



# Ending the use of capital punishment

Where does the Commonwealth stand?

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9 April 2025, Commonwealth Law Conference, Malta



# International law and the death penalty

In 1971 the United Nations General Assembly set the goal to achieve universal abolition of the death penalty

## ICCPR Article 6

6 (6). Nothing in this article shall be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment by any State Party to the present Covenant.

### **Human Rights Committee (CCPR) General Comment 36 - Adopted November 2018**

50. Article 6, paragraph 6 reaffirms the position that States parties that are not yet totally abolitionist should be on an irrevocable path towards complete eradication of the death penalty, de facto and de jure, in the foreseeable future. The death penalty cannot be reconciled with full respect for the right to life, and abolition of the death penalty is both desirable and necessary for the enhancement of human dignity and progressive development of human rights. It is contrary to the object and purpose of article 6 for States parties to take steps to increase de facto the rate and extent in which they resort to the death penalty, or to reduce the number of pardons and commutations they grant.

# The death penalty worldwide 2025



DPP uses United Nations data and keeps an eye on the latest changes.

1999	2025	
74	117	Abolitionist for all crimes
11	11	Abolitionist for ordinary crimes
38	43	Abolitionist <i>de facto</i> - (States where no executions have been carried out for at least 10 years)
70	30	Retentionist states

# The death penalty in Africa 2025

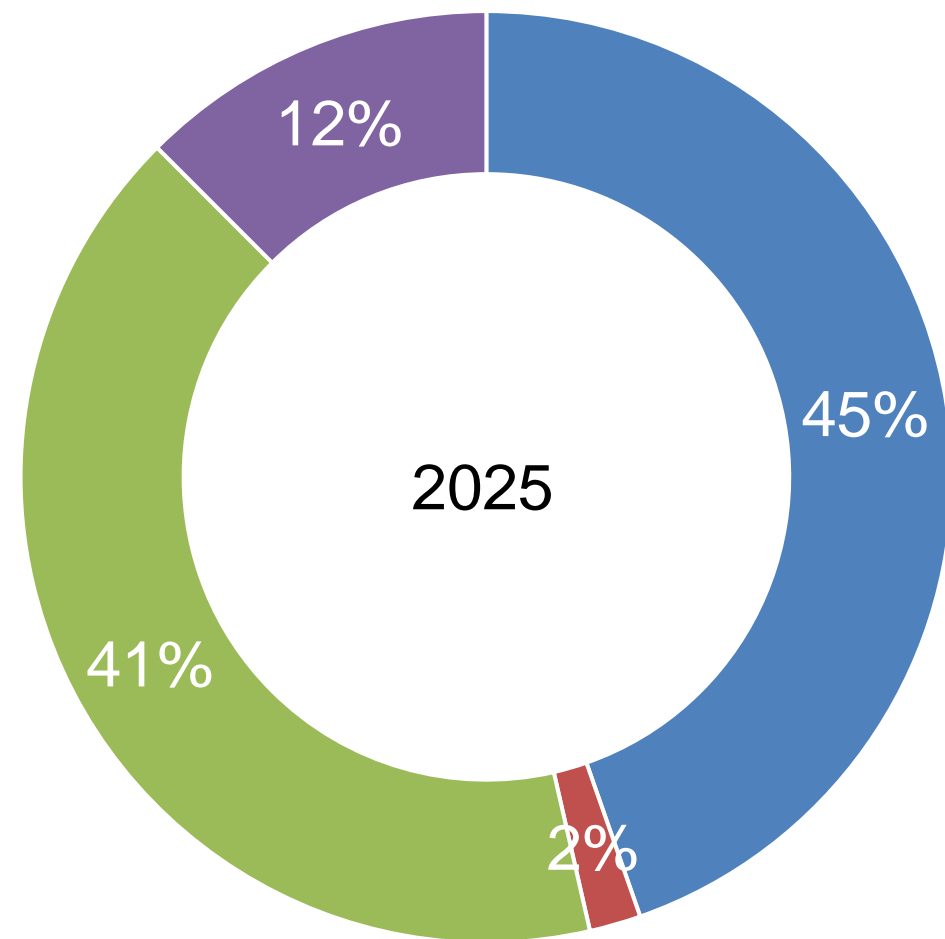


## Abolition since 2020:

Country	Date of abolition	Last execution	Last vote for the UNGA universal moratorium
Zimbabwe	2024	2003	In favour
Ghana	2023	1993	In favour
Zambia	2022	1997	In favour
Central African Republic	2022	1981	In favour
Equatorial Guinea	2022	2014	In favour
Sierra Leone	2021	1998	In favour
Chad	2020	2015	In favour

