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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL REPORT

DEATH SENTENCES

AND EXECUTIONS

2019

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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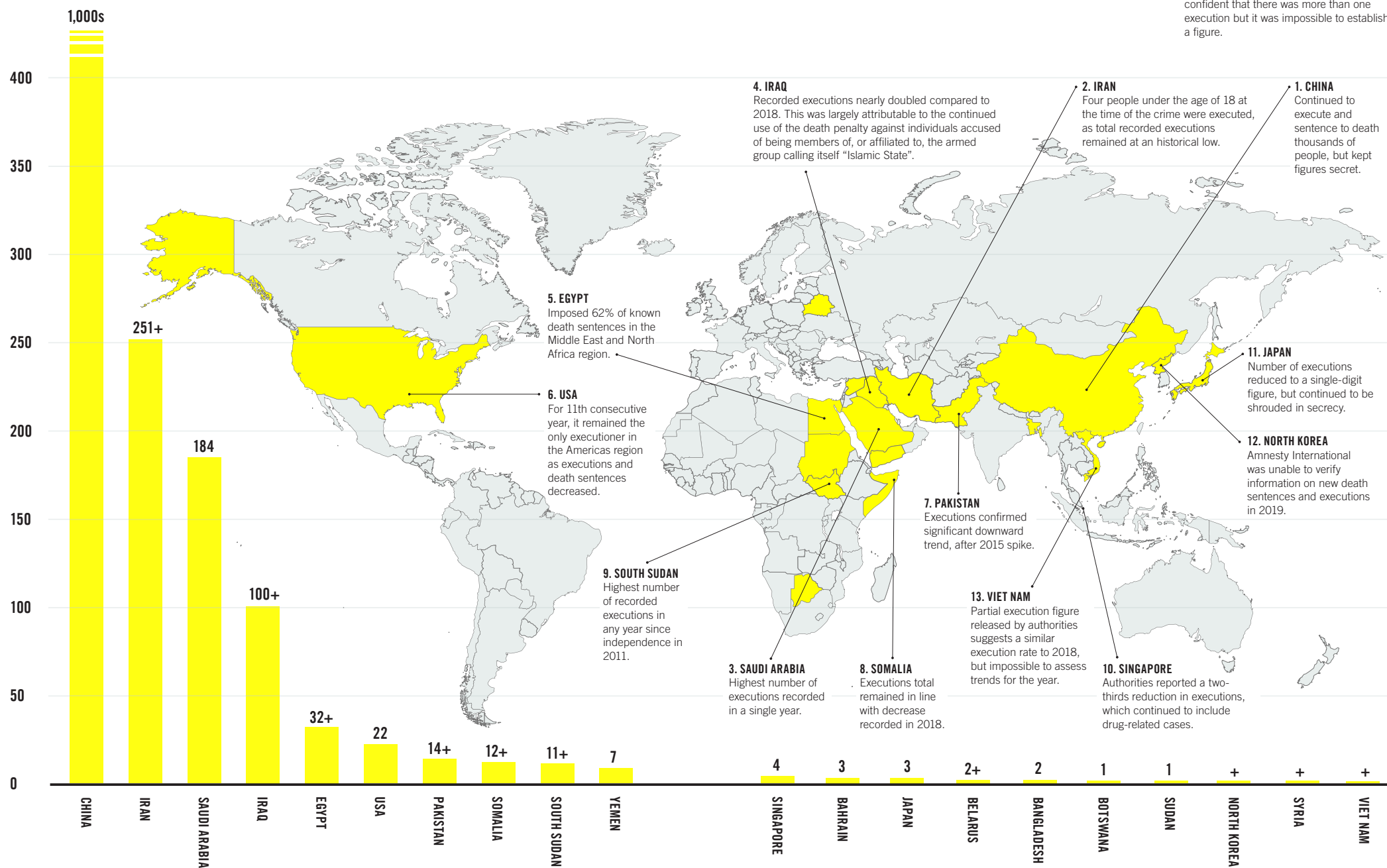
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EXECUTING COUNTRIES IN 2019



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

The 13 countries numbered on the map have persistently executed people in the past five years (2015-2019).

+ 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 impossible to establish a figure.

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 2019. As in previous years, information is collected from a variety of sources, including: official figures; judgments; information from individuals sentenced to death and their families and representatives; media reports; and, for a limited number of countries, other civil society organizations. Amnesty International reports only 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 In many countries governments do not publish information on their use of the death penalty.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 Belarus, China and Viet Nam, data on the use of the death penalty is classified as a state secret. During 2019 little or no information was available on some countries – in particular Laos and North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) – due to restrictive state practice.

Therefore, for many countries, Amnesty International's figures on the use of the death penalty are minimum figures. The true figures are likely to be higher. Where the organization obtains official information on a specific country in a given year, this is noted in the report.

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 www.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, Thailand (16+) – it means that Amnesty International confirmed 16 executions, death sentences or persons under sentence of death in Thailand but believes that there were more than 16. Where “+” appears after a country name without a figure – for instance, Syria (+) – 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 2, 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 capital punishment.

THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2019

“The intentional killing of another person is wrong and as Governor, I will not oversee the execution of any individual. Our death penalty system has been, by all measures, a failure. It has discriminated against defendants who are mentally ill, black and brown, or can’t afford expensive legal representation. It has provided no public safety benefit or value as a deterrent. It has wasted billions of taxpayer dollars. Most of all, the death penalty is absolute. It’s irreversible and irreparable in the event of human error.”

Gavin Newsom, Governor of California, 13 March 2019¹

GLOBAL TRENDS

Amnesty International’s analysis of the global use of the death penalty in 2019 shows that the momentum towards the worldwide abolition of the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment is on course, even though some countries are bucking the trend.



