

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
PRESS RELEASE**

AI Index: PRE 01/096/2009
19 March 2009

Amnesty International to publish 2008 global death penalty statistics

On Tuesday 24 March Amnesty International will publish its global death penalty statistics, looking at how many people were executed or sentenced to death across the world during 2008.

The report will include details on how the global totals are calculated, and tables on the number of executions carried out in per country between January and December 2008 as well as the number of death sentences passed. It concludes with some considerations on the death penalty figures and the challenges involved in uncovering accurate figures.

On the same day, Amnesty International will publish a report on the death penalty in Belarus, Ending executions in Europe: Towards abolition of the death penalty in Belarus, the last country in Europe to maintain the death penalty.

Key background facts from previous years are:

- At least 1,252 people were known to be executed in 24 countries during 2007. The true figure was certainly higher.
- At least 3,347 people were sentenced to death in 51 countries in 2007
- 138 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.
- 59 countries retain and use the death penalty, most often as a punishment for people convicted of murder

For more information on death penalty issues, see www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty

Amnesty International's Secretary General Irene Khan and other experts will be available for interviews in Arabic, English, French, Italian and Spanish

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Josefina Salomón P:+44 207 413 5562, M:+44 7778 472 116, jsalomon@amnesty.org
Tom Mackey P:+44 207 413 5810, M:+44 79 04 39 82 85, tom.mackey@amnesty.org

For information on the Belarus report, please contact:

Lydia Aroyo M: + 44 (0) 7771 796 350, laroyo@amnesty.org

-ENDS-