
Capital Punishment Practices Report in the Arab World

February 2026

The death penalty continues to be applied, debated, and contested across the Arab world, reflecting significant variations in legal frameworks, political contexts, and human rights practices among states in the region. During February 2026, developments related to capital punishment included executions, the issuance of new death sentences, and legislative or political discussions concerning the future of the penalty. While some countries continued to actively implement capital punishment, others witnessed growing institutional or civil society efforts advocating for its restriction or abolition. The following report outlines the **principal developments concerning capital punishment** practices in selected Arab states during February 2026.

Iraq

In February 2026, several developments related to the use of the death penalty were reported in Iraq. These followed the reported execution of **Saadoun Sabri al-Qaisi**, a former major general under the regime of **Saddam Hussein**, which is believed to have taken place in January 2026. On **8 February 2026**, **Iraq's Criminal Court** issued a death sentence against a man convicted of killing his wife by setting fire to the vehicle in which she was inside.¹

Two days later, on **10 February 2026**, Iraqi authorities carried out the execution of **six** individuals in cases related to **counterterrorism** charges. The executions were reported to have followed convictions under Iraq's counterterrorism legislation. These incidents reflect the continued implementation of the death penalty in Iraq during the reporting period.²

Lebanon

The **Human Rights Committee of the Parliament of Lebanon** approved a **draft law to abolish the death penalty**, which had been submitted by several members of parliament. The Committee decided to refer the draft to the **General Assembly of Parliament** for deliberation and final decision. The proposed legislation provides for **replacing the death penalty with life imprisonment under aggravated circumstances** as an alternative

¹ [Supreme Judicial Council of Iraq, 8 February 2026](#)

² [Iraq: Alleged ISIS Detainees Transferred from Syria at Risk of Abuse, Human Rights Watch](#)

sentence. This development reflects ongoing **legislative discussions concerning human rights reform** within Lebanon.

Notwithstanding this step, **Lebanon has remained execution-free for 22 years**. The last executions in the country were carried out on **17 January 2004**, when **three individuals** were executed following convictions for **murder-related offences**.³

Saudi Arabia

In February 2026, **the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia** carried out **nine executions** across **seven separate cases**. The last recorded execution occurred on **14 February** in **Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah**. Although there is no formal legal provision mandating a suspension of executions during **Ramadan**, it is widely observed in practice that executions tend to decrease or pause during the holy month. **Ramadan commenced on 18 February 2026**, after which no further executions were reported for the remainder of the month.⁴

This resulted in an **execution rate of approximately 0.3 executions per day** in February, representing a marked decline compared to **January 2026**, when the rate was **1.03 executions per day**.

With respect to **the legal classifications of the sentences**, **six of the nine individuals** were executed pursuant to **discretionary (Ta'zir) rulings**, all in cases related to **drug trafficking offenses**. The remaining **three executions** were carried out under **(Hadd) and (Qisas) verdicts**, involving convictions for **murder and aggravated murder**.

Tunisia

The **President of the Tunisian Coalition Against the Death Penalty**, Chokri Latif, issued a statement in response to remarks made by **Judge Moez Balsaidi**, President of the Criminal Chamber at the Tunis Court of Appeal, during his appearance on the program "**Nas Diwan**" on Monday. Judge Balsaidi stated that the **President of the Republic had affirmed support for implementing the death penalty**, indicating that he was "very keen" on this matter.

³ [Session of the Lebanese Parliamentary Human Rights Committee on 23/Feb/ 2026](#)

⁴ For details of the individual reports, see the **Saudi Arabia** section in the sources (Saudi Press Agency, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14 February 2026) where links to the official web pages are provided.

The Tunisian Coalition Against the Death Penalty emphasized that, if these remarks are **officially confirmed** by the Presidency, this would represent an **extremely dangerous development regarding Tunisia’s stance on the right to life**.⁵

Yemen

The **National Authority for Prisoners and Abductees** condemned the issuance of **21 death sentences** by the **Houthi movement**, following the **prisoner exchange agreement** that took place in **Muscat on 23 December 2025** between the Houthi movement and the **internationally recognized government of Yemen**.⁶

According to the National Authority, the verdicts involved **three groups: two groups, totaling 21 individuals**, were sentenced by the **Houthi appellate courts**, while **one group of 11 individuals** remains under trial before the **courts of first instance**, with the movement’s prosecution requesting the **death penalty**.⁷

The Authority highlighted a specific case in which the **death sentence** was originally issued on **11 November 2025** and upheld on appeal on **19 January 2026**. The Authority noted that the **very short interval between the initial verdict and the appellate confirmation** raises serious concerns regarding the **expedited application of capital punishment**.

⁵ [the Tunisian Coalition Against the Death Penalty Official Facebook account 23. Feb. 2026](#)

⁶ [The National Authority for Prisoners and Abductees Official X Account 04/ Feb/ 2026](#)

⁷ [The National Authority for Prisoners and Abductees Official X Account 05/ Feb/ 2026](#)

Sources:

Iraq

- **Nineveh Criminal Court:** Death sentence for doctor who burned his wife, Dr. Israa Azzam Suleiman, in Mosul. [Supreme Judicial Council of Iraq, 8 February 2026.](#)
- **Human Rights Watch:** Iraq: Alleged ISIS Detainees Transferred from Syria at Risk of Abuse; Ensure Fair Trials, Repatriate Foreigners. February 2026.

Lebanon

- **Lebanese Parliamentary Human Rights Committee,** Session of 23 February 2026.

Saudi Arabia

Official execution announcements:

- Saudi Press Agency, 7 February 2026.
- Saudi Press Agency, 8 February 2026.
- Saudi Press Agency, 10 February 2026 (Announcement 1).
- Saudi Press Agency, 10 February 2026 (Announcement 2).
- Saudi Press Agency, 10 February 2026 (Announcement 3).
- Saudi Press Agency, 11 February 2026.
- Saudi Press Agency, 14 February 2026.

Tunisia

- **Tunisian Coalition Against the Death Penalty,** Official Facebook account, statement issued 23 February 2026.

Yemen

- **National Authority for Prisoners and Abductees,** Official X account (used due to temporary inaccessibility of the official website), 4 February 2026.
- **National Authority for Prisoners and Abductees,** Official X account (used due to temporary inaccessibility of the official website), 5 February 2026.