Confirmed executions have decreased by 5% compared to 2018 to the lowest number recorded in at least 10 years thereby confirming a year-on-year reduction since 2015.² Several factors were mainly responsible for the global drop in recorded executions. There were significant reductions in the number of confirmed executions in countries – such as Egypt, Japan and Singapore – that are strong adherents of the death penalty. For the second consecutive year, Iran, the world’s number two executing country, executed fewer people than it had historically done, following 2017 amendments to its anti-narcotics law.

1 “Governor Gavin Newsom orders a halt to the death penalty in California”, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, 13 March 2019, www.gov.ca.gov/2019/03/13/governor-gavin-newsom-orders-a-halt-to-the-death-penalty-in-california/

2 In 2015 Amnesty International recorded 1,634 executions (excluding China) which was the highest total that the organization had reported since 1989

However, some countries are bucking the trend towards complete abolition of the death penalty. Iraq, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan and Yemen significantly increased their execution of people compared to 2018; Bahrain and Bangladesh resumed executions after a one-year hiatus; the legislature in the Philippines proposed bills to reintroduce the death penalty; and Sri Lanka and the US federal government threatened to resume executions after years without carrying out any.

In addition, a lack of transparency by several countries hindered Amnesty International's full assessment of the global use of the death penalty. Major executing countries, for example China, North Korea and Viet Nam, continued to hide the full extent of their use of the death penalty by restricting access to death penalty-related information. Many countries did not provide official information on their use of the death penalty, including following specific requests made by Amnesty International. In some countries only partial information is made public; for example, the authorities in Viet Nam published partial information on executions which suggested a similar execution rate as in 2018, but incomplete figures impeded full assessment of the use of the death penalty. Also, some countries carried out executions without announcing them in advance or giving advance notices to families or legal representatives of people executed.

Although no country abolished the death penalty in 2019, positive signs were recorded which indicate that the desire for retention of the death penalty is dwindling among countries that are yet to abolish the punishment. In the USA, New Hampshire became the 21st state to abolish the death penalty for all crimes while the Governor of California – the US state with the largest death row population – established a moratorium on executions. Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Malaysia and Gambia continued to observe official moratoriums on executions; Barbados removed the mandatory death penalty from its Constitution; and positive actions or pronouncements which may lead to the abolition of the death penalty soon occurred in Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Kazakhstan, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

EXECUTIONS

At least 657 executions were carried out in 2019 compared to 2018 when at least 690 occurred, representing a 5% drop. For the second consecutive year, Amnesty International recorded the lowest number of global executions in a 10-year period.³

As in previous years, the global recorded totals do not include the thousands of executions that Amnesty International believed were carried out in China, where data on the death penalty is classified as a state secret.⁴

Compared to 2018 records, executions reduced significantly in Egypt (from 43+ to 32+), Japan (from 15 to 3) and Singapore (from 13 to 4).⁵ In contrast, executions increased significantly in Iraq (from 52+ to 100+), Saudi Arabia (from 149 to 184), South Sudan (from 7+ to 11+) and Yemen (from 4+ to 7).

Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq accounted for 81% of confirmed global executions in 2019. The 184 executions in Saudi Arabia were the highest ever recorded by Amnesty International in one year in the country. This spike occurred in the context of an increase in the use of the death penalty as a political weapon against Shi'a dissidents. The 92% increase in recorded executions in Iraq is largely attributable

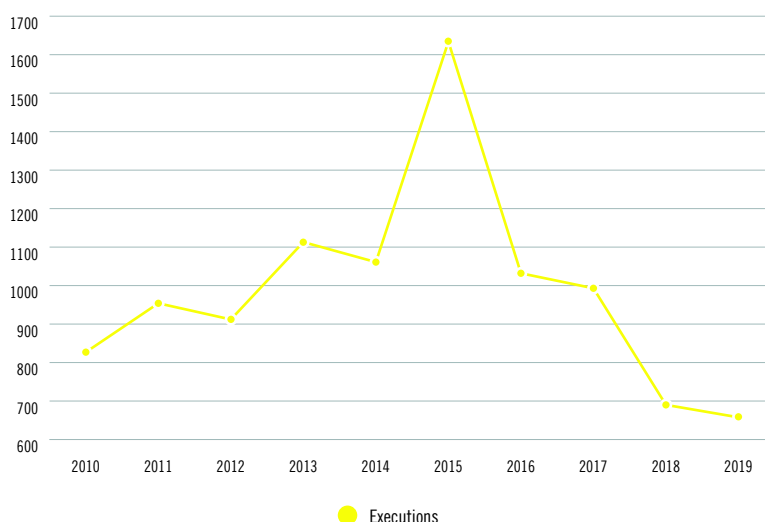
3 The total number of executions reported for 2019 represents one of the lowest figures that Amnesty International has recorded in any given year since it began its monitoring of the use of the death penalty in 1979. However, changes in access to information, configuration of countries and methodology over the decades make it challenging to accurately compare this figure over a longer period.

4 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).

5 The recorded figures for Japan and Singapore in 2018 were the highest yearly totals in over a decade.

to the continued use of the death penalty against individuals accused of being members of, or affiliated to, the armed group calling itself “Islamic State”. On the other hand, recorded executions reduced slightly in Iran (from 253+ to 251+) and remained at an historical low because of the implementation of amendments in 2017 to the country’s anti-narcotics law.⁶ Despite this Iran was responsible for 38% of known executions in the world.

RECORDED GLOBAL EXECUTIONS 2010-2019



Amnesty International recorded executions in 20 countries, the same number as 2018, but there were changes in the countries that carried out executions. Afghanistan, Taiwan and Thailand did not carry out any executions in 2019 but did so in 2018 while Bahrain and Bangladesh resumed executions in 2019 after not carrying out any in 2018. Of further significance is the fact that, unlike in previous years when Amnesty International was unable to confirm whether judicial executions took place in Syria, the organization confirmed executions were carried out in 2019 but had insufficient information to provide a credible minimum figure.⁷

EXECUTIONS RECORDED GLOBALLY IN 2019

Bahrain (3), Bangladesh (2), Belarus (2+), Botswana (1), China (+), Egypt (32+), Iran (251+), Iraq (100+), Japan (3), North Korea (+), Pakistan (14+), Saudi Arabia (184), Singapore (4), Somalia (12+), South Sudan (11+), Sudan (1), Syria (+), USA (22), Viet Nam (+), Yemen (7).



