



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 698
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EU statement on the invitation to ODIHR to observe the forthcoming Presidential Elections in the Russian Federation

The EU notes the fact that an invitation was issued by the Russian Federation to ODIHR to observe the Presidential Elections. The EU regrets that ODIHR was not enabled to determine, in accordance with its standard methodology, how to observe the forthcoming Presidential Elections in the Russian Federation.

We are concerned that the invitation received by ODIHR was delayed and includes numerous significant restrictions, in particular regarding the number of observers and the timing and duration of their presence in the country.

Recent elections in a number of OSCE participating States, which have allowed ODIHR to work without such restrictions, have again clearly shown ODIHR's ability to conduct professional election observation throughout the OSCE region in accordance with its standard methodology, which has been developed over many years. This methodology has a high level of credibility and is also followed by EU election observation missions.

The EU appeals to the Russian Federation to remove the above-mentioned restrictions on ODIHR's observation mission for the Presidential Elections.

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We hope that all practical arrangements such as the issuing of visas will be facilitated expeditiously and that observers will be given unfettered access to the remaining electoral process.

The candidate country Croatia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, as well as the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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