# Capital punishment in the Commonwealth

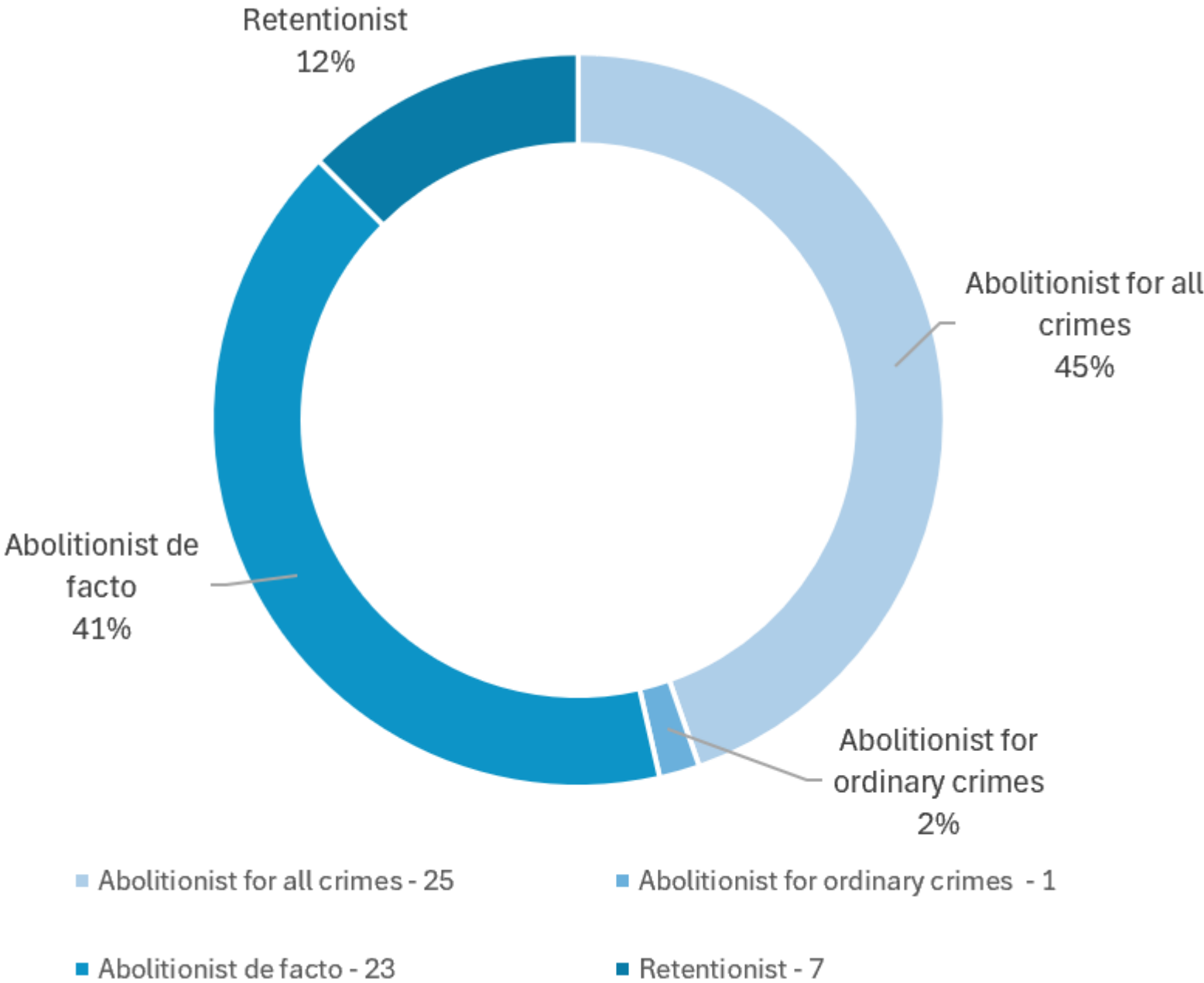
- Abolitionist for all crimes - 25
- Abolitionist for ordinary crimes - 1
- Abolitionist de facto - 23
- Retentionist - 7