⁶ Known executions in Iran dropped from at least 507 in 2017, before the anti-narcotics law was introduced, to at least 251 in 2019 – a decrease of 50%. The law, which had been amended in November 2017, increased the threshold of the quantity of drugs involved in the offence required for courts to impose a mandatory death sentence, with potential retroactive effect, and permitted people sentenced to death for drug-related offences to request a review of their death sentences with a view to commutation

⁷ Due to the ongoing conflict, Amnesty International could not confirm that executions were carried out in Syria in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018

METHODS OF EXECUTIONS IN 2019⁸

Beheading	Saudi Arabia										
Electrocution	USA										
Hanging	Bangladesh	Botswana	Egypt	Iran	Iraq	Japan	Pakistan	Singapore	South Sudan	Sudan	Syria
Lethal injection	China	USA	Vietnam								
Shooting	Bahrain	Belarus	China	North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)				Somalia	Yemen		

2019 KNOWN EXECUTING COUNTRIES BY INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Organization of American States: 1 out of 35 countries carried out executions – USA.
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: 2 out of 57 countries executed people – Belarus and USA.
- African Union: 5 out of 55 countries carried out executions – Botswana, Egypt, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.
- League of Arab States: 8 out of 22 countries executed people – Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations: 2 out of 10 countries carried out executions – Singapore and Viet Nam.
- Commonwealth: 4 out of 54 countries executed people – Bangladesh, Botswana, Pakistan and Singapore.
- Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie: 2 out of 54 countries carried out executions – Egypt and Viet Nam.
- United Nations: 20 out of 193 member states (10% of UN membership) were known to have executed people.

DEATH SENTENCES

In 2019, Amnesty International recorded 2,307 death sentences globally, a decrease on the 2,531 death sentences recorded in 2018. However, variations in the nature and availability of information on death sentences for some countries make the evaluation of this global total in comparison with those of previous years methodologically challenging.

Amnesty International did not receive information on official figures for death sentences imposed in Malaysia, Nigeria and Sri Lanka, countries that reported high official numbers of death sentences in previous years. In contrast, Amnesty International received official information from Zambia which showed a significantly higher number of death sentences imposed in the country compared to 2018, when such official data was not provided to the organization.

⁸ In line with previous years, Amnesty International did not receive any reports of judicial executions by stoning in 2019

During the year death sentences were confirmed in 56 countries, two more than in 2018, when 54 countries were known to have imposed death sentences.

In 2019 four countries were known to have imposed death sentences after a hiatus – Malawi, Maldives, Niger and Trinidad and Tobago. Unlike in previous years when Amnesty International was unable to confirm death sentences in Syria, the organization confirmed that death sentences were imposed in the country in 2019 but had insufficient information to provide a credible minimum figure.⁹ During the year no new death sentences were recorded in three countries – Chad, Libya and Papua New Guinea – where death sentences were recorded in 2018.

DEATH SENTENCES RECORDED GLOBALLY IN 2019

Afghanistan (14), Algeria (4+), Bahrain (4+), Bangladesh (220+), Belarus (3+), Botswana (4), China (+), Democratic Republic of the Congo (8), Egypt (435+), Gambia (1), Ghana (8), Guyana (2), India (102), Indonesia (80+), Iran (+), Iraq (87+), Japan (2), Jordan (8+), Kenya (29+), Kuwait (5+), Lebanon (23), Malawi (8), Malaysia (26+), Maldives (2), Mali (4+), Mauritania (8), Morocco/Western Sahara (7+), Myanmar (4), Niger (8), Nigeria (54+), North Korea (+), Oman (7+), Pakistan (632+), Palestine (State of: 4, Hamas authorities, Gaza), Qatar (2+), Saudi Arabia (5+), Sierra Leone (21), Singapore (12), Somalia (24+), South Korea (1), South Sudan (4+), Sri Lanka (34+), Sudan (31+), Syria (+), Taiwan (2), Tanzania (4+), Thailand (16+), Trinidad and Tobago (8), Tunisia (39+), Uganda (2), United Arab Emirates (18+), USA (35), Viet Nam (76+), Yemen (55), Zambia (101), Zimbabwe (6).



Significant decreases in the number of death sentences imposed were recorded in the following countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo (from 41 to 8), Egypt (from 717+ to 435+), India (from 162 to 102), Iraq (from 271+ to 87+), Kuwait (from 34 to 5+), Libya (from 45+ to 0), Mali (from 18 to 4+), Palestine (State of) (from 13 to 4), Thailand (from 33+ to 16+).

On the other hand, Amnesty International recorded a significant increase in the number of death sentences imposed in 2019 compared to 2018 in the following countries: Indonesia (from 48+ to 80+), Kenya (from 12+ to 29+), Lebanon (from 5+ to 23), Pakistan (from 250+ to 632+), Sierra Leone (from 4 to 21), Sudan (from 8 to 31+), Tunisia (from 12+ to 39+), Yemen (from 13+ to 55), Zambia (from 21+ to 101).

Globally, at least 26,604 people were known to be under sentence of death at the end of 2019.¹⁰

⁹ Due to the ongoing conflict, Amnesty International could not confirm that death sentences were carried out in Syria in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018

¹⁰ 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 an adequate number. These included China, Egypt, Iran, North Korea and Saudi Arabia.

