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LIST OF ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES (31 December 2008)



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INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 0DW, UNITED KINGDOM

LIST OF ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES (31 December 2008)

More than two-thirds of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice. The numbers are as follows:

Abolitionist for all crimes: 92
Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only: 10
Abolitionist in practice: 36

Total abolitionist in law or practice: 138
Retentionist: 59

Among the key developments in 2008:

Argentina and Uzbekistan abolished the death penalty for all crimes;

Amnesty International reclassified Cameroon and Tajikistan, previously retentionist, as abolitionist in practice;

Liberia, previously abolitionist for all crimes, became abolitionist in practice after the President of Liberia signed into law an Act that reintroduced the death penalty for armed robbery in cases that result in death.

Following are lists of countries in the four categories: **abolitionist for all crimes**, **abolitionist for ordinary crimes only**, **abolitionist in practice** and **retentionist**.

At the end is a list of countries which have abolished the death penalty since 1976. It shows that in the past decade, an average of over three countries a year have abolished the death penalty in law or, having done so for ordinary offences, have gone on to abolish it for all offences.

1. ABOLITIONIST FOR ALL CRIMES

Countries whose laws do not provide for the death penalty for any crime

Abbreviations: **Date (A)** = date of abolition for all crimes; **Date (AO)** = date of abolition for ordinary crimes; **Date (last ex.)** = date of last execution; **K** = date of last known execution; **NK** = date of last execution not known; **Ind.** = no executions since independence

Country	Date (A)	Date (AO)	Date (last ex.)
ALBANIA	2007	2000	
ANDORRA	1990		1943
ANGOLA	1992		
ARGENTINA	2008	1984	
ARMENIA	2003		
AUSTRALIA	1985	1984	1967
AUSTRIA	1968	1950	1950
AZERBAIJAN	1998		1993
BELGIUM	1996		1950
BHUTAN	2004		1964K
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	2001	1997	
BULGARIA	1998		1989
CAMBODIA	1989		
CANADA	1998	1976	1962
CAPE VERDE	1981		1835
COLOMBIA	1910		1909
COOK ISLANDS	2007		
COSTA RICA	1877		
COTE D'IVOIRE	2000		
CROATIA	1990		1987
CYPRUS	2002	1983	1962
CZECH REPUBLIC	1990		
DENMARK	1978	1933	1950
DJIBOUTI	1995		Ind.

Country	Date (A)	Date (AO)	Date (last ex.)
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1966		
ECUADOR	1906		
ESTONIA	1998		1991
FINLAND	1972	1949	1944
FRANCE	1981		1977
GEORGIA	1997		1994K
GERMANY	1987		
GREECE	2004	1993	1972
GUINEA-BISSAU	1993		1986K
HAITI	1987		1972K
HOLY SEE	1969		
HONDURAS	1956		1940
HUNGARY	1990		1988
ICELAND	1928		1830
IRELAND	1990		1954
ITALY	1994	1947	1947
KIRIBATI			Ind.
LIECHTENSTEIN	1987		1785
LITHUANIA	1998		1995
LUXEMBOURG	1979		1949
MACEDONIA	1991		
MALTA	2000	1971	1943
MARSHALL ISLANDS			Ind.
MAURITIUS	1995		1987
MEXICO	2005		1937
MICRONESIA			Ind.
MOLDOVA	1995		
MONACO	1962		1847
MONTENEGRO	2002		
MOZAMBIQUE	1990		1986
NAMIBIA	1990		1988K

Country	Date (A)	Date (AO)	Date (last ex.)
NEPAL	1997	1990	1979
NETHERLANDS	1982	1870	1952
NEW ZEALAND	1989	1961	1957
NICARAGUA	1979		1930
NIUE			
NORWAY	1979	1905	1948
PALAU			
PANAMA	1922		1903K
PARAGUAY	1992		1928
PHILIPPINES	2006 (1987)		2000
POLAND	1997		1988
PORTUGAL	1976	1867	1849K
ROMANIA	1989		1989
RWANDA	2007		1998
SAMOA	2004		Ind.
SAN MARINO	1865	1848	1468K
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE	1990		Ind.
SENEGAL	2004		1967
SERBIA(including KOSOVO)	2002		1992
SEYCHELLES	1993		Ind.
SLOVAKIA	1990		
SLOVENIA	1989		
SOLOMON ISLANDS		1966	Ind.
SOUTH AFRICA	1997	1995	1991
SPAIN	1995	1978	1975
SWEDEN	1972	1921	1910
SWITZERLAND	1992	1942	1944
TIMOR-LESTE	1999		

Country	Date (A)	Date (AO)	Date (last ex.)
TURKEY	2004	2002	1984
TURKMENISTAN	1999		
TUVALU			Ind.
UKRAINE	1999		
UNITED KINGDOM	1998	1973	1964
URUGUAY	1907		
UZBEKISTAN	2008		2005
VANUATU			Ind.
VENEZUELA	1863		

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, such as wartime crimes

Abbreviations: **Date (AO)** = date of abolition for ordinary crimes; **Date (last ex.)** = date of last execution; **K** = date of last known execution; **NK** = date of last execution not known; **Ind.** = no executions since independence

Country	Date (AO)	Date (last ex.)
BOLIVIA	1997	1974
BRAZIL	1979	1855
CHILE	2001	1985
EL SALVADOR	1983	1973K
FIJI	1979	1964
ISRAEL	1954	1962
KAZAKSTAN	2007	
KYRGYZSTAN	2007	
LATVIA	1999	1996
PERU	1979	1979

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 past 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions. The list also includes countries which have made an international commitment not to use the death penalty.