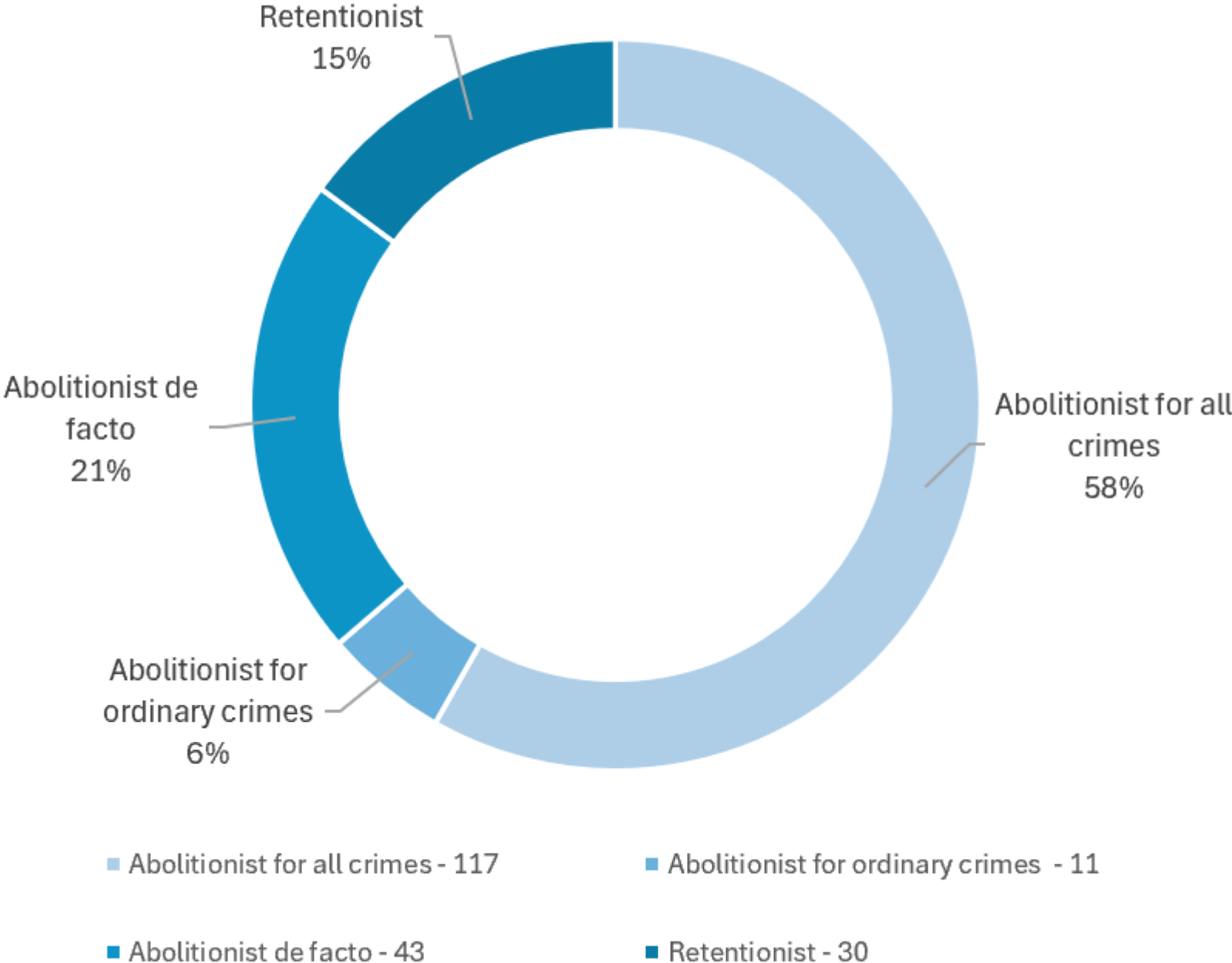
## The status of the death penalty in the Commonwealth

- 25 have fully abolished the death penalty for all offences
- 1 state has abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes
- 23 states are classified as “de facto abolitionist” states, meaning that they have not carried out an execution in 10 years
- 7 states are classified as retentionist

# 2025 – Comparing the pace of abolition: global v Commonwealth



**Abolition in the Commonwealth 2025**



**Abolition globally 2025**

# The Commonwealth by region

	Caribbean	Africa	Asia	Americas	Europe	Oceania	Total
Abolitionist states	0	11	0	1	3	10	25
Abolitionist for ordinary crimes	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Abolitionist de facto	12	7	3	0	0	1	23
Retentionist states	0	2	5	0	0	0	7



# The Commonwealth by country

Retentionist (Year of Last Execution)	Abolitionist de facto (Year of Last Execution)	Abolitionist (Year of Abolition)
Bangladesh (2023)	Antigua and Barbuda (1989)	Australia (1985) (For ordinary crimes 1984)
Botswana (2021)	Bahamas (2000)	Canada (1998) (For ordinary crimes 1976)
India (2020)	Barbados (1984)	Cyprus (2002) (For ordinary crimes 1983)
Malaysia (2017)	Belize (1986)	Fiji (2015) (For ordinary crimes 1979)
Nigeria (2016)	Brunei Darussalam (1957)	Gabon (2010)
Pakistan (2018)	Cameroon (1997)	Gambia (2018)
Singapore (2025)	Dominica (1986)	Ghana (For ordinary crimes 2023)
	Eswatini (1983)	Kiribati (1979)
	Grenada (1997)	Malta (2000) (For ordinary crimes 1971)
	Guyana (1997)	Mauritius (1995)
	Jamaica (1988)	Mozambique (1990)
	Kenya (1987)	Namibia (1990)
	Lesotho (1995)	Nauru (2016)
	Malawi (1992)	New Zealand (1989) (For ordinary crimes 1961)
	Maldives (1952)	Papa New Guinea (2022)
	St. Kitts (2008)	Rwanda (2007)
	St. Lucia (1995)	Samoa (2004)
	St. Vincent (1995)	Seychelles (1993)
	Sri Lanka (1976)	Sierra Leone (2021)
	Tanzania (1994)	Solomon Islands (1978) (For ordinary crimes 1966)
	Tonga (1982)	South Africa (1997) (For ordinary crimes 1995)
	Trinidad and Tobago (1999)	Togo (2008)
	Uganda (2004)	Tuvalu (1976)
		United Kingdom (1998) (For ordinary crimes 1965)
		Vanuatu (1980)
		Zambia (2022)
7	23	26





**Thank you!**