COMMUTATIONS, PARDONS AND EXONERATIONS

Amnesty International recorded commutations or pardons of death sentences in 24 countries:

Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco/Western Sahara, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Singapore, Sudan, Thailand, UAE, USA, Zambia, Zimbabwe.¹¹

Amnesty International recorded at least 11 exonerations of prisoners under sentence of death in two countries –USA (3), Zambia (8).¹²

THE DEATH PENALTY IN 2019: IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

The death penalty continued to be used in ways that violated international law and standards in 2019. Some examples included:

- At least 13 **public executions** were recorded in Iran.
- At least 6 people – 4 in Iran, 1 in Saudi Arabia and 1 in South Sudan – 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 Maldives, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and South Sudan.¹³
- People with **mental or intellectual disabilities** were under sentence of death in several countries, including Japan, Maldives, Pakistan and USA.
- Death sentences were known to have been imposed after proceedings that did not meet **international fair trial standards** in several countries, including Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Viet Nam and Yemen.
- **“Confessions”** that may have been extracted through **torture or other ill-treatment** were used to convict and sentence people to death in Bahrain, Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia.
- Death sentences were imposed **without the defendant being present (in absentia)** in Bangladesh and Lebanon.

11 Commutation is the process by which a death sentence is exchanged for a less severe sentence such as terms 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.

12 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

13 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. 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.

- **Mandatory death sentences** were imposed in Ghana, Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Singapore.¹⁴
- **Military courts** sentenced civilians to death in Egypt and Pakistan. **Special Courts** imposed death sentences in Bangladesh, 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.¹⁵
 - **Drug-related offences:** at least 118 executions were known to have been carried out in 4 countries – China (+), Iran (30), Saudi Arabia (84) and Singapore (2). This was 18% of the global recorded executions total and up from 14% in 2018. Information on Viet Nam was unavailable.

184 new death sentences were known to have been imposed in 8 countries: Bahrain (2), Bangladesh (2), China (+), Indonesia (60), Malaysia (18), Singapore (12), Sri Lanka (15) and Viet Nam (73).

 - **Economic crimes**, such as corruption: China.¹⁶
 - **“Blasphemy”** or “insulting the prophet of Islam”: Pakistan.
 - **Kidnapping:** Iran.
 - **Rape:** Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia.
 - 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 ruler”** and other **“crimes against the state”**, whether or not they led to a loss of life: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.
- **Expansion of the scope** of the death penalty: India, Thailand and Nigeria (Katsina State and Taraba State).

14 Mandatory death sentences are inconsistent with human rights protections because they do not allow “any possibility of taking into account the defendant’s personal circumstances or the circumstances of the particular offence”. UN Human Rights Committee, *Pagdayawon Rolando v. Philippines*, Views of the Human Rights Committee, Communication No. 1110/2002, UN Doc. CCPR/C/82/D/1110/2002 (2004) para. 5.2

15 As prescribed by Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

16 In China, economic offences were punished with a “suspended” death sentence in one known case, which is generally commuted to terms of imprisonment after two years’ imprisonment when no other crimes are committed

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

REGIONAL TRENDS

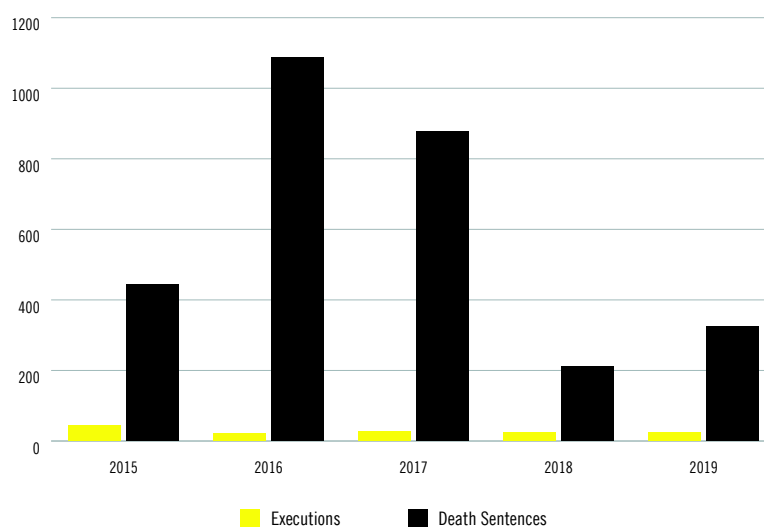
- The same four countries – Botswana, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan – that carried out executions in 2018 did so in 2019.
- Recorded executions increased by one, compared to 2018, despite a decrease in recorded executions in three out of these four countries; only South Sudan recorded an increase.
- Recorded death sentences went up by 53% due to increases in 10 countries.
- Positive signs towards abolition of the death penalty were recorded in five countries.

COUNTRY	2019 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2019 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2019
Botswana	1	4	7
Burkina Faso	0	0	+
Cameroon	0	0	+
Central African Republic	0	0	
Chad	0	0	4+
Comoros	0	0	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0	8	48+
Equatorial Guinea	0	0	
Eritrea	0	0	
Eswatini (former Swaziland)	0	0	1
Ethiopia	0	0	
Gambia	0	1	1
Ghana	0	8	168
Guinea	0	0	15+ ¹²⁵
Kenya	0	29+	1,000+
Lesotho	0	0	+
Liberia	0	0	
Malawi	0	8	23
Mali	0	4+	+
Mauritania	0	8	123

¹²⁵ Although Guinea abolished the death penalty for all crimes in 2017, some prisoners remained under the sentence of death at the end of 2019. In November 2019, Amnesty International visited prisons in Guinea and documented 15 people under the sentence of death, 12 in Kindia and three in Conakry. The death sentences of these prisoners had not been commuted and more prisoners in this category could be in other prisons in the country.

