

The Constitutional Amendments in Turkmenistan - September 25, 2020

Turkmenistan's authoritarian leader, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, has signed into law constitutional changes, the details of which remain largely unknown.

State-controlled media reported on September 25 that Berdymukhammedov, who initiated the constitutional changes a year ago and has led a commission he established that prepared a bill of amendments, signed the legislation after the People's Council and lawmakers approved it.

Turkmen citizens have yet to be informed about the exact changes to the constitution of the tightly controlled, energy-rich country, except that the single-chamber parliament, the Mejlis, will merge with the People's Council and become a two-chamber institution.

The People's Council (Halk Maslahaty) was created in 2017 on the basis of the Council of Elders.

Berdymukhammedov is the body's chairman.

Critics have said that Berdymukhammedov plans to use the constitutional amendments to secure his lifetime presidency and its eventual succession to his son and grandchildren.