largely positive trend regarding the use of the penalty after recorded setbacks in 2023. There was a slight decrease in both recorded executions and death sentences, although the total number of countries that imposed death sentences remained the same as the previous year. Moreover, Zambia acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and Zimbabwe abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes. However, authorities in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burkina Faso announced plans to resume executions and reinstate the death penalty for ordinary crimes, respectively, while Nigeria took steps to reintroduce the death penalty for drug-related offences.

Recorded executions in the region decreased by 11%, from 38 in 2023 to 34 in 2024 (*Figure 6*). Despite Somalia being the single country accounting for all recorded executions in both 2023 and 2024 (*Figure 7*), the 34 executions recorded in 2024 was the second highest total recorded in the region since 2015.

FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF COUNTRIES KNOWN TO HAVE CARRIED OUT EXECUTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2014-2024



Recorded death sentences also decreased by 10%, from 494 in 2023 to 443 in 2024. Amnesty International recorded death sentences in 14 countries, matching the same total countries in 2023. However, there were increases in recorded death sentences in eight countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo (from at least 33 in 2023 to at least 125 in 2024); Mali (from at least 13 to at least 16); Mauritania (from at least five to at least 23); Niger (from at least eight to at least 16); South Sudan (from zero to at least three); Sudan (from zero to at least 30); Tanzania (from at least three to at least 12); and Uganda (from zero to at least two).

Following the abolition of the death penalty for all crimes in late December 2023, **Zambia** acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty in December 2024.[111] Also in December, **Zimbabwe** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.[112] While Zimbabwe's National Assembly passed a Bill that would have abolished the death penalty for all crimes, last-minute amendments by the Senate introduced a new provision in the Defence Act that allows for the reinstatement of the death penalty during times of emergency.[113]

[111] Permanent Mission of the Republic on Zambia to the United Nations, "Zambia becomes party to the Second Optional Protocol on the abolition of the death penalty", 20 December 2024, https://www.zambiaun.org/zambia-becomes-party-to-the-second-optional-protocol-on-the-abolition-of-the-death-penalty/

[112] Amnesty International, "Zimbabwe: Historic moment as President signs into law a bill to abolish death penalty for ordinary circumstances", 31 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-applauds-zimbabwes-decision-to-abolish-the-death-penalty-for-all-crimes-but-regrets-the-possibility-of-its-reinstatement-during-state-of-emergency-under-the-defence-act/

[113] Veritas Zimbabwe, "Zimbabwe: The Death Penalty Abolition Act, 2024, section 116 Suspension of death sentences imposed under this Act", p.103, https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/Death%20Penalty%20Abolition%20Act%2C%20%20Act%20No.%204%20of%202024.pdf

In **Ghana**, Act 1101 abolishing the death penalty from the criminal code came into force in January 2024 after former President Nana Akufo-Addo assented to the Criminal Offences (Amendment) Bill, 2023.[114] Since taking effect, 12 people convicted of murder and conspiracy to commit murder were sentenced to life imprisonment instead of the previously mandatory death penalty for those offences.[115] However, six individuals were sentenced to death in 2024 for high treason offences under Article 3 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution.[116] By the end of the year, the Armed Forces (Amendment) Bill, 2023, that abolished the death penalty from the military code had not yet been signed by the president and the period for its assent expired.

Progress to abolish the death penalty in other countries continued, albeit at a slower pace than in 2023. Despite a pledge made by the government of **Liberia** in December 2023 to abolish the death penalty by 31 October 2024,[117] a bill unanimously passed by the Senate in 2022 to abolish the death penalty for all crimes was pending before the House of Representatives by the end of 2024. During a roundtable dialogue with key stakeholders from the government, civil society, and other relevant sectors in November, the Ministry of Justice presented a revised draft bill for the abolition of the death penalty.[118] The Ministry of Justice reiterated its determination to include the draft bill in the priority listing for the Presidential Legislative Agenda and to submit it to the upcoming legislature in 2025. In August, the government of **Gambia** gazetted the Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia (Promulgation) Bill, 2024 as part of the constitutional amendment process to replace the 1997 Constitution that still provides for the death penalty.[119] The new draft constitution does not provide for the death penalty and was presented for first reading before the National Assembly on 23 December 2024.[120]

Despite these encouraging trends, there were concerning developments that could expand the use of the death penalty in a region that has shown steady progress towards its abolition over the last five years. In March 2024, the government of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** announced its intention to resume executions in order to combat "treason" within the army at a time when the country was facing an escalation of armed conflicts, particularly the resurgence of the armed group March 23 Movement (M23) supported by Rwanda.[121] Since the announcement, at least 125 new death sentences were imposed by military courts compared to 33 death sentences recorded by Amnesty International for the whole of 2023.[122] The last known execution in the DRC was carried out in 2003.

