

DEATH PENALTY 2014: FACTS AND FIGURES

GLOBAL FIGURES

At least **607 people** were **executed** in **22 countries** in 2014. This reflects a drop of almost 22% compared to 2013, when Amnesty International recorded at least 778 executions in 22 countries worldwide.

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

China executed more people than the rest of the world put together – 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 607 excludes the number of executions carried out in China.

During 2014, **only 22 countries, about one in 10 of all countries worldwide, are known to have carried out executions** – the same number as in 2013. This number has almost halved from two decades ago (41 countries carried out executions in 1995).

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

Commutations or **pardons** of death sentences were recorded in 28 countries in 2014. At least **112 people who had been sentenced to death were exonerated** in **nine countries in 2014**.

At least 2,466 death sentences were recorded in 55 countries in 2014, a sharp increase from the 2013 figures (at least 1,925 death sentences in 57 countries).

This increase was mainly due to developments in Egypt (at least 109 death sentences in 2013; at least 509 in 2014) and Nigeria (at least 141 death sentences in 2013; at least 659 in 2014).

At least **19,094 people** were on **death row** at the end of 2014.

While seven countries that executed in 2013 did not do so in 2014 (Bangladesh, Botswana, Indonesia, India, Kuwait, Nigeria and South Sudan), seven others resumed executions after a hiatus: Belarus, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Jordan, Pakistan, Singapore and UAE.

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

Reports indicated that at least 14 people who were **under 18** at the time of the crime were executed in Iran, in violation of international law.

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, for example in Afghanistan, Bahrain, China, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, 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 defined in international standards. These offences included drug-related crimes in at least 10 countries in Asia and the Middle East, as well as committing "adultery" while married (UAE), "blasphemy" (Pakistan), economic crimes (China, North Korea, Viet Nam), different offences involving rape (Afghanistan, India, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE) and "witchcraft" and "sorcery" (Saudi Arabia).

In December 117 countries – more than ever before – voted in favour of a UN General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

AFRICA

At least 46 executions were carried out in three countries, a drop compared to figures recorded in 2013 - 64 executions in five countries.

Death sentences rose from at least 423 in 2013 to at least 909 last year – mainly due to a sharp increase in **Nigeria**.

Only three countries - **Equatorial Guinea**, **Somalia** and **Sudan** -- were known to have carried out executions in 2014.

AMERICAS

The **USA** was the only country in the region to carry out executions, 35 in 2014 (four fewer than in 2013). Only seven states executed in 2014 compared to nine the previous year. Four states - Texas, Missouri, Florida and Oklahoma – were responsible for 89% of all executions. In February, the state of Washington imposed a moratorium on all executions.

In **Central and Southern America** and **the Caribbean**, a total of five death sentences were recorded in three countries compared to 15 in four countries in 2013. Suriname took steps to abolish the death penalty for all crimes while the government of Barbados introduced legislation to remove the mandatory death penalty.

ASIA-PACIFIC

At least 32 executions were carried out in nine countries in the region. This figure does not include executions carried out in **China**, which executed more people than the rest of the world put together. But the true extent of the use of the death penalty in China is unknown as data is treated as a state secret.

Pakistan lifted a six-year moratorium on the execution of civilians in December, putting seven people to death in the space of two weeks.

Singapore resumed executions in 2014 and put two people to death during the year, ending a moratorium on executions imposed in 2012.

It was impossible to confirm the real number of executions in **North Korea**. Credible sources indicated that at least 50 executions were carried out, but Amnesty International believes the actual figure may be much higher.

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Belarus - the only country in the region that executes - put at least three people to death during the year, ending a 24-month hiatus on executions. The executions were marked by secrecy, with family members and lawyers only being informed after the fact.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

At least 491 executions were carried out in eight countries – a drop of 23% from the 638 executions recorded in six countries in 2013.

Iran, **Iraq** and **Saudi Arabia** accounted for 90 per cent of all recorded executions in the region.

It could not be confirmed if executions took place in **Syria**.

In **Iran**, authorities officially announced at least 289 executions, but according to reliable sources at least 454 more executions were carried out – bringing the total close to 743.

Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates resumed executions in 2014. In December, **Jordan** put 11 people to death, the first executions in eight years.

ENDS

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