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15 November 2021

## Bureau of the Assembly

### Memorandum<sup>1</sup>

Prepared by Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez (Switzerland, SOC), Head of the PACE election assessment mission for the Parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation (19 September 2021)

#### I. The aim and purpose of the Memorandum

1. The present Memorandum is drafted in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Assembly's Guidelines for the observation of elections, under the authority of the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee which worked in the format of an Election Assessment Mission. The aim of the Memorandum is to summarise the findings of the Election Assessment Mission, on the basis, in particular, of the information on the legislative and electoral framework provided by the Venice Commission as well as the information received by the mission during online and *in-situ* meetings with different national stakeholders.
2. These findings are not intended to make a comprehensive evaluation of the elections but should feed into the work of the Assembly's Monitoring Committee, as well as the Venice Commission, whenever relevant, so as to address the issues and concerns identified by the Election Assessment Mission.

#### II. Introduction

3. The Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, at its meeting on 27 May 2021, decided to observe the parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation scheduled for 19 September 2021, subject to receiving an invitation. It decided to set up an Ad Hoc Committee composed of 40 members as well as the two co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee. The Bureau also authorised a pre-electoral mission. I was appointed as Head of the Ad Hoc Committee.
4. On 17 June 2021, in line with the Constitution, the President of the Russian Federation called the State Duma elections for 19 September 2021. On 28 July 2021, Mr Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, in a letter addressed to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, invited the Assembly to observe the parliamentary elections. By another letter, Mr Piotr Tolstói, Vice-Chairman of the State Duma and Head of the Russian delegation to the Assembly, informed the Assembly that "based on the sanitary and epidemiological situation in the Russian Federation, it was decided to limit the number of international observers. In this regard, it is assumed that the mission of the organisation will be up to 10 people". A similar letter concerning the limitation on the number of international observers to be deployed was addressed to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR).
5. The ODIHR conducted, in May 2021, a needs assessment mission concluding that the appropriate format for election observation should include a core team of 80 long term observers and experts,

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<sup>1</sup> The Bureau decided to declassify this document at its meeting on 25 November 2021

as well as 420 short term observers. Later the ODIHR was informed by the Russian authorities that, because of COVID-19 precautions, no more than 50 observers would be allowed.

6. It is important to recall that, as a rule, the Assembly observes elections in co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the ODIHR, within the framework of an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM). The President of the Assembly was informed by the OSCE PA and ODIHR that despite their efforts to find a compromise, both organisations concluded that the limitations imposed would make it impossible for them to observe the elections in line with the established methodology. Therefore, the OSCE PA and ODIHR decided to cancel their observation missions.
7. Following consultations among the leaders of the Assembly's political groups, the President of the Assembly informed the Chairman of the State Duma, on 10 August 2021, that the Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee for the Observation of the Parliamentary Elections in Russia would hold, on 2-3 September 2021, remote pre-electoral meetings in order to collect information about the preparation for the elections and assess the feasibility of holding an *in-situ* meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee in Moscow, on 16-20 September 2021.
8. In line with the co-operation agreement between the Parliamentary Assembly and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the representatives of the Venice Commission provided legal advice to the Ad Hoc Committee.
9. Ahead of the pre-electoral meetings, the experts of the Venice Commission prepared a Memorandum on legal and electoral framework of the Russian Federation on the basis of the information available on the official website of the Central Electoral Commission (including relevant legislation), the Venice Commission's relevant opinions, as well as the 2021 ODIHR's Needs assessment report.

