

THE PROCESS OF ABOLISHING THE DEATH PENALTY IN MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION



OVERVIEW
2025

Recent decades show Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) openness and willingness towards universal human rights values. Abolishing the death penalty in OIC member states hasn't yet been achieved but the involvement of Members or Parliament (MPs), civil society figures and politicians to support abolition has played and will play a decisive role.

Abolition processes are slow, difficult and can be risky. However, there are many reasons to hope for further changes, especially while looking at the growing number of states that have become abolitionists.

The study *The process of abolishing the death penalty in member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation* is based on interviews and research conducted by ECPM and Nael Georges in 2020; it provides a better understanding of the processes leading to the abolition in OIC member states. It constitutes a tool in supporting their endeavours towards abolishing the death penalty and discrediting popular misconceptions on the issue.

Out of the OIC's 57 member states, 20 have abolished the death penalty (for all crimes or ordinary crimes), 12 have established a moratorium (either de jure or de facto) on it and 25 are retentionist states. Abolition is possible and this study proves it with its detailed examples of states that have achieved it.

Out of the 20 states that have abolished the death penalty, 14 are Muslim-majority countries (70%).

Muslim-majority states

Albania
Azerbaijan
Burkina Faso (ordinary crimes)
Chad
Côte d'Ivoire
Djibouti
Guinea
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Uzbekistan
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Turkmenistan
Türkiye

Muslim-minority states

Benin
Gabon
Guinea-Bissau
Mozambique
Togo
Suriname

#2

KEY INFORMATION

- ▶ The OIC is the biggest international organisation after the United Nations. Its member states are spread over 4 continents.
- ▶ **Some objectives¹**
 - To preserve and promote the highest Islamic values of peace, compassion, tolerance, equality, justice and human dignity;
 - To contribute to international peace and security;
 - To promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, rule of law, democracy and accountability in member states in accordance with their constitutional and legal systems.
- ▶ **Some priorities from the OIC 2016-2025 Action Plan²**
 - Peace and security
 - Counter-terrorism
 - Human rights and good governance
- ▶ **Diversity of member states:** Some states' official religion is Islam, others are secular; demographic and political and legal aspects of Islam differ between states.
- ▶ **Most OIC states are parties to the main international conventions of human rights**
 - All have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - 16 states have ratified the OP2³
 - Only 4 states have not ratified the ICCPR



KEY DATES

- ▶ **1969:** establishment of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) following the al-Aqsa Mosque attack
- ▶ **1970:** first Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs
→ creation of a general secretariat
- ▶ **1972:** adoption of the OIC Charter
- ▶ **1983:** adoption of the Dhaka Declaration on Human Rights in Islam
- ▶ **1990:** adoption of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam
- ▶ **2011:** the OIC becomes the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