---

[114] Ghana News Agency, "Criminal Offences Amendment Bill, 2023 is already an Act — Speaker", 22 December 2023, https://gna.org.gh/2023/12/criminal-offences-amendment-bill-2023-is-already-an-act-speaker/

[115] Think News Online, Death Penalty Abolition in Ghana: Criminal Offenses (Amendment) Act, 2023 (Act 1101), 30 January 2024, https://www.thinknewsonline.com/post/death-penalty-abolition-in-ghana-criminal-offenses-amendment-act-2023-act-1101

[116] Constitute, Ghana 1992 (rev. 1996), https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Ghana_1996

[117] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – Human Rights 75 Secretariat, "Pledge submitted by Liberia to the Human Rights 75 Secretariat", December 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/udhr/publishingimages/75udhr/Liberia_EN.pdf

[118] OHCHR Liberia's Facebook Post, A Round Table dialogue on the abolition of the death penalty in Liberia, 30 November 2024, https://www.facebook.com/100077363018206/photos/457138340208263/?_rdr

[119] Foroyaa, "The Constitution and the National Assembly", 5 December 2024, https://foroyaa.net/the-constitution-and-the-national-assembly/

[120] All Africa, "Gambia: The First Reading of the Constitution (Promulgation) Bill", 23 December 2024, https://allafrica.com/stories/202412240084.html

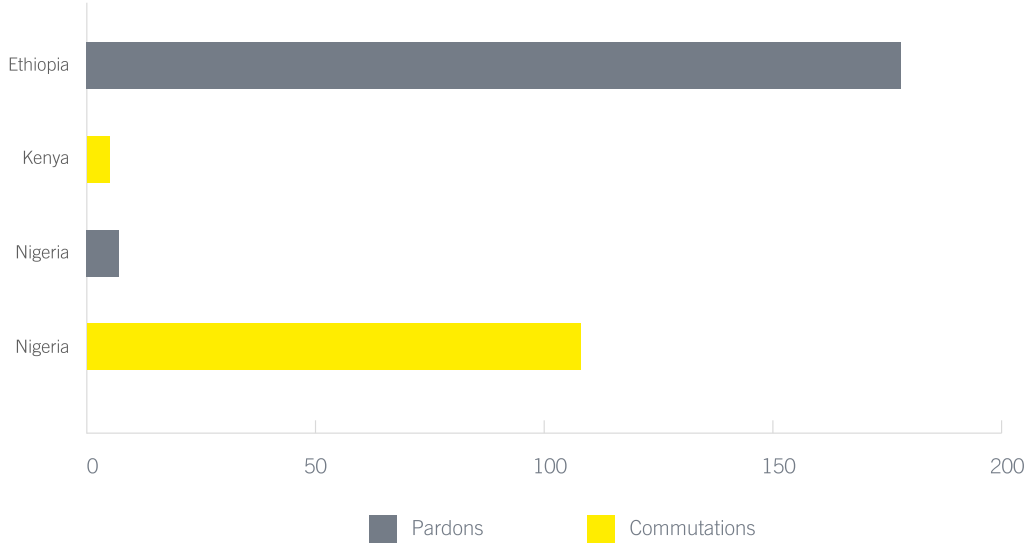
[121] Ministry of Justice of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, "Note circulaire n°002/MME/CAB/ ME/MIN/J&GS/2024 du 13 mars 2024 relative à la levée du moratoire sur l'exécution de la peine de mort en République démocratique du Congo" [Circular No.002/MME/CAB/ME/MIN/J&GS/2024 of 13 March 2024 on the lifting of the moratorium on execution of the death penalty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo], 13 March 2024, https://www.peinedemort.org/document/12106/Note-Circulaire-relative-ala-levee-du-moratoire-sur-l-execution-de-la-peine-de-mort-en-Republique-democratique-du-Congo

[122] Amnesty International, "Democratic Republic of the Congo: Alarming increase in death sentences as government threatens to resume executions", 22 January 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr62/8938/2025/en/; Amnesty International, "Death sentences and executions in 2023" (ACT 50/7952/2024), 29 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/7952/2024/en/

In May, the Senate in **Nigeria** passed a bill that would prescribe the death penalty for people found guilty of drug-related offences.[123] A version of the bill that provides life imprisonment as the maximum sentence for drug-related offences was earlier on passed by the House of Representatives.[124] By the end of 2024, a committee of five members from the Senate and House was tasked to harmonise the two versions of the bill before presenting it for presidential assent.[125] In November, the military authorities in **Burkina Faso** announced they were considering reinstating the death penalty,[126] in contravention of international standards that bar state parties to the ICCPR from reintroducing the death penalty once it has been abolished.[127] Burkina Faso abolished the capital punishment for ordinary crimes in 2018, and the last known execution was carried out in 1988.[128]

