Resolution on the outcome of the presidential elections in Russia

2012/2573(RSP) - 15/03/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by a resolution tabled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the outcome of the presidential elections in Russia held on 4 March 2012.

It notes that the OSCE/ODIHR, OSCE PA and PACE Common Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions of 5 March 2012 stated that the electoral process had not been free or fair, as it had been ‘deeply skewed in favour of one candidate’ through denunciation during the registration process of potentially competing candidates, unequal and biased media coverage and the use of State resources in favour of one candidate.

Parliament takes note of the results of the presidential elections in the light of the preliminary conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR as well as of the domestic observation organisations, e.g. Golos, Grazhdanin Nabludatel, the Voters' League and representatives of political parties. It **strongly criticises the shortcomings and irregularities in the preparation and conduct of these elections** and the fact that voters' choice was limited. It welcomes the significant civic engagement in the campaign, and calls for comprehensive and transparent analyses of all irregularities and the introduction, strengthening and implementation of democratic rules for future elections.

Members **invite President Medvedev to match the deed to the word** and to guarantee the adoption of the necessary reforms of the political system, and expect that the new Russian President will be ready to take them forward, including the much needed simplification of rules governing the registration of political parties. They call for a serious commitment to address the problems of media freedom and freedom of assembly and expression, and reiterate the EU's readiness to cooperate with Russia, including in the framework provided by the Partnership for Modernisation, to improve respect for human and fundamental rights.

Parliament recalls that by means of a number of demonstrations since the Duma elections on 4 December 2011, the Russian people have expressed their will for more democracy and a comprehensive reform of the electoral system. It **deplores the detention of dozens of protestors across Russia** during demonstrations. Members want the Russian authorities and political parties represented in the State Duma to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the pro-democracy protestors and opposition in the interests of a comprehensive reform, transparency and democracy. They **call on the President-elect Vladimir Putin to tone down his rhetoric against the protestors** and engage with them in a sincere dialogue on the future of the country.

For their part, the different **Russian democratic opposition groups are urged to unite more closely** around a positive programme of political reforms, thus offering Russian citizens a credible alternative.

Lastly, Parliament notes the initial approval by the State Duma of the Presidential draft laws aimed simplification of the rules concerning the registration of political parties and their access to elections, and it urges the State Duma to **take into account amendments jointly submitted by the non-registered parties**. It expects all sides to take the opportunity before the inauguration of the President-elect to **decide on a comprehensive reform package including changes to the electoral law**, since Members are convinced that a new electoral law and the registration of opposition political parties should provide a basis for free and fair elections to the State Duma.