1 OIC Charter: <https://www.oic-oci.org/en/page/16>

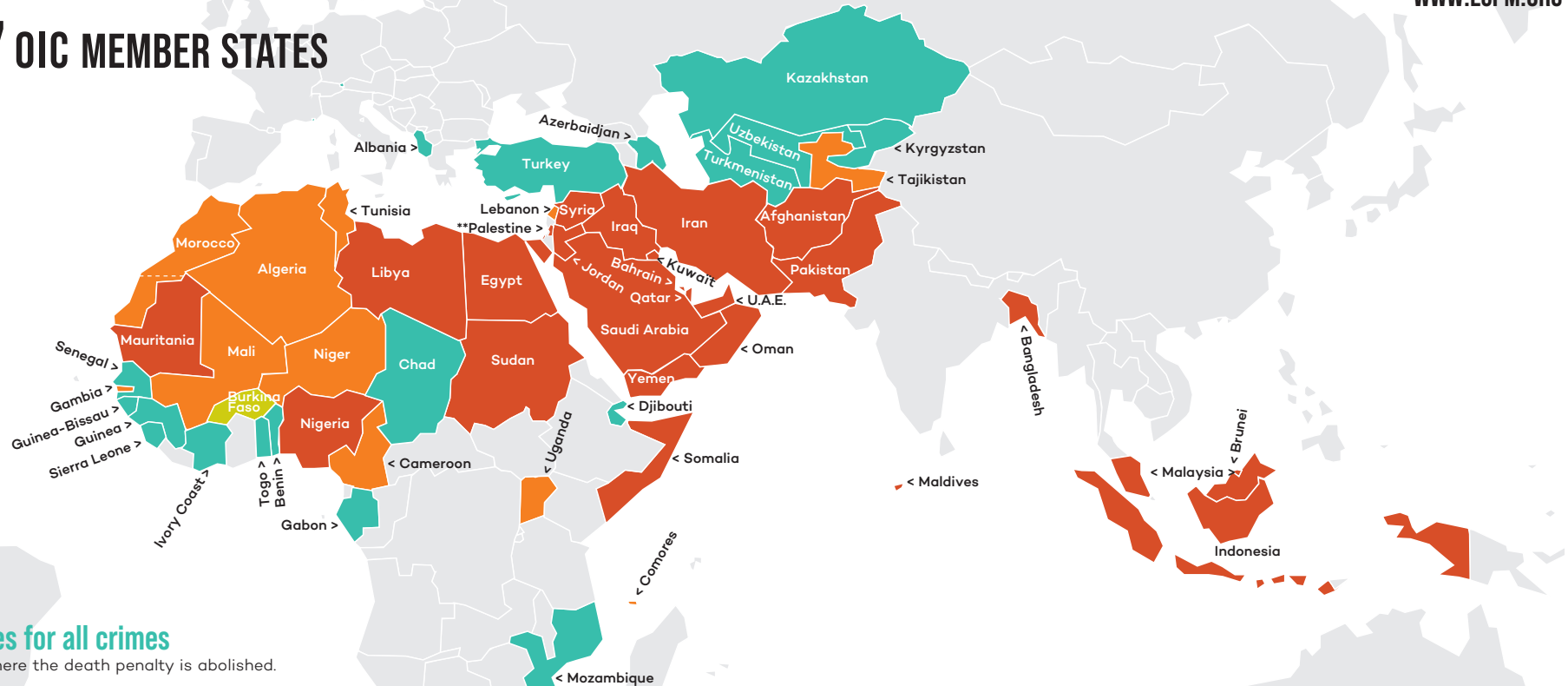
2 The 2026–2035 ten-year action plan had not yet been adopted at the time of updating this summary.

3 Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

#3

The interactive version
of this map
with data
is accessible on
WWW.ECPM.ORG

OUT OF THE 57 OIC MEMBER STATES



19 Abolitionist states for all crimes

States or territories where the death penalty is abolished.

1 Abolitionist state for ordinary crimes

States or territories where the death penalty is abolished unless there are exceptional circumstances.

12 States with a moratorium on executions

States or territories where the death penalty is implemented but no executions have been carried out for at least 10 years and which did not oppose the latest UNGA resolution for a universal moratorium on executions and/or having ratified OP2*.

25 Retentionist states

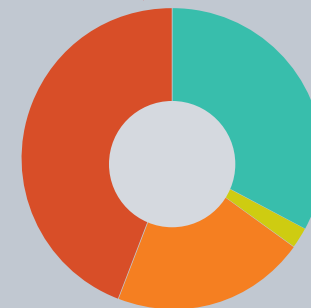
States or territories which retain the death penalty.

* Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty

** **Palestine** is a particular case: it cannot vote the moratorium resolution, has ratified OP2 but the death penalty is still applied in Gaza (last documented executions in 2023).

Status of OIC States as of 31 December 2025.