Amnesty International recorded 113 commutations and 185 pardons in four countries (*Figure 8*). Judicial commutations were granted in Kenya (5), while executive commutations were granted in Nigeria (108). Pardons were granted in Ethiopia (178) and Nigeria (7). There were also at least five individuals acquitted of a criminal charge that carried a death sentence and at least six recorded foreign nationals on death row who were set for repatriation to their country of origin in 2024. Acquittals were recorded in Ghana (3), Kenya (1), Nigeria (2) and Uganda (1), while six Moroccan nationals sentenced to death in Somalia were released from prison by a military court and set for repatriation to Morocco.[129]

FIGURE 8: RECORDED DEATH PENALTY COMMUTATIONS AND PARDONS GRANTED IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2024



[123] Reuters," Nigeria's Senate proposes death penalty for drug trafficking", 9 May 2024, https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigerias-senate-proposes-death-penalty-drug-trafficking-2024-05-09/

[124] Reuters, "Nigeria's Senate proposes death penalty for drug trafficking" (previously cited).

[125] Reuters," Nigeria's Senate proposes death penalty for drug trafficking" (previously cited).

[126] Voice of America News, "Burkina wants to reinstate death penalty, government source says", 9 November 2024, https://www.voanews.com/a/7858302.html

[127] Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on Article 6: Right to Life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36, 3 September 2019, para. 34.

[128] Amnesty International, "Burkina Faso: Abolition of death penalty a hard-won victory", 1 June 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/06/burkina-faso-abolition-of-death-penalty-a-hardwon-victory/

[129] Safaa Kasraoui, "Military Court in Somalia Releases Moroccans Sentenced to Death for Repatriation", 14 May 2024, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2024/05/19601/military-court-in-somalia-releases-moroccans-sentenced-to-death-for-repatriation/

ANNEX I: RECORDED EXECUTIONS AND DEATH SENTENCES IN 2024

This report only covers the judicial use of the death penalty and does not include figures for extrajudicial executions. Amnesty International only reports figures for which it can find reasonable confirmation, although the true figures for some countries are significantly higher. Some states intentionally conceal death penalty proceedings; others do not keep or make available data on the numbers of death sentences and executions.

Where "+" appears after a figure next to the name of a country – for example, Iraq (63+) – it means that Amnesty International confirmed 63 executions or death sentences in Iraq but believes there were more than 63. Where "+" appears after a country name without a figure – for instance, Viet Nam (+) – it means that Amnesty International has corroborated executions or death sentences (more than one) in that country but had insufficient information to provide a credible minimum figure. When calculating global and regional totals, "+" has been counted as two including for China.

RECORDED EXECUTIONS IN 2024

China 1,000s	Somalia 34+	Oman 3
Iran 972+	USA 25	Afghanistan +
Saudi Arabia 345+	Egypt 13	North Korea +
Iraq 63+	Singapore 9	Syria +
Yemen 38+	Kuwait 6	Viet Nam +

RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES IN 2024

China 1,000s

Egypt 365

Iraq 200+

Nigeria 186+

Bangladesh 165+

Yemen 152+

Viet Nam 150+

India 139

Democratic Republic of the Congo 125+

Pakistan 117+

Thailand 115

Indonesia 85+

Sudan 30+

USA 26

Sri Lanka 25+

Malaysia 24

Mauritania 23+

Somalia 17+

Mali 16+

Niger 16+

Tanzania 12+

Tunisia 12+

Libya 11+

Algeria 8

Jordan 7+

Kuwait 7+

Myanmar 7+

Ghana 6

Singapore 5

Ethiopia 3+

South Sudan 3+

Japan 3

Kenya 3

Laos 2+

Lebanon 2+

Morocco/Western Sahara 2+

Uganda 2+

United Arab Emirates 1+

Belarus 1

Botswana 1

Trinidad and Tobago 1

Afghanistan +

Iran +

North Korea +

Saudi Arabia +

Syria +

ANNEX II: ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

Close to three quarters of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice. As of 31 December 2024, the numbers were as follows:

Abolitionist for all crimes: 113

Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only: 9

Abolitionist in practice: 23

Total abolitionist in law or practice: 145

Retentionist: 54

The following are lists of countries in the four categories: abolitionist for all crimes, abolitionist for ordinary crimes only, abolitionist in practice and retentionist.

1. ABOLITIONIST FOR ALL CRIMES

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

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Central African Republic, Colombia, Congo, 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, 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, Zambia.