Abbreviations: **Date (last ex.)** = date of last execution; **K** = date of last known execution; **Ind.** = no executions since independence

Country	Date (last ex.)
ALGERIA	1993
BENIN	1987
BRUNEI	1957K
BURKINA FASO	1988
CAMEROON	1997
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	1981
CONGO (Republic of)	1982
ERITREA	1989
GABON	1981
GAMBIA	1981
GHANA	1993
GRENADA	1978
KENYA	1987
LAOS	1989
LIBERIA	2000
MADAGASCAR	1958K
MALAWI	1992
MALDIVES	1952K
MALI	1980
MAURITANIA	1987
MOROCCO	1993

Country	Date (last ex.)
MYANMAR	1980s
NAURU	Ind.
NIGER	1976K
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	1950
RUSSIAN FEDERATION ¹	1999
SOUTH KOREA	1997
SRI LANKA	1976
SURINAME	1982
SWAZILAND	1983
TAJIKISTAN	2004
TANZANIA	1995
TOGO	1978
TONGA	1982
TUNISIA	1991
ZAMBIA	1997

¹ The Russian Federation introduced a moratorium on executions in August 1996. However, executions were carried out between 1996 and 1999 in the Chechen Republic.

4. RETENTIONIST

Countries and territories that retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes

Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, Burundi, Chad, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominica, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nigeria, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad And Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United States Of America, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

5. COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE ABOLISHED THE DEATH PENALTY SINCE 1976

Countries that have abolished the death penalty since 1976

1976: **Portugal** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1978: **Denmark** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1979: **Luxembourg, Nicaragua** and **Norway** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Brazil, Fiji** and **Peru** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1981: **France** and **Cape Verde** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1982: The **Netherlands** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1983: **Cyprus** and **El Salvador** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1984: **Argentina** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1985: **Australia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1987: **Haiti, Liechtenstein** and the **German Democratic Republic**² abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1989: **Cambodia, New Zealand, Romania** and **Slovenia**³ abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1990: **Andorra, Croatia, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic,**⁴ **Hungary, Ireland, Mozambique, Namibia** and **Sao Tomé and Príncipe** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1992: **Angola, Paraguay** and **Switzerland** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

² In 1990 the German Democratic Republic became unified with the Federal Republic of Germany, where the death penalty had been abolished in 1949.

³ Slovenia and Croatia abolished the death penalty while they were still republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The two republics became independent in 1991.

⁴ In 1993 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic divided into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

1993: **Guinea-Bissau, Hong Kong⁵** and **Seychelles** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1994: **Italy** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1995: **Djibouti, Mauritius, Moldova** and **Spain** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1996: **Belgium** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1997: **Georgia, Nepal, Poland** and **South Africa** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Bolivia** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1998: **Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Lithuania** and the **United Kingdom** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1999: **East Timor, Turkmenistan** and **Ukraine** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Latvia⁶** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2000 : **Cote D'Ivoire** and **Malta** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Albania⁷** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2001: **Bosnia-Herzegovina⁸** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Chile** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2002: **Cyprus** and **Yugoslavia** (now two states **Serbia** and **Montenegro⁹**) abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2003: **Armenia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2004: **Bhutan, Greece, Samoa, Senegal** and **Turkey** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

⁵ In 1997 Hong Kong was returned to Chinese rule as a special administrative region of China. Since then Hong Kong has remained abolitionist.

⁶ In 1999 the Latvian parliament voted to ratify Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty for peacetime offences.

⁷ In 2007 Albania ratified Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances. In 2000 it had ratified Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty for peacetime offences.

⁸ In 2001 Bosnia-Herzegovina ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, abolishing the death penalty for all crimes.

⁹ Montenegro had already abolished the death penalty in 2002 when it was part of a state union with Serbia. It became an independent member state of the United Nations on 28 June 2006. Its ratification of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances, came into effect on 6 June 2006.

2005: **Liberia**¹⁰ and **Mexico** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2006: **Philippines** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2007: **Albania, Cook Islands** and **Rwanda** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Kyrgyzstan** and Kazakhstan abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2008: Argentina and Uzbekistan abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

¹⁰ In 2005 Liberia ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, abolishing the death penalty for all crimes.