### **III. Legal and electoral framework**

10. The State Duma consists of 450 deputies elected for a five-year term under a mixed electoral system. Half of the deputies are elected in single-mandate constituencies under the first-past-the-post system; the other half are elected according to a proportional system, from lists of candidates of political parties in a single federal constituency. The threshold for the allocation of seats according to the proportional system is five per cent of the valid votes. According to the law, each federal list should include between 200 and 400 candidates, with no less than 35 regional groups of candidates.
11. The September 2021 parliamentary elections were held after last year's nationwide vote on broad changes to the Constitution, which affected, inter alia, the powers of the President as well as the rules of appointment of the judiciary. Moreover, in the past two years, several changes were introduced to various pieces of domestic legislation impacting the electoral process: in particular, introducing additional limitations on holding public assemblies and increasing criminal liability for related violations; extending the status of 'foreign agents' to private individuals; further tightening rules applicable to media and Internet.
12. Election-related legislation in Russia is in constant evolution, with the most recent changes introduced in 2020 and 2021. In particular, recent amendments vested the Central Election Commission (CEC) with the right to decide on the extension of voting for up to three days, further restricted the right to stand for elections, in particular in relation with the "foreign agent" status as well as the holding of assets abroad, authorised the CEC and the Subject's Election Commissions (SECs) to ban on-line campaign materials that violated the law, and abolished the campaign silence period if the vote was extended to several days. It is also worth noting that earlier changes were related to voting at the place of temporary residence and introduced the requirement to reside within the territory of a single mandate constituency (SMC) three months prior to the Election Day, in order to be able to vote for the SMC candidates. Furthermore, the possibility to verify previous criminal or administrative records of candidates for membership in election commissions was introduced and observers were allowed to observe elections only in the SMC where they can vote.

13. According to the information provided to the Ad Hoc Committee by different interlocutors and the opinions of the Venice Commission, the amendments to different pieces of legislation concerning “foreign agents” raise particular concern as it appears that they seriously impacted the capacity of some political parties and civil society organisations to participate in the electoral process. In particular, in its opinion on “foreign agent” legislation in Russia (CDL-AD(2021)027),<sup>2</sup> the Venice Commission warned, among other things, of its potential negative impact on the electoral rights of citizens. Thus, affiliation with the status of “foreign agent”, as well as the holding of assets abroad, would deprive citizens from the right to stand for election. The Ad Hoc Committee was informed that, taken together with exclusions related to, among other things, past criminal records, the limitations of the right to stand for election would cover some 9 million voters.
14. I wish to recall the Assembly’s position regarding the illegal annexation of Crimea, confirmed most recently in Resolution 2363 (2021). In this context, I refer to the Venice Commission’s opinion on “The compliance with Council of Europe and other international standards of the inclusion of a not internationally recognised territory into a nationwide constituency for parliamentary elections”<sup>3</sup> which points out that “the organisation of elections in the annexed territory does not and cannot remedy the annexation”.

#### IV. Pre-electoral online meetings

15. On 2-3 September 2021, the Ad Hoc Committee held on-line pre-electoral meetings with the representatives of four political parties represented in the State Duma, with the representatives of the Yabloko party, an extra parliamentary opposition political force, with representatives of non-governmental organisations involved in the observation of the elections and media monitoring, as well as with the President of the Central Election Commission (see programme and list of participants in Appendices 1 and 2).
16. During the pre-electoral online meetings, the interlocutors from political parties represented in the State Duma and Ms Ella Pamfilova, Chairperson of the CEC, expressed confidence in the existing legal framework. By contrast, the representative of the Yabloko party and the representatives of non-governmental organisations (Golos, Analytical Center Levada, the Liberal Mission Foundation, the Center for the Protection of Media Rights) shared a general dissatisfaction with the electoral legislation and strongly insisted on the fact that it aimed at limiting competition in the upcoming elections. ODIHR’s Needs assessment report of 25 June 2021<sup>4</sup> contains a similar assessment. The interlocutors from the opposition and the civil society stressed in particular the fact that “foreign agents” legislation had a negative impact on a large range of electoral rights.
17. As regards the technical preparations for the elections, according to the interlocutors, the CEC carried out all necessary actions for the voting in a timely and well-organised manner. The CEC’s expressed commitment to administer elections in a professional and transparent manner, in line with the national legislation, was particularly noted.
18. The multiple-day voting was one of the main issues raised during the pre-electoral meetings. On 18 June 2021, in accordance with Article 63.2 of the Law on Basic Guarantees of electoral rights and citizens’ right to participate in referendums (FZ-2002, with latest amendments of 20 April 2021, hereinafter “Law on Basic guarantees”) and Article 80.1 of the Law on the Election of Deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly (the Law - FZ-355 of 2014 with latest amendments introduced on 20 April 2021 – hereinafter, “the Law on elections to the State Duma”), the CEC decided to extend the voting to three days (providing the on-going pandemic of COVID-19 as the main argument for justifying the extension).