COUNTRY	2019 RECORDED EXECUTIONS	2019 RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES	PEOPLE KNOWN TO BE UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH AT THE END OF 2019
Niger	0	8	0
Nigeria	0	54+	2,700+
Sierra Leone	0	21	63
Somalia	12+	24+	+
South Sudan	11+	4+	338+
Sudan	1	31+	115+
Tanzania	0	4+	500+
Uganda	0	2	133
Zambia	0	101	393
Zimbabwe	0	6	89

EXECUTIONS AND DEATH SENTENCES RECORDED IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2015-2019

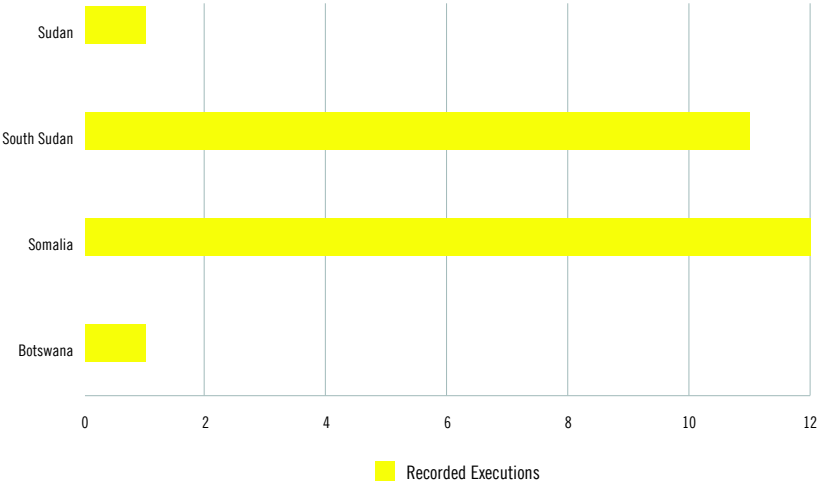


Amnesty International recorded a slight increase in the number of executions in the sub-Saharan Africa region in 2019; 25 executions were confirmed compared to 2018 when 24 were recorded. Botswana, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan carried out executions in 2019, just as they did in 2018. Recorded executions went down by one in Botswana, Somalia and Sudan. However, in South Sudan recorded executions increased by 57%, from 7+ recorded in 2018 to 11+ in 2019.

The number of confirmed death sentences in the region went up by 53%, from 212 in 2018 to 325 in 2019. This was due to increases in Kenya (12+ to 29+); Malawi (0 to 8); Mauritania (3 to 8); Niger (0 to 8); Nigeria (46+ to 54+); Sierra Leone (4 to 21); Somalia (15+ to 24+); Sudan (8 to 31+); Zambia (21+ to 101); and Zimbabwe (5+ to 6). Death sentences were confirmed in 18 countries in 2019, an increase of one compared to 2018.

Positive actions or pronouncements which may lead to the abolition of the death penalty were recorded in Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

RECORDED EXECUTIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2019



NOTABLE COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

The government of **Botswana** informed Amnesty International that one execution was carried out, four death sentences were imposed, and seven people were under the sentence of death at the end of the year. The government added that no commutations or pardons were granted, no one under the sentence of death was exonerated and no foreign national was under the sentence of death in the country. The Prison Service announced the execution of Mooketsi Kgosibodiba through a statement on 2 December, stating that he was executed at the Gaborone Central Prison in the “morning”. He was convicted for the murder of his employer in 2012 and was sentenced to death by the Francistown High Court in December 2017; his appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal in July 2018. Kagiso Molefe, who was facing the death penalty after being convicted of murder, was not sentenced to death. On 11 April, the High Court in Lobatse, during a ruling on extenuation, ruled that it was “satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances which abate the moral blameworthiness of the accused entitling the court to impose a sentence other than death.” The Court sentenced him to 20 years’ imprisonment.

In March, the Speaker of the National Assembly of the **Central African Republic**, Honourable Laurent Ngon-Baba, was reported to have issued a decision to establish a joint committee to examine a bill on the abolition of the death penalty.¹²⁶

On 15 April, the President of **Equatorial Guinea**, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema, announced in Praia, Cabo Verde, that he would soon submit to the country’s Parliament a bill to abolish the death penalty, as required by the Community of Portuguese Language Countries. Amnesty International was unable to confirm at the end of the year that the bill had been sent to Parliament.

The government of **Eswatini** informed Amnesty International that no death sentence was imposed, and that no execution was carried out. The last execution was carried out in 1983, and since that year a total of 45 people have been sentenced to death, 44 of whom have had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment during that period. The last person remained under the sentence of death at the end of the year.

In May, the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of **Gambia** announced that President Adama Barrow had commuted the death sentences of 22 prisoners to life imprisonment. These prisoners represented the number of people under the sentence of death at the end of 2018. The only death sentence recorded in the country was imposed in July by the High Court against Pap Ibrahim Khalilulaye Thiam, a Senegalese national, for murder.¹²⁷ In November, Gambia’s Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) published a draft constitution for the country.¹²⁸ The Chairman of the CRC, Justice Cherno Suluyman Jallow, emphasized that while reviewing the current constitution, the CRC considered international treaties that Gambia is a party to and its international legal obligations. One notable development in the draft constitution is the removal of the provision in the current constitution which allows for the death penalty as an exception to the right to life. Section 37(1) of the draft constitution provides: “A person shall not be deprived of life intentionally.” As a party to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, Gambia has a legal obligation to take all necessary measures to abolish the death penalty within its jurisdiction.¹²⁹

126 Parliamentarians for Global Action, *Central African Republic and the death penalty* (News story, March 2019), www.pgaction.org/ilhr/adp/caf.html

127 “Senegalese sentenced to death for strangling woman”, *The Standard*, 25 July 2019, <https://standard.gm/senegalese-sentenced-to-death-for-strangling-woman/>

128 “Gambia publishes first draft constitution”, *The Voice*, 16 November 2019, www.voicegambia.com/2019/11/16/gambia-publishes-first-draft-constitution/

129 Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, Art.1(2)

The **Ghana** Prisons Service informed Amnesty International that no executions were carried out and the courts sentenced eight people to death in 2019. At the end of the year, 168 people were under sentence of death, including six foreign nationals from Benin (1), Burkina Faso (2) and Nigeria (3). Twelve people had their death sentence commuted to life imprisonment and one person was pardoned. The last execution recorded in Ghana was in 1993.

