
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

DEATH SENTENCES AND EXECUTIONS IN 2007



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1. Introduction

During 2007, at least 1252 people were executed in 24 countries. At least 3347 people were sentenced to death in 51 countries. These were only minimum figures; the true figures were certainly higher.

Many countries carry out executions in secret and refuse to divulge any information on the use of the death penalty. Such countries include China, Singapore, Malaysia and Mongolia. The United Nations has repeatedly called for the death penalty only to be used in an open and transparent manner.

In resolution 1989/64, adopted on 24 May 1989, the UN Economic and Social Council urged UN member states "to publish, for each category of offence for which the death penalty is authorized, and if possible on an annual basis, information about the use of the death penalty, including the number of persons sentenced to death, the number of executions actually carried out, the number of persons under sentence of death, the number of death sentences reversed or commuted on appeal and the number of instances in which clemency has been granted, and to include information on the extent to which the safeguards referred to above are incorporated in national law".

In resolution 2005/59, adopted on 20 April 2005, the UN Commission on Human Rights called upon all states that still maintain the death penalty "to make available to the public information with regard to the imposition of the death penalty and to any scheduled execution".

The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has stated: "Transparency is essential wherever the death penalty is applied. Secrecy as to those executed violates human rights standards. Full and accurate reporting of all executions should be published, and a consolidated version prepared on at least an annual basis."¹

2. How the global totals are calculated

All annual figures for the total known death sentences and executions are minimum figures. In compiling them from the information obtained by Amnesty International, we use the largest figure that can safely be inferred from the information provided. If AI knows that at least three executions were carried out, we count it as three. If AI knows that there were executions but does not know how many, this year we are indicating it with "+".

¹ Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions: Report of the Special Rapporteur..., UN document E/CN.4/2005/7, 22 December 2004, Para. 87.

3. Key

“+” after a number indicates that the figure is a minimum one. The true figure is at least the figure shown. For example, “47+” means that there were at least 47 executions in 2007.

If “+” is not preceded by a number, it means that we know that there were executions or death sentences (at least more than one) but we do not know how many.

4. Reports of executions in 2007

Country	Executions
CHINA	470+
IRAN	317+
SAUDI ARABIA	143+
PAKISTAN	135+
USA	42
IRAQ	33+
VIET NAM	25+
YEMEN	15+
AFGHANISTAN	15
LIBYA	9+
JAPAN	9
SYRIA	7+
SUDAN	7+
BANGLADESH	6
SOMALIA	5+
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	3
SINGAPORE	2
KUWAIT	1+
INDONESIA	1+
BOTSWANA	1+
BELARUS	1+
ETHIOPIA	1
EGYPT	+
NORTH KOREA	+

Amnesty International remains concerned that executions may have taken place in Mongolia and Malaysia. However, due to the secretive nature of the use of the death penalty the organization was unable to obtain reliable information.

5. Reports of death sentences in 2007

Country	Death Sentences
CHINA	1860+
PAKISTAN	307+
ALGERIA	271
IRAQ	199+
USA	100+
INDIA	100+
BANGLADESH	93
VIET NAM	83+
MONGOLIA	45
EGYPT	40+
CONGO(Democratic Republic)	24+
SUDAN	23+
JAPAN	23
NIGERIA	20+
JORDAN	17+
MALAYSIA	12
MADAGASCAR	12
INDONESIA	11+
UGANDA	10+
SYRIA	10+
SRI LANKA	10+
ZAMBIA	8
THAILAND	6+
TAIWAN	5
LEBANON	4+
BELARUS	4
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	3+
TUNISIA	3
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	2+
KUWAIT	2+
BAHRAIN	2
GAMBIA	2
SINGAPORE	2
SOUTH KOREA	2
MOROCCO	1
ZIMBABWE	1
BAHAMAS	+

BURUNDI	+
CHAD	+
ETHIOPIA	+
GUYANA	+
IRAN	+
JAMAICA	+
KENYA	+
NORTH KOREA	+
LIBYA	+
SAUDI ARABIA	+
ST.CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS	+
TANZANIA	+
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	+
YEMEN	+

The above figures represent those death sentences known to Amnesty International. Other countries may have condemned prisoners to death but the information has gone unreported.

6. Considerations on the death penalty figures

As in previous years, the vast majority of executions worldwide were carried out in a small handful of countries. In 2007, 88 per cent of all known executions took place in five countries: China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the USA. Saudi Arabia had the highest number of executions per capita, followed by Iran and Libya.

In 2007 the Chinese authorities again refused to publish statistics on the government's use of the death penalty leaving the world in the dark about the number of executions carried out. Amnesty International believes there is likely to have been a significant drop in executions during 2007 after Supreme People's Court (SPC) review for all death sentences was restored on 1 January. In 2007 470 executions were recorded by AI, but this number is based on public reports available and serves as an absolute minimum. The US-based organization "Dui Hua Foundation" estimates that 6,000 people were executed last year based on figures obtained from local officials. In a country as vast as China with tight government controls on information and the media only the authorities know the reality behind the use of the death penalty.

In June 2007 the authorities claimed a 10 per cent reduction in death sentences as a result of SPC review, but failed to provide figures to back this

up. SPC review increases the time between sentencing and execution and a significant backlog in executions may have developed over the year. Amnesty International would welcome any drop in the number of executions by the world's biggest user of the death penalty. As Beijing prepares to host the Olympics, we challenge the government of China to end its secretive use of the death penalty and provide detailed information about the use of capital punishment. Only then can a full and informed debate around the appropriateness of the use of the death penalty take place.

In 2007 Iran executed at least 317 people, Saudi Arabia 143 and Pakistan 135. These are all minimum figures. There were 42 executions in 10 states in the USA.

The worldwide figure for those currently condemned to death and awaiting execution is difficult to assess. The estimated number at the end of 2007 was between 18,311 and 27,562 based on information from human rights groups, media reports and the limited official figures available².

In 2007 three countries carried out executions for crimes committed by people below eighteen years of age³. Mohammad Mousawi (16 years old at the time of the offence), Sa'id Quanbar Zahi (17 years old at the time of the execution), Makwan Moloudzadeh (13 at the time of the offence) were executed in Iran on 22 April, 27 May and 4 December respectively. Dhahian Rakan al-Sibai'l, who was 15 or 16 years old when he committed the crime, was executed in Saudi Arabia on 21 July 2007, while Adil Muhammad Saif al-Ma'amari was executed in Yemen in February 2007. He was 16 years old at the time of the offence.

² For further information visit: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/aiwarren/global.htm>

³This is prohibited under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. See also the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, Article 6 par.5: "Sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age and shall not be carried out on pregnant women."