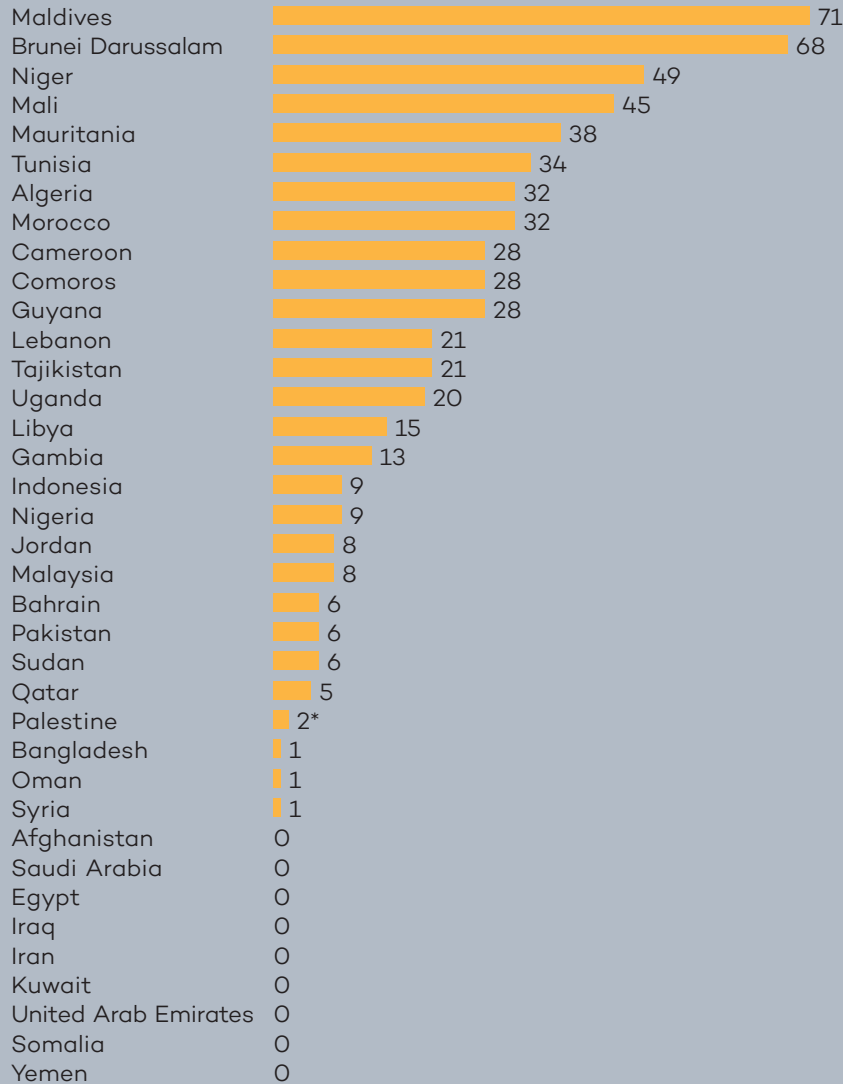
MOST OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD HAS ABOLISHED CAPITAL PUNISHMENT OR NO LONGER CARRIES OUT EXECUTIONS



Abolitionists 33%
Abolitionists for ordinary crimes 2%
With a moratorium 21%
Retentionists 44%

AMONG THE 37 STATES RETAINING THE DEATH PENALTY OR WITH A MORATORIUM, THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY DIFFERS FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER

