



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL
TO THE OSCE

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Portugal 2007- Presidency of the European Union

Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

685th Meeting of the Permanent Council

1st November 2007

Statement of the European Union on the Russian Invitation to ODIHR to observe the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections

Mr Chairman,

the European Union greatly regrets that ODIHR was not able to determine how to observe the forthcoming elections in the Russian Federation and then, through delay, could not observe them as they might have judged appropriate. We are concerned that there was a delay in issuing an invitation to ODIHR which included unprecedented restrictions. As ODIHR considers the invitation we hope that all practical arrangements will be facilitated expeditiously, and that observers will be given unfettered access to the entire electoral process.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.