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<sup>2</sup> See Russian Federation - Opinion on the Compatibility with international human rights standards of a series of Bills introduced to the Russian State Duma between 10 and 23 November 2020, to amend laws affecting “foreign agents”, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 127th Plenary session (Venice and online, 2-3 July 2021). [www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?country=26&year=all](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?country=26&year=all)

<sup>3</sup> CDL-AD(2019)030

<sup>4</sup> See [Elections in Russia | OSCE](#).

19. While some of the political parties represented in the State Duma see this as a positive measure to prevent overcrowding at polling stations, thus decreasing the risk of COVID-19 contamination, other interlocutors expressed concerns regarding the secure storage of election material during the night, the potential impact of multi-day voting on the integrity and transparency of the electoral process (e.g. limited possibilities for observers to monitor the storage of ballot boxes during the night) and the possibility of using multiple-day voting to exert pressure on voters to come to polling stations in order to increase turnout.
20. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee were informed that, by contrast to previous elections, access to video monitoring was restricted only to a limited number of accounts allocated to representatives of political parties and to certain observers. Domestic observers and some political stakeholders see this as a step back in the transparency of the electoral process, as during previous election, video streams from polling stations could be consulted by anyone online; the CEC argued that limiting the number of video stream accounts aimed at protecting the privacy of the voters as well as reducing the possibilities for cyberattacks.
21. Some of the political parties (notably, the Communist party) stated that multiple day voting represented an additional challenge for recruiting observers (both in terms of finding available people and financing their deployment); this argument was particularly relevant for the first day of voting (Friday, 17 September) which was a working day. The new system appears to raise issues with regard to the respect of the Venice Commission's Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, as it opens a possibility for limiting the capacity of observers to follow different election-related operations.<sup>5</sup>
22. Concerns relating to electronic voting were among the top issues on the agenda of the pre-electoral meetings. On 23 May 2020, the Law "on Basic Guarantees" was amended to introduce a possibility of electronic voting (Internet voting). Voters were given a choice either to vote electronically (online) or by using paper ballots. To vote via the Internet, voters had to register via a personal account on the portal of state and municipal services - Gosuslugi. Internet voting operated on a private blockchain platform with a two-step voter identification.
23. The Chairperson of the CEC informed the Ad Hoc Committee that this option would be available in seven federal subjects. According to the CEC data, electronic voting could potentially affect approximately 15 million voters. The system was tested in May 2021 by some 1,2 million citizens.
24. While the authorities expressed confidence in the safety of the procedures, a number of domestic organisations involved in the election observation process and some political parties raised concerns about the secrecy and transparency of the process, the lack of possibility to observe electronic voting, the absence of instruments allowing to audit and verify its functioning, and for voters to verify the vote, as well as the lack of clarity regarding the competent body to consider related complaints.
25. The election campaign started from the day of nomination of candidates. Recent amendments eliminated the campaign silence period in case of voting being extended to more than one day. By law, all candidates are granted equal campaign opportunities and the use of administrative resources is prohibited. That said, the representatives of Yabloko party and NGOs met by the members of the Ad Hoc Committee on 2 September expressed concerns about potential campaign violations including pressure on voters, particularly civil servants, misuse of administrative resources. Representatives of the Communist party also admitted that in some regions, candidates running for the ruling party benefited from support of local administrations.
26. The 2021 amendments to the electoral legislation introduced a requirement to indicate, whenever relevant, in all campaign materials whether a candidate is affiliated with a 'foreign agent' or performs the functions of a 'foreign agent'. Election administration is equally obliged to provide information about the candidate's affiliation with a 'foreign agent'.
27. As confirmed by interlocutors on 2 September, the latest amendments concerning 'foreign agents' had a negative impact on electoral rights of candidates, associations and media. It transpired from the exchanges with the non-governmental organisations, that the amended legislation had produced

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<sup>5</sup> See Code of good practice in electoral matters (CDL-AD (2002)023rev2-cor), 3.2.

a prejudicial effect on a number of candidates who run or intended to run in 2021 State Duma elections. As a consequence, it appears that equal conditions were not guaranteed for all participants in the electoral process.

