



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU statement on the presidential elections in Russia on 4 March 2012

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the presidential elections in Russia on 4 March, issued on 5 March 2012 in Brussels:

“As Russia’s strategic partner and direct neighbour, the EU has followed with particular interest the election process and the public debate in Russia on the State Duma elections of last December and the Presidential elections held yesterday.

The EU takes note of the preliminary results of the presidential elections and the clear victory of Vladimir Putin. International election observers from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) noted the significant civic engagement in the campaign and that authorities allowed protests to take place without undue interference, but also identified shortcomings and irregularities in the preparations and conduct of these elections and that voters’ choice was limited. The EU encourages Russia to address these shortcomings.

The EU looks forward to working with the incoming Russian President and the new government in full support of our shared modernisation agenda, which we see as covering both economic and political reforms. We trust the new Russian President will be ready to take these reforms forward, in dialogue with citizens and civil society. “