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:[130]

Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Israel, Peru, Zimbabwe.

3. ABOLITIONIST IN PRACTICE

Countries that 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 last 10 years or more and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions:

Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco/Western Sahara, Niger, Russia,[131] South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia.

4. RETENTIONIST

Countries that retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes:

Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine (State of), Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen.

[130] No executions were recorded in these countries in more than 10 years.

[131] Russia introduced a moratorium on executions in August 1996. However, executions were carried out between 1996 and 1999 in the Chechen Republic.

ANNEX III: RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

The community of nations has adopted four international treaties providing for the abolition of the death penalty. One is of worldwide scope; three are regional.

Below are short descriptions of the four treaties, a list of states parties to the treaties and lists of countries which have signed but not ratified the treaties, as of 31 December 2024. States may become a party to international treaties either by acceding to them or by ratifying them. Signature indicates an intention to become a party at a later date through ratification. States are bound under international law to respect the provisions of treaties to which they are a party, and to do nothing to defeat the object and purpose of treaties which they have signed.

SECOND OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, AIMING AT THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, is of worldwide scope. It provides for the total abolition of the death penalty but allows states parties to retain the death penalty in time of war if they make a reservation to that effect at the time of ratifying or acceding to the Protocol. Any state which is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights can become a party to the Protocol.

States parties: Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Norway, Palestine (State of), Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia (total: 92).

PROTOCOL TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

The Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights to Abolish the Death Penalty, adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States in 1990, provides for the total abolition of the death penalty but allows states parties to retain the death penalty in wartime if they make a reservation to that effect at the time of ratifying or acceding to the Protocol. Any state party to the American Convention on Human Rights can become a party to the Protocol.

States parties: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela (total: 13).

PROTOCOL NO. 6 TO THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, CONCERNING THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY[132]

Protocol No. 6 to the (European) Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights), concerning the abolition of the death penalty, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1983, provides for the abolition of the death penalty in peacetime; states parties may retain the death penalty for crimes "in time of war or of imminent threat of war". Any state party to the European Convention on Human Rights can become a party to the Protocol.

States parties: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom (total: 46).

PROTOCOL NO. 13 TO THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, CONCERNING THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Protocol No. 13 to the (European) Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights), concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2002, provides for the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances, including in time of war or of imminent threat of war. Any state party to the European Convention on Human Rights can become a party to the Protocol.

States parties: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye Ukraine, United Kingdom (total: 45).

Signed but not ratified: Azerbaijan (total: 1).

[132] Russia ceased to be a signatory to the treaty on 16 September 2022.

ANNEX IV: VOTING RESULTS OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 79/179,

ADOPTED ON 17 DECEMBER 2024

The UN General Assembly adopted its tenth resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority of UN member states.

Co-sponsors of UN General Assembly resolution 79/179, adopted on 17 December 2024

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela (total: 70).

Votes in favour – Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco/Western Sahara, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Zambia (total: 130).

Votes against – Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Yemen (total: 32).

Abstentions – Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Guinea, Guyana, Indonesia, Laos, Lesotho, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe (total: 22).

Not present – Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Dominica, Grenada, Marshall Islands, Senegal, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela (total: 9).

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS TO ONE PERSON, IT MATTERS TO US ALL.

CONTACT US

www.amnesty.org/en/about-us/contact/

+44 (0)20 7413 5500

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

www.facebook.com/amnesty

@amnesty

DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS 2024

Amnesty International's monitoring of the global use of the death penalty recorded 1,518 executions in 2024, an increase by 32% from 1,153 in 2023. For the second consecutive year, executing countries reached the lowest number on record.

The global spike in known executions was due to a considerable rise in the numbers recorded in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, where executions increased altogether from 1,041 in 2023 to 1,380 in 2024. This constitutes approximately 91% of all known executions globally.

Compared to 2023, significant increases in executions were also recorded in Egypt, Singapore and Yemen, while a marginal decrease was recorded in Somalia. The use of state secrecy and other restrictive practices in China, North Korea and Viet Nam, among other states, continued to impair accurate assessments of the use of the death penalty.

Amnesty International recorded 637 executions for drug-related offences, representing over 42% of all known executions. While international human rights law prohibits the use of the death penalty for crimes that do not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes" (crimes involving intentional killing), at least four countries – China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Singapore – carried out executions for drug-related offences in 2024. No confirmation was available for Viet Nam.

However, some notable advancements towards abolition were made. Zambia acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, while Zimbabwe abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes. More than two thirds of all UN member states also voted in favour of the tenth General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception.

INDEX: ACT 50/8976/2025
APRIL 2025
ENGLISH

amnesty.org

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL