

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FEATURES

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## Five 'crimes' that can get you killed

Even though most of the world has turned its back on the death penalty, some countries continue to impose capital punishment for acts like having consensual sexual relations outside marriage, opposing the government, offending religion and even drinking alcohol.

This is despite international law barring states from handing out death sentences for any of these crimes.

Here's a list of some "crimes" that, in some parts of the world, can get you killed.

### 1. Consensual sexual relations outside marriage

In Sudan, two women, Intisar Sharif Abdallah and Layla Ibrahim Issa Jumul, were sentenced to death by stoning on charges of "adultery while married" in separate cases in May and July 2012. In both cases the women were sentenced after unfair trials involving forced "confessions". The sentences were subsequently overturned on appeal, and both women were released.

In Iran at least 10 individuals, mainly women, remain on death row having been sentenced to stoning for the crime of "adultery while married".

### 2. Trafficking drugs

On 30 March 2012, Robert Shan Shiao-may of Hong Kong, and Lien Sung-ching of Taiwan were executed in mainland China. They were both sentenced on 26 June 2009 for drug-trafficking after being arrested in December 2005 and accused of sending 192kg of crystal methamphetamine to the Philippines from mainland China via Hong Kong.

In Thailand, at least half of the at least 106 new death sentences recorded in 2012 were against individuals convicted of drug-related offences, according to figures from the south-east Asian country's Correction Department.

Likewise, more than 70 per cent of all officially acknowledged executions in Iran in 2012 were for drug offences.

In Saudi Arabia, 2012 saw a marked increase in executions for drug-related offences where at least 22 people were killed (out of at least 79 executed in 2012), compared with three in 2011 (out of 82), and only one (out of 27) in 2010.

### 3. White-collar crimes

In April 2012, China's Supreme People's Court ordered a retrial in the high-profile case of businesswoman Wu Ying, whose death sentence for "fraudulently raising funds" – a crime that still carries the death penalty – had been confirmed in January 2012.

In Iran, four men were sentenced to death in July 2012 after conviction of corruption and "disrupting the country's economic system" for their role in a massive bank fraud.

### 4. Opposing the government

Sudanese teacher and activist Jalila Khamis Koko was arrested in March 2012 and charged in

December with, among other things, “undermining the constitutional system” and “waging war against the state” – capital crimes under Sudanese law. In 2011, she had volunteered to provide humanitarian support to people affected by the armed conflict in Sudan’s Southern Kordofan state and appeared in a Youtube video denouncing conditions in conflict-affected areas and calling for a ceasefire. After being acquitted of these charges and sentenced for a lesser charge, she was released in January 2013.

In 2012, Iran’s Supreme Court upheld the death sentence imposed on Gholamreza Khosravi Savadjani under charges of “enmity against God” for his alleged ties to a banned Iranian opposition group, the Peoples’ Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). He was originally only sentenced to a prison term and his death sentence came after two re-trials.

#### 5. **Offending or abandoning religion**

In Iran, web programmer Saeed Malekpour was sentenced to death in 2010 for “insulting and desecrating Islam” after a software package he had developed was used without his knowledge to post pornographic images online. His death sentence was reportedly suspended in December after he entered a plea in which he “repented” for his actions, a claim disputed by his family.

Last December, online activist Raif Badawi was prosecuted for “apostasy” in Saudi Arabia, for founding a website for political and social debate. <sup>The charge was dropped in 2013,</sup> but his prosecution appeared to be an attempt by the authorities to intimidate those trying to engage in open debates.

Besides those five crimes, many others exist. In some states, even drinking alcohol can land you on death row.

Last June Iran’s Supreme Court upheld death sentences for two men found guilty for a third time of drinking alcohol. Very rarely imposed, no executions for this “offence” are known to have been carried out in at least the last decade.

And in North Korea, there were unconfirmed reports that a senior North Korean defence ministry official was executed last October for drinking alcohol during the 100-day mourning period for the late leader Kim Jong-il.