

# Resolution on the preparations for the Russian State Duma elections in December 2011

2011/2752(RSP) - 07/07/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the preparations for the Russian State Duma elections in December 2011.

The resolution had been tabled by the Greens/EFA, EPP, S&D, ECR, GUE/NGL and ALDE groups.

It refers to the decision of the Russian Ministry of Justice on 22 June 2011 to refuse the application for official registration of the People's Freedom Party (PARNAS), and to previous similar cases, which will make it impossible for these parties to participate in the elections, and deplores this decision by the Russian authorities to reject the registration of PARNAS for the forthcoming Duma elections in December 2011. Members reconfirm Parliament's resolution of 9 June 2011 on the EU-Russia Summit in Nizhny Novgorod, and they call on the Russian authorities to guarantee free and fair elections and to withdraw all decisions and rules that oppose this principle. They reaffirm their concerns regarding the difficulties faced by the political parties in registering for elections, which effectively constrain political competition in Russia, reduce the choice available to its electorate and show that there are still real obstacles to political pluralism in the country. Parliament notes that political pluralism is a cornerstone of democracy and modern society, and a source of political legitimacy, and recalls that on 12 April 2011 the European Court of Human Rights expressed its criticism over the **cumbersome registration procedures for political parties in Russia**, which do not comply with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The resolution emphasises that the State Duma elections should be based on the implementation of election standards set by the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Members urge the Russian authorities to allow the OSCE/Council of Europe **long-term election observation mission** and to cooperate fully with it from its earliest stage, and call on the HR/VP to insist on the establishment of a mission for this purpose. There must be close cooperation by this observation mission with civil society and the monitoring groups.

Lastly, Parliament expresses its concern about the proposal of a draft law, to be discussed in the Duma, which would enable Russian courts to ignore the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights in some areas, such an initiative contradicting the basic principles of the European Convention on Human Rights. It welcomes the recent decision of the Russian Duma not to consider the draft law for the time being and hopes it will finally renounce that initiative.