In **Kenya**, the Task Force on review of the mandatory death sentence under section 204 of the Penal Code, which was set up on the orders of the Supreme Court in the case of *Francis Karioko Muruatetu and Wilson Thirimbi Mwangi v. Republic*, published its report in October.¹³⁰ The Task Force was given the responsibility of preparing “a detailed professional review with regard to the death penalty in the context of the Judgment and Order of the court, set up a legal framework to deal with resentencing of capital offenders, formulate parameters of what ought to constitute life imprisonment, review the legislative framework on death penalty in Kenya with a view to formulate amendments, and propose law to give effect to the Judgment.”¹³¹

The Task Force noted in its report that following the judgment in *Muruatetu*, and before its work was completed, many people who were under the sentence of death for murder before the mandatory death sentence was abolished had made applications to the courts for re-sentence hearing. Some of the applications had been assigned for hearing in the future; some had become final and the petitioners had been either released from prison, re-sentenced to a definite term in prison or had the original death sentence confirmed. At least 1,148 petitions for re-sentencing had been received by the court, at least 107 had been dismissed for a lack of jurisdiction, and at least 67 had been decided.

The Task Force made the following key findings:¹³²

1. The death penalty is not an effective deterrent (it does not stop people from committing capital offences);
2. There is growing consensus that extended time on death row, if not the death penalty itself, constitutes inhuman punishment in violation of international law, regional law and most modern constitutions including those similar to Kenya's;
3. The world – but more specifically African countries – is moving toward abolition at a minimum with respect to all but the most serious crimes;
4. The justice system is not perfect, and this leads to a disproportionate number of poor or vulnerable persons, many who are in fact innocent, being sentenced to death; and
5. Kenyans, when presented with the reality of injustice and hardship faced by people in the correctional system, and the truth about the humanity and fallibility of many who are incarcerated, are willing to accept that offenders can reform their lives and become productive members of society.

The Task Force recommended that: Parliament abolish the death penalty entirely; life imprisonment be substituted where the Penal Code previously provided for the death penalty, with the option of life imprisonment without parole for the most serious of crimes; if not abolished, the death penalty should only be reserved for the rarest of rare cases involving intentional and aggravated acts of killing; the current Sentencing Policy Guidelines be enacted as regulations in order to have the force of law, in addition to formulation of Re-sentencing Regulations to guide the sentencing and re-sentencing processes; and a new system of parole for offenders serving a life sentence, including a clear definition and degrees of offences for purposes of determining eligibility for parole, is established.

130 The Supreme Court of Kenya in this case abolished the mandatory death penalty for murder in December 2017

131 Report of the Task Force on Review of the Mandatory Death Sentence under Section 204 of the Penal Code, Vol. 1, p. 3

132 Report of the Task Force on Review of the Mandatory Death Sentence under Section 204 of the Penal Code, Vol. 1, p. 108

The government of **Malawi** informed Amnesty International that no executions were carried out and that five death sentences were imposed. However, the media reported the imposition of eight death sentences; all were imposed for the murder of people with albinism. According to the government, 23 people were under the sentence of death at the end of the year; one was a foreign national (from Mozambique).

Willard Mikaele was convicted of the murder of a person with albinism on 19 March and sentenced to death on 3 May; he was arrested in Mozambique on 12 January 2017. The court imposed the death sentence citing the prevalence of attacks against people with albinism in the country and the court's obligation to protect them.¹³³ In August, a court in the western town of Mchinji convicted and sentenced three people – Douglas Mwale, Fontino Folosani and Sophie Jere – to death for killing a person with albinism.¹³⁴ In December the High Court in Lilongwe convicted and sentenced four people – Gerald Phiri, Medson Madzialenga, Jesmon Baluwa and Steven Ching'ombe – to death for killing a 21-year-old woman with albinism in Dowa in 2016.¹³⁵

The authorities in **Mauritania** informed Amnesty International that no executions were carried out, eight death sentences were imposed, one commutation was granted, and 123 people – including 15 foreign nationals – were under the sentence of death at the end of the year.

In **Niger**, the eight death sentences imposed during the year were commuted by presidential decree, on independence day, in December.

No execution was recorded in **Nigeria** but at least 54 death sentences were imposed. At least 67 people had their death sentence commuted to life imprisonment and at least 13 people were pardoned. Amnesty International estimates that at least 2,700 people were under the sentence of death at the end of the year. In May, following an amendment of relevant sections of the Penal Code, the death penalty was introduced for kidnapping and cattle rustling in Katsina State.¹³⁶ In June, Taraba State introduced the death penalty for kidnapping.¹³⁷ In Lagos State, the then Governor, Akinwunmi Ambode, commuted 20 death sentences to life imprisonment in April,¹³⁸ while the incumbent, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, commuted three death sentences to life imprisonment in December.¹³⁹

According to the data provided by the Correctional Service of **Sierra Leone**, no execution was carried out; 21 death sentences were imposed by the courts for murder and conspiracy to murder; and 63 people were under the sentence of death at the end of the year. On 14 November, a High Court in Freetown convicted and sentenced 18-year-old Osman Kamara to death by hanging after the jury found him guilty of the murder of a 22-year-old man during a fight at a nightclub.¹⁴⁰

133 *Republic v. Willard Mikaele*, Homicide Case no. 238 of 2018

134 Malawi: 3 sentenced to death over killing of person with albinism", Aljazeera, 15 August 2019, www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/malawi-3-sentenced-death-killing-person-albinism-190815084058460.html

135 "Four sentenced to death killing albinos", The Nation, 2 December 2019, <https://mwonation.com/four-sentenced-to-death-killing-albinos/>

