



By: TA | AP Insight

Closing Orban's era - Hungary changes the constitution to remove the President



Hungary's Parliament voted Monday to pass a constitutional amendment to **remove President Tamás Sulyok** from office and make some political reforms aimed at dismantling the political system of autocratic former Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

After winning in a **landslide election** in April, current Prime Minister Péter Magyar and his pro-European, center-right Tisza party hold a two-thirds majority in Parliament, allowing them to make constitutional changes and roll back many of the policies Orbán implemented during his 16 years in power.

The constitutional amendment, which had the stated purpose of "restoring rule-of-law democracy," passed with 139 votes for and six against in the 199-member Parliament.

Tisza lawmakers held a standing ovation after the vote, while lawmakers from Orbán's far-right Fidesz party boycotted the parliamentary session.

Sulyok needs to sign the amendment within five days for it to become law, and has not said whether he would do so, but Tisza has vowed to launch an impeachment procedure against him if he doesn't.

Magyar has argued that Sulyok failed to live up to his role as president by neglecting to stand in the way of antidemocratic steps by Orbán's government.

Magyar promised repeatedly to remove Sulyok during the election campaign, and points to his party's big win as a clear mandate from voters to fulfill that promise. Sulyok has resisted Magyar's calls to resign.

Parliament would elect a new president

Following the vote, Magyar told a news conference that with the passage of the amendment his government had "started the transformation of the Orbán legal system."

"With this vote today, we have closed an era," he said. "We asked for and received a completely clear mandate from the Hungarian people to do this."

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It also would make some judicial reforms, set up an office aimed at investigating financial abuses under the Orbán government and impose a 12-year term limit on lawmakers.

Fidesz has argued that the amendment is an "unprecedented" assault on Hungary's democratic order, and last week **staged a protest** in opposition to the changes which drew around 3,000 people but which Orbán did not attend.

On Monday, Orbán posted a photograph of Magyar on Facebook with the subtitle, "Democratic Hungary: 1990-2026" — the period since Hungary transitioned from state socialism. Orbán was traveling to the United States on Monday to attend the final three matches of the World Cup.

The amendment 'breaks up the legal system'

While mostly a ceremonial role, Hungary's president is responsible for signing legislation into law and has the power to send bills passed by Parliament to the Constitutional Court for review.

That's raised concerns among supporters of the new government that Sulyok, an Orbán-era appointee, could use that power to obstruct its plans.



Fidesz caucus leader Gergely Gulyás said the amendment breaks up the legal system

Since taking office in May, the government has quickly gone to work dismantling what Magyar calls Orbán's "mafia" by removing numerous political appointees and heads of institutions viewed as having facilitated Orbán's autocratic regime.

They suspended the news service of **Hungary's public television** and radio — which Magyar has argued served as a "propaganda factory" for Orbán's party — and shuttered Hungary's Sovereignty Protection Office, an authority seen by Orbán's opponents as a tool for intimidating critics and silencing independent media.

Prior to Monday's vote, Fidesz caucus leader Gergely Gulyás said the amendment "breaks up the legal system, undermines the rule of law and restricts democracy."

Gulyás announced he would resign as caucus leader, given that the amendment's 12-year term limit would make him unable to take a seat in Parliament in the next national election.

Fidesz supporters called for a candlelight vigil outside Hungary's parliament building on Monday evening to demonstrate against what they called the "tyranny" of Magyar's government.