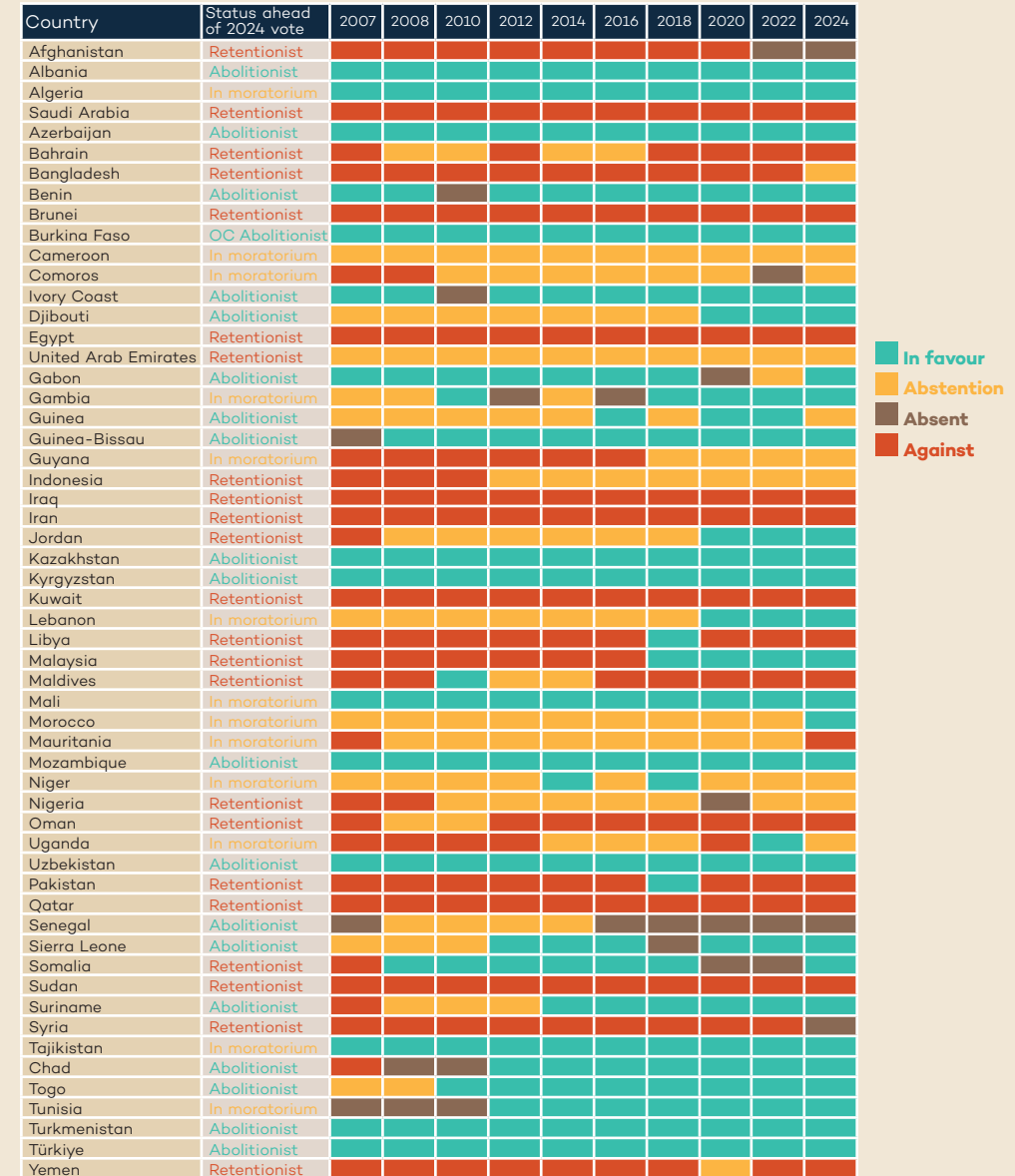
NUMBER OF YEARS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTION
IN STATES WITH A MORATORIUM OR RETENTIONIST STATES
(DECEMBER 31, 2025)



*Data for 2024 and 2025 unknown.

OIC MEMBER STATES TAKE VARYING POSITIONS ON THE UN RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY

There has been a positive trend in voting results. While 15 member states were in favour of the moratorium in 2007, they were 28 (50%) supporting the resolution in 2024.



In favour
Abstention
Absent
Against

“Death penalty is irreversible and its use has been universally rejected.”

Mohamed El Baradaei

*Former Vice-President,
winner of the 2005 Nobel
Peace Prize*

EGYPT

“No value can ever justify putting human life into perspective so far as to eliminate it legally.”

Abdou Diouf

*Former President
of the Republic, former
General Secretary
of the International
Organisation of
La Francophonie*

SENEGAL

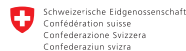
“Death penalty continues to be used a widespread phenomenon throughout the world and times and can be affiliated to murder. It cannot deter from committing any criminal act.”

Liew Vui Keong

*Former Minister
in the Prime Minister's
Department for Law*

MALAYSIA

READ THE FULL REPORT
“THE PROCESS OF ABOLISHING
THE DEATH PENALTY
IN MEMBER STATES OF
THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC
COOPERATION (OIC)”
AND THE INTERACTIVE MAP
ON **WWW.ECPM.ORG**



Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA



Co-funded by
the European Union

This document was updated in 2026 with the support of the AFD and Fondation de France, and printed with the support of France, the European Union and Switzerland. The content of this document is the sole responsibility of the authors and should in no way be considered to reflect the position of the above-mentioned donors.