136 "Masari approves death penalty for kidnappers, rustlers in Katsina", *The Guardian*, 25 May 2019, <https://guardian.ng/news/masari-approves-death-penalty-for-kidnappers-rustlers-in-katsina/>

137 "Taraba okays death penalty for kidnappers", *Punch*, 5 July 2019, <https://punchng.com/taraba-okays-death-penalty-for-kidnappers/>

138 Lagos State, "Lagos pardons 14 inmates, commutes 20 death sentences to life imprisonment" (News story, 28 April 2019), <https://lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2019/04/28/lagos-pardons-14-inmates-commutes-20-death-sentences-to-life-imprisonment/>

139 "Christmas: Governor commutes death sentences of three, pardons six others", Premium Times, 26 December 2019, www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/369904-christmas-governor-commutes-death-sentences-of-three-pardons-six-others.html

140 "18-year-old sentenced to death by hanging", *Awoko*, 19 November 2019, <https://awokonewspaper.com/18-year-old-sentenced-to-death-by-hanging/>

In **South Sudan**, at least 11 people were executed (four more than were known to have been executed in the country in 2018). This was the highest recorded number in South Sudan in any year since the country's independence in 2011. Seven men were executed in February, three of whom were from the same family. The authorities did not inform the family of the three related men before they were executed. Of the seven people, six were executed in Juba Central Prison, while one was executed in Wau Central Prison. In September, four people were executed; two men were executed in Juba Central Prison on 27 September and two were executed in Wau Central Prison on 30 September. One of the two executed on 30 September had been sentenced to death by the High Court in Tonj on 29 November 2018 for murder. The other was a child at the time of the crime. He was about 17 when he was convicted and sentenced to death by the High Court in Lakes State on 10 September 2015.

At least four death sentences were imposed in 2019. On 8 March, death sentences were imposed on three soldiers by the Military Court for killing two civilians in their homes in 2018.¹⁴¹

At the end of the year, Magai Matiop Ngong, now 18 years old, who was just 15 when he was sentenced to death, remained on death row and at risk of execution. The use of the death penalty against people who were children at the time of the crime is strictly prohibited under international human rights law and South Sudan's 2011 Transitional Constitution. Article 21(2) of the Constitution states that "No death penalty shall be imposed on a person under the age of eighteen". Article 37(a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which South Sudan is a party, stipulates that "neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below 18 years of age".

South Sudan's Penal Code provides for the use of the death penalty for murder; bearing false witness resulting in an innocent person's execution or for fabricating such evidence or using as true evidence known to be false; insurgency, banditry, sabotage or terrorism resulting in the death of a person; aggravated drug trafficking; and treason. Hanging is the method of execution provided for in the Code of Criminal Procedure. Before a person sentenced to death can be executed, the Supreme Court and the President must confirm the death sentence.

In **Sudan**, the at least 31 death sentences recorded were a significant increase on the eight death sentences recorded in 2018. Sudan's Transitional Military Council (TMC) issued 25 pardons as "part of the implementation of the measures aiming to create confidence-building measures aiming to achieve peace in Sudan as provided in the agreements reached by the TMC and the Forces for Freedom."¹⁴²

No executions were carried out in **Tanzania**, but at least four death sentences were imposed by the courts. In June a Bukoba High Court sentenced three Muslim men to death for decapitating four Christians in November 2015 during an outbreak of violence.¹⁴³

In July, a High Court in Dar es Salaam declared that the mandatory death penalty in Tanzania is constitutional and that it could not depart from an existing decision of the Court of Appeal that the death penalty was constitutional. In contrast, on 28 November, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights delivered judgment in the case of *Ally Rajabu and Others v. United Republic of Tanzania*.¹⁴⁴ The Court held that Section 197 of the Tanzania Penal Code which provides for mandatory

141 "South Sudan military court sentences soldiers to death for killing civilians", The EastAfrican, 8 March 2019, www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Death-sentences-for-South-Sudan-soldiers-for-killing-civilians/4552908-5016018-q2jhy7/index.html

142 "TMC overturns death sentences against Sudan's rebels", Sudan Tribune, 9 August 2019, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article67910; "Sudan drops 8 Darfur rebel death sentences to 'build confidence'", France24, 19 September 2019, www.france24.com/en/20190919-sudan-drops-8-darfur-rebel-death-sentences-to-build-confidence

143 "Tanzanian court sentences 3 Muslims to death for murder", SowetanLIVE, 20 June 2019, www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/africa/2019-06-20-tanzanian-court-sentences-3-muslims-to-death-for-murder/

144 The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights is a continental court established by African countries to ensure the protection of human and peoples' rights in Africa. The Court has jurisdiction over all cases and disputes submitted to it concerning the interpretation and application of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and any other relevant human rights instrument ratified by the States concerned.

death sentence violates the right to fair trial and right to life which are protected in Article 7(1) and Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.¹⁴⁵ The Court emphasized that the mandatory death sentence for murder in Section 197 of the Tanzania Penal Code constitutes an arbitrary deprivation of the right to life and that Tanzania had violated Article 4 of the African Charter.¹⁴⁶

On 4 November, President Yoweri Museveni of **Uganda** signed into law the Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act 2019. The Act amended the Penal Code Act and the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2002 to: remove the mandatory death penalty prescribed by these laws;¹⁴⁷ restrict the death penalty to the most serious crimes under those laws; remove the restriction on mitigation in the case of convictions that carry a death penalty; and define life imprisonment or imprisonment for life. The Act provides that "the court may only pass a sentence of death in exceptional circumstances where the alternative of imprisonment for life or other custodial sentence is demonstrably inadequate."¹⁴⁸ Also, the Act provides that a death sentence that is not carried out within three years shall be deemed to have been commuted to imprisonment for life.¹⁴⁹ In addition, it defines imprisonment for life as "imprisonment for fifty years".¹⁵⁰

The government of **Zambia** informed Amnesty International that no executions were carried out; 101 people – 88 men and 13 women – were sentenced to death;¹⁵¹ 393 people – 370 men and 23 women – were under the sentence of death at the end of the year, five of whom were foreign nationals (two Chinese, one Malawian, one Namibian, one Tanzanian); 21 commutations were granted; and eight people were exonerated by the courts.