28. The amendments to the Law “on Information and Technologies and Protection of Information”, adopted on 9 March 2021, enable the CEC and relevant SECs to request the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor) to ban, without a court decision, online campaign activities or materials which are against the law. According to the Chairperson of the CEC, systematic monitoring of campaign activities on social networks was not conducted; however, the CEC reacted to specific complaints about online campaign activities and related content. The Ad Hoc Committee was informed that most political parties participating in the 2021 elections used traditional methods of campaigning, including small scale rallies, door-to-door canvassing and distribution of various printed materials, while increasingly relying at the same time on campaigning online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing health-related concerns.

## V. Outcome of the pre-electoral online meetings

29. The aim of the remote pre-electoral meetings was to collect information about the preparations for the parliamentary elections and to assess the feasibility of holding a second in situ meeting in Moscow, on and around Election Day. Thus, on 3 September 2021, by letter addressed to the President of the Assembly, I informed the President of the Assembly about the outcome of the meetings.
30. During online meetings, the pre-electoral delegation received, from representatives of political parties, representatives of domestic observer and civil society organisations, as well as the Central Election Commission (CEC), comprehensive information about the state of preparation of the elections, the legal framework, the process of candidate registration as well as the ongoing election campaign.
31. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee were informed of a number of concerns relating to the legal framework, candidate registration, electoral campaigning, as well as the modalities of the organisation of the voting process (see above, under legal framework). The participants in the pre-electoral meetings considered that these issues – as well as the related concerns - should be addressed further within the framework of the Assembly’s monitoring procedure as well as in co-operation with the Venice Commission.
32. It also appeared from the online exchanges that all political stakeholders met, the CEC, as well as domestic observer and civil society organisations, argued in favour of the presence by the Assembly on and around Election Day, highlighting the important role that international missions play in the electoral process.
33. Against this background, the pre-electoral delegation considered that, in the absence of the Assembly’s usual international election observation partners from ODIHR and OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and taking into account the current epidemiological situation, ***the Assembly would not be in a position to conduct a fully-fledged election observation mission*** in a country with around 96,000 polling stations.
34. Nevertheless, taking into account the issues and concerns raised, the opinion of domestic stakeholders, as well as the link between election observation and the Assembly’s monitoring procedure, the pre-electoral delegation considered that ***a political presence by the Assembly, on and around Election Day, would bring an added value to the ongoing process of political dialogue between the Russian Federation and the Council of Europe***. Therefore, I recommended holding an *in-situ* meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee in Moscow, on and around Election Day.

