

Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution (2020)

The 20th Amendment (October 2020) restored executive-presidential powers diluted by the 19th Amendment and consolidated authority in the executive.

The 20th Amendment to the Constitution, certified on 29 October 2020, repealed core provisions of the 19th Amendment (2015) and restored the executive presidency's discretionary appointment powers over judicial, audit, election and human-rights commissions. The amendment is documented by the Centre for Policy Alternatives, the International Commission of Jurists and the OHCHR as a centralisation of executive power with consequences for accountability institutions, including the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and the Office on Missing Persons.

§1 What it changed

The amendment removed the Constitutional Council's binding role over commission appointments, allowing presidential discretion. It restored the President's powers to dissolve Parliament after one year, to hold ministerial portfolios, and to remove the Prime Minister. The 19A two-term limit on the executive presidency was retained.

§2 Where this sits

Read against the OMP, HRCSL and Right to Information Commission — the post-2015 accountability architecture — the 20A is the executive-side rollback of the institutional safeguards on which that architecture depended. The Sri Lanka Accountability Project (UNHRC 46/1, 2021) followed within five months.

Sources

- welikala-cpa-2012
- icj-pta
- ohchr-46-20

What this is not

- This page does not name individual ministers or commission appointees.
- This page does not assert criminal liability.