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Global figures

At least **1,634 people** were executed in 25 countries in 2015. This represents a stark increase on the number of executions recorded in 2014 of more than **50%**; in 2014 Amnesty International recorded 1,061 executions in 22 countries worldwide.

This is the highest number of executions recorded in more than 25 years (since 1989).

Most executions took place in **China, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the USA** – in that order.

China remained the world's top executioner – but the true extent of the use of the death penalty in China is unknown as this data is considered a state secret; the figure of 1,634 excludes the thousands of executions believed to have been carried out in China.

Excluding China, almost **90%** of all executions took place in just three countries – **Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia**.

During 2015, 25 countries, about one in 10 of all countries worldwide, are known to have carried out executions – a rise from 22 in 2014. This number has decreased significantly from two decades ago (39 countries carried out executions in 1996).

140 countries worldwide, more than two-thirds, are abolitionist in law or practice.

In 2015, four countries – Fiji, Madagascar, the Republic of Congo and Suriname – abolished the death penalty for all crimes. In total, **102** countries have done so – a majority of the world's states. In 2015, Mongolia also passed a new criminal code abolishing the death penalty which will come into effect later in 2016.

Commutations or pardons of death sentences were recorded in **34** countries in 2015. At least 71 people who had been sentenced to death were exonerated in six countries in 2015: China (1), Egypt (1), Nigeria (41), Pakistan (at least 21), Taiwan (1) and USA (6).

At least **1,998 death sentences** were recorded in 61 countries in 2015, a decline from 2014 (at least 2,466 death sentences in 55 countries).

At least **20,292 people were on death row** at the end of 2015.

The following **methods of execution** were used across the world: beheading, hanging, lethal injection and shooting.

Reports indicated that at least **nine people who were under 18** at the time of the crime for which they were sentenced to death were executed in 2015 – four in Iran and five in Pakistan.

In many countries where people were sentenced to death or executed, the proceedings did not meet international **fair trial** standards. In some cases this included the **extraction of 'confessions' through torture** or other ill-treatment, including in Bahrain, China, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and Saudi Arabia.

People continued to be sentenced to death and executed for offences that do not meet the "most serious crimes" threshold of "intentional killing" as set out in international law and standards. These offences included drug-related crimes in at least 12 countries in Asia and the Middle East, as well as committing "adultery" (Maldives, Saudi Arabia), economic crimes (China, North Korea, Viet Nam), "apostasy" (Saudi Arabia) and "insulting the prophet of Islam" (Iran).

Sub-Saharan Africa

At least **43** executions were carried out in four countries – compared to 46 executions in three countries in 2014.

Death sentences fell sharply from **909** in 2014 to **443** in 2015, mainly due to a decrease in Nigeria.

Chad, which had not executed anyone for more than a decade, resumed executions and put 10 people to death. The other three countries that carried out executions were Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

Americas

For the seventh consecutive year, the USA was the only country to carry out executions in the Americas region with, 28 people executed in 2015 (seven fewer than in 2014). This was the lowest number of executions recorded in a single year since 1991. Six states executed in 2015 compared to seven the previous year. The number of death sentences decreased from at least 72 in 2014 to 52 in 2015, the lowest number recorded since executions resumed in 1977. Only one other country in the region, Trinidad and Tobago, imposed death sentences in 2015.

Asia-Pacific

At least **367 executions** were carried out in **12 countries** – a huge increase on the 32 executions in nine countries recorded in 2014, almost exclusively due to the rise in Pakistan. This figure does not include executions carried out in China, where executions were still in the thousands. . But the true extent of the use of the death penalty in China is unknown as data is treated as a state secret.

Pakistan put 326 people to death in 2015 after the country lifted a six-year moratorium on the execution of civilians in December 2014, following the Taliban attack on a school in Peshawar. It is the highest number of executions Amnesty International has ever recorded for Pakistan.

Indonesia carried out **14 executions** for drug-related offences, the first executions under President Joko Widodo.

It was impossible to confirm the real number of executions in **North Korea**.

Europe and Central Asia

Belarus - the only country in the region that executes – did not put anyone to death in 2015 but imposed two death sentences (compared to three executions and no death sentences in 2014).

Middle East and North Africa

At least **1,196** executions were carried out in eight countries – a rise of **26%** from the 945 executions recorded in eight countries in 2014.

Iran alone accounted for **82%** of all recorded executions in the region.

Saudi Arabia executed at least **158** people – a **76%** increase on 2014 and the highest number recorded for Saudi Arabia since 1995.

Amnesty International could not confirm if executions took place in **Syria**.

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