## VI. Deployment of the Ad Hoc Committee in Moscow, in the format of an Election Assessment Mission

35. At its meeting on 6 September 2021, the Bureau of the Assembly considered the assessment of the online pre-electoral delegation. Different opinions were expressed in the discussion about whether the Ad Hoc Committee should or should not be deployed on and around the Election Day. Following a comprehensive exchange of views, the majority of members of the Bureau argued in favour of a limited political presence of the Assembly during elections, aiming, inter alia, at maintaining political dialogue with the Russian authorities and supporting the Assembly's monitoring procedure regarding the Russian Federation.
36. Thus, the Bureau decided, in accordance with Assembly Rules, to hold a second *in situ* meeting of the Ad Hoc committee in the format of an Election Assessment Mission, composed of one member from each of the five political groups, as follows: Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez (Switzerland, SOC) as its Chairperson; Mr Joseph O'Reilly (Ireland, EPP/CD); Mr Alberto Ribolla (Italy, EC/DA); Mr Jacques Maire (France, ALDE) and Mr George Katrougalos (Greece, UEL).
37. Subsequently, the Election Assessment Mission visited Moscow on 16-20 September 2021. It held meetings with the representatives of the political parties represented in the State Duma, the representatives of the extra parliamentary opposition party Yabloko, the representatives of the domestic non-governmental organisations involved in election observation, as well as the President and members of the Central Election Commission (see the programme with the names of participants in Appendix 3).
38. *In-situ* meetings confirmed the issues and concerns raised by different interlocutors during the online meetings on 2-3 September. In particular, according to the information received:
- candidate registration did not appear to be inclusive, and some well-known members of opposition parties were denied registration (e.g. prominent figures from the Communist Party and the Yabloko party). In this respect, the Election Assessment Mission was informed about initiated and ongoing criminal proceedings and criminal sentences against a number of opposition figures, which effectively prevented them from running in the elections;
  - deregistration by the CEC of a number of candidates on the basis of information received from state authorities, without any judicial decision, raises concerns;
  - allegations of pressure on state employees to vote on Friday were reported;
  - the security of ballots overnight was questioned;
  - reportedly, election campaign conditions were not the same for all parties, pandemic restrictions were systematically used in an unequal way, to limit opposition parties and candidates rallies and door-to-door campaigning;
  - allegations of misuse of state and administrative resources were reported;
  - several interlocutors expressed the concern that official Covid-19-related social and financial aid measures enacted prior and during the campaign period could be perceived as favoring the ruling party;
  - media coverage favoured the ruling party at both local and federal level;
  - the requirements of the "foreign agents" legislation imposing the obligation on candidates and political parties associated with a "foreign agent" to display the information about their status on all campaign materials was raised as a major concern. The Ad Hoc Committee recalls that in its latest opinion on "foreign agents" legislation, the Venice Commission recommended that "at a minimum, the stigmatising and misleading "foreign agent" label should be abandoned in favour of a more neutral and accurate designation" and warned "against the significant chilling effect

that the recent reforms are likely to have on the free exercise of the civil and political rights which are vital for an effective democracy”.

It appeared that the requirements of “foreign agent” legislation particularly penalised the Yabloko party. In this context, the Ad Hoc Committee wishes to stress that the labelling of candidates and political parties as “foreign agents” puts them in a disadvantaged position vis-à-vis other electoral actors, which undermines the fairness of the electoral process.

39. The Election Assessment Mission was informed that, out of 32 registered political parties, 14 parties participated in the 2021 elections to the State Duma, nominating some 5,800 candidates. The President of the Central Election Commission informed the members of the Election Assessment Mission about the work conducted by the CEC to prepare the elections. The Election Assessment Mission noted the impressive and commendable amount of work invested by the CEC in the technical and logistical organisation of the vote, in a particularly complex and rapidly evolving epidemiological situation.
40. The Election Assessment Mission relayed the concerns expressed by a number of political stakeholders to the CEC. Replying to specific questions and concerns, the President of the CEC assured the Mission that the election administration functioned in a transparent manner, creating equal conditions for all participants according to the Russian Federation legislation. It is to be noted that many Mission's interlocutors argued that the perception of the functioning of the CEC improved since the appointment, in March 2016, of Ms Ella Pamfilova as President of the CEC.
41. That said, the members of the Election Assessment Mission felt that the concerns relating to restrictive legislation (in particular on the status of “foreign agents) as well as the reported unequal campaign conditions, were not resolved in a satisfactory manner. Therefore, the Ad Hoc Committee strongly calls on the Russian authorities to address these concerns, in particular, in close co-operation with the Venice Commission and in line with the recommendations contained in its opinions.

## **VII. Visits to polling stations (18-19 September 2021)**

42. As stated above, the absence of the Assembly's usual international election observation partners, as well as the limitations on the number of observers deployed, did not allow the Election Assessment Mission to conduct a comprehensive and proper observation of the voting process.
43. However, the members of the Election Assessment Mission decided to visit a number of polling stations in and around Moscow in order to evaluate the overall atmosphere around the electoral process. It is to be noted that the impressions of the members cannot serve as a basis for a comprehensive assessment of these elections.
44. On 18-19 September 2021, the members of the Election Assessment Mission split into 3 teams. Altogether, around 50 polling stations were visited. In the visited polling stations the mission noted the generally smooth voting process, the atmosphere was calm and the vote was well organised and transparent; as a rule, the observers were well received by polling stations members who provided comprehensive answers to all questions. The members of the mission noted a particular emphasis on ensuring the respect of procedures, as well as the safety and security of polling stations. Domestic observers representing different political parties and candidates were present at the visited polling stations.
45. On 20 September 2021, the PACE Election Assessment Mission made a factual statement on the visit to Moscow (see appendix 4).

