

Online Safety Act (2024)

The 2024 Act creating broad offences for 'false statements' online, with executive-appointed enforcement powers. Domestic legal and human-rights bodies, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, and international press-freedom organisations expressed concern at scope and chilling effect.

The Online Safety Act, alongside the proposed Anti-Terrorism Act, is the post-2022 architecture by which dissent — Tamil, Sinhalese-progressive, and Muslim alike — can be criminalised through executive-appointed institutions. The case file records the Act because it sits in continuity with the PTA on the suppression of speech.

§1 Concerns recorded by independent observers

Concerns recorded by CPA, the Bar Association of Sri Lanka, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, CPJ, RSF and Article 19 include: vague definitions of prohibited content, executive control over the enforcement commission, and absence of adequate judicial safeguards. The case file does not duplicate that documentation; it routes to it.

Sources

- CPJ — Sri Lanka coverage.
- RSF — Sri Lanka coverage.

What this is not

- This article does not name at-risk journalists or commentators.
- This article does not name members of the enforcement commission.