The government of **Zimbabwe** informed Amnesty International that no executions were carried out; six death sentences were imposed for murder, murder and robbery, murder and attempted murder; and 89 people were under the sentence of death at the end of the year. In February, the media reported that the government commuted 34 death sentences to life imprisonment; the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs had recommended to the government to abolish the death penalty; and the government was in the process of implementing strategies and policies aimed at abolishing the death penalty.¹⁵²

145 *Ally Rajabu and Others v. United Republic of Tanzania*, Application No. 007/2015

146 Shortly before this judgment was delivered, Tanzania withdrew the right of individuals and NGOs to directly file cases against it at the Arusha-based African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Prof Palamagamba Kabudi, signed the notice of withdrawal of the declaration made under Article 34(6) of the African Court Protocol on 14 November 2019. This notification was sent to the African Union on 21 November.

147 The mandatory death penalty had already been abolished by the Constitutional Court in 2005 in *Susan Kigula & 416 Ors v. Attorney General*

148 Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act 2019, Section 5

149 Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act 2019, Section 7(2)

150 Law Revision (Penalties in Criminal Matters) Miscellaneous (Amendment) Act 2019, Section 7(3)

151 This constitutes a significant increase compared to 2018 when Amnesty International confirmed 21 death sentences

152 "Govt removes 34 from death row to life imprisonment as death sentence phases out", ZimEye, 1 February 2019, www.zimeye.net/2019/02/01/govt-removes-34-from-death-row-to-life-imprisonment-as-death-sentence-phases-out/

ANNEX I: RECORDED EXECUTIONS AND DEATH SENTENCES IN 2019

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, Thailand (16+) – it means that Amnesty International confirmed 16 executions or death sentences in Thailand but believes there were more than 16. Where “+” appears after a country name without a figure – for instance, Syria (+) – 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 2, including for China.

RECORDED EXECUTIONS IN 2019

China 1,000s	Pakistan 14+	Belarus 2+
Iran 251+	Somalia 12+	Bangladesh 2
Saudi Arabia 184	South Sudan 11+	Botswana 1
Iraq 100+	Yemen 7	Sudan 1
Egypt 32+	Singapore 4	North Korea +
USA 22	Bahrain 3	Syria +
	Japan 3	Viet Nam +

RECORDED DEATH SENTENCES IN 2019

China 1,000s	Sierra Leone 21	Bahrain 4+
Pakistan 632+	UAE 18+	Mali 4+
Egypt 435+	Thailand 16+	Tanzania 4+
Bangladesh 220+	Afghanistan 14	South Sudan 4+
India 102	Singapore 12	Botswana 4
Zambia 101	Jordan 8+	Myanmar 4
Iraq 87+	Democratic Republic of the Congo 8	Palestine (State of) 4
Indonesia 80+	Ghana 8	Belarus 3+
Viet Nam 76+	Malawi 8	Qatar 2+
Yemen 55	Mauritania 8	Guyana 2
Nigeria 54+	Niger 8	Japan 2
Tunisia 39+	Trinidad and Tobago 8	Maldives 2
USA 35	Morocco/Western Sahara 7+	Taiwan 2
Sri Lanka 34+	Oman 7+	Uganda 2
Sudan 31+	Zimbabwe 6	Gambia 1
Kenya 29+	Kuwait 5+	South Korea 1
Malaysia 26+	Saudi Arabia 5+	Iran +
Somalia 24+	Algeria 4+	North Korea +
Lebanon 23		Syria +

ANNEX II: ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2019

More than two thirds of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice. As of 31 December 2019 the numbers were as follows:

Abolitionist for all crimes: 106

Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only: 8

Abolitionist in practice: 28

Total abolitionist in law or practice: 142

Retentionist: 56

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, Colombia, Congo (Republic of the), 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, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Madagascar, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niue, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia (including Kosovo), Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela.

2. ABOLITIONIST FOR ORDINARY CRIMES ONLY

Countries whose laws provide for the death penalty only for exceptional crimes such as crimes under military law or crimes committed in exceptional circumstances:¹⁵³

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

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 and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions:

Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Eswatini (former Swaziland), Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco/Western Sahara, Myanmar, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation,¹⁵⁴ Sierra Leone, South Korea (Republic of Korea), Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia, Zambia.

4. RETENTIONIST

Countries that retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes:

Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, Chad, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Nigeria, North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of 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, USA, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

¹⁵³ No executions were recorded in these countries in more than 10 years

¹⁵⁴ The Russian Federation 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 2019

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 2019. States may become states parties 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, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, 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, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Madagascar, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Palestine (State of), Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia (including Kosovo), Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (total: 88).

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

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

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, North Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia (including Kosovo), Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, Ukraine (total: 46).

Signed but not ratified: Russian Federation (total: 1).

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, 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, North Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia (including Kosovo), Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, Ukraine (total: 44).

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



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DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS

2019

Amnesty International's monitoring of the global use of the death penalty in 2019 showed that the number of known executions decreased slightly on the 2018 total, continuing the year-on-year reduction recorded since 2015 and reaching the lowest figure in more than 10 years. Significantly, this decrease was reported despite Iraq nearly doubling its tally and Saudi Arabia having its highest executions total in any given year.

The number of executing countries (20) remained the same as in 2018 and confirmed that the resort to executions remained confined to a minority of states. Major executing countries – including China, Iran, North Korea and Viet Nam – continued to hide the full extent of their use of the death penalty by restricting access to death penalty information.

Positive developments towards abolition were recorded in Barbados, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malaysia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the US States of California and New Hampshire, and Zimbabwe during 2019, while threats of setbacks in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and by the US federal authorities did not come to fruition by the end of the year.

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

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