## **VIII. Results of the elections**

46. On 24 September the CEC announced the results of the parliamentary elections. The electoral roll contains 109 204 662 electors; the turnout was 51,72%. Five parties passed the 5% threshold:

- United Russia – 324 seats (126 seats from the proportional vote and 198 seats in single-mandate constituencies);
- Communist party of the Russian Federation – 57 seats (48 seats from the proportional vote and 9 seats in single-mandate constituencies);
- Just Russia – for True - 27 seats (19 seats from proportional vote and 8 seats in single-mandate constituencies);
- Liberal Democratic Party – 21 seats (19 seats from proportional vote and 2 seats in single-mandate constituencies);
- “New people” – 13 seats (only from proportional vote);
- Parties “Motherland”, “Civic platform” and “Progress” – one seat for each party;
- Five independent candidates were elected in single-mandate constituencies.

## **IX. Conclusions and recommendations**

47. The aim of the Election Assessment Mission was not to make a political assessment of the outcome of the vote. Its findings should feed into the work of the Assembly’s Monitoring Committee, as well as the Venice Commission, whenever relevant, so as to address the issues and concerns identified by the Election Assessment Mission.
48. Due to the limitations on the number of observers to be deployed, the Assembly was not in a position to conduct a comprehensive election observation mission. Therefore, the aim of the Election Assessment Mission was to collect information about the evolution of the legal and electoral framework – and in particular, any related concerns – as well as to gather first-hand impressions from the voting process.
49. Against this background, while thanking the Russian authorities for good co-operation in the organisation of the activities of the Election Assessment Mission as well as commending the efforts of the CEC to ensure proper logistical, technical and sanitary organisation of the voting process in the difficult context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Assessment Mission regrets that a proper international election observation mission could not be deployed.
50. The Election Assessment Mission equally regrets that concerns previously expressed about the legal framework and electoral practice remain unresolved and were further reinforced. It expresses particular concerns about the “foreign agent” legislation which had a prejudicial effect on some opposition candidates and political parties.
51. The Election Assessment Mission expects the Russian authorities and the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to intensify co-operation and political dialogue with the Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies, in particular the Venice Commission, as well as the Assembly’s own Monitoring Committee, in order to address, as a matter of urgency, the long-standing concerns relating to the legal framework and electoral practices.
52. Finally, to facilitate follow up to the conclusions and recommendations contained in the present Memorandum, I suggest that the Bureau should forward the present Memorandum to the Monitoring Committee, as well as should declassify it.



**Appendix 1 - Programme of the on-line pre-electoral meetings on 2-3 September 2021****Thursday 2 September 2021 (Strasbourg time)**

- 14.30-16.00 Meeting with NGOs involved in the observation of the election:
- . “Golos” Movement, Mr Grigory Melkonyants, Co-Chair
  - . Analytical Center Levada, Mr Denis Volkov, Acting Director
  - . “St-Petersburg Observers”, Ms Olga Dmitrieva
  - . “Center for the Protection of Media Rights”, Ms Galina Arapova, Chairperson
- 16.00-16.30 Meeting with “Yabloko Party”, Mr Vladimir Dorokhov, Deputy Chairperson

**Friday 3 September 2021 (Strasbourg time)**

- 9.00-13.00 Meetings with the parliamentary political parties in the State Duma
- 9.00-9.30 Just Russia, Mr Mikhail Emelianov
- 9.45. –10.15 United Russia, Mr Petr Tolstoy
- 10.30 –11.00 Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Mr Leonid Kalashnikov
- 11.15 –11.45 Liberal Democratic Party, Mr Vasilii Vlasov
- 12.00 – 13.00 Meeting with Ms Ella Pamfilova, President,

## **Appendix 2 - List of participants (pre-electoral)**

**Chairperson:** Mr Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland

### **Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group (SOC)**

Mr Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland

### **Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD)**

Mr Joseph O'REILLY, Ireland

### **Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)**

Ms Liliana TANGUY, France

### **European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance (EC/DA)**

Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINER, United Kingdom

### **Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)**

Mr George KATROUGALOS, Greece

### **Venice Commission**

Ms Maria Paloma BIGLINO CAMPOS, Spain

### **Central Election Commission**

Ms Ella PAMFILOVA, President,

### **Parliamentary parties in the State Duma**

Just Russia, Mr Mikhail EMELIANOV  
United Russia, Mr Petr TOLSTOY  
Communist Party, Mr Leonid KALASHNIKOV  
Liberal Democratic Party, Mr Vasilii VLASOV

### **Parliamentary parties not in the State Duma**

Mr Vladimir DOROKHOV, Deputy Chairperson, "Yabloko" Party

### **Non-Governmental Organisations**

Mr Grigory MELKONYANTS, Co-chair, "Golos" Movement  
Mr Denis VOLKOV, Acting Director, Analytical Center Levada  
Ms Olga DMITRIEVA, Member of Council, "St.Petersburg Observers" NGO  
Ms Galina ARAPOVA, Chairperson, "Center for the Protection of Media Rights" NGO

**Secretariat of the Assembly**

Mr Chemavon CHAHBAZIAN, Head of Secretariat, Election observation and Interparliamentary co-operation Division

Mr Artemy KARPENKO, Head of the Office of the Secretary General of the Assembly

Mr Bogdan TORCĂTORIU, Administrator, Election observation and Interparliamentary co-operation Division

Ms Danièle GASTL, Assistant, Election observation and Interparliamentary co-operation Division

Ms Anne GODFREY, Assistant, Election observation and Interparliamentary co-operation Division

**Secretariat of the Venice Commission**

Mr Serguei KOUZNETSOV, Head of Division

**Council of Europe Moscow Office**

Mr Petr SICH, Head of Office

### Appendix 3

## PACE ELECTION ASSESSMENT MISSION THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

*Moscow, 17-20 September 2021*

### Programme

#### Thursday, 16 September 2021

Arrival of the members of the mission

#### Friday, 17 September 2021

*(Hotel National, Slavyanskiy room,)*

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|---------------|---|
| 9.00 – 9.45   | Meeting of the mission  |
| 10.00 – 13.00 | Meetings with the Leaders/representatives of the State Duma political groups  |
| 10.00-10.30   | Mr. Alexey Chepa, Deputy Chair of the party "Just Russia», Deputy Chair of the Committee on International Affairs   |
| 10.30-11.30   | Mr. Petr Tolstoy, member of the party "United Russia", Deputy Chair of the State Duma and Mr. Leonid Slutsky, member of Liberal Democratic Party, Chair of the Committee on International Affairs |
| 11.30-12.15   | Mr. Sergey Obukhov, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Communist Party in the State Duma.   |
| 13.00 – 13:45 | Meeting with Galina Mikhaleva of the party Yabloko<br><i>(Central Election Commission)</i>  |
| 14.45 – 15.45 | Meeting with Ms Ella. Pamfilova, Chairperson of the CEC, and members of the Central Election Commission   |
| 16.00 – 17.00 | Meeting with NGOs involved in the election observation<br>Denis Volkov from Analytical Centre Levada,<br>Olga Dmitrieva from "St. Petersburg Observers" NGO<br>Andrey Buzin from "Golos" Movement |

#### Saturday, 18 September 2021

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|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| 10.00 – 10.45 | Meeting with drivers and interpreters |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
- Visits to polling stations in Moscow and the region of Moscow

#### Sunday, 19 September 2021

Visits to polling stations in Moscow and the region of Moscow

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|---------------|--|
| 20.00 – 22.00 | Debriefing meeting of the assessment mission |
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#### Monday, 20 September 2021

Departure of the members of the mission

#### **Appendix 4 - Parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation: statement by PACE Election Assessment Mission**

Upon the decision of the Bureau of the Assembly and at the invitation of the Russian authorities, an *ad hoc* committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) met in Moscow, on 17-20 September 2021, in the format of an Election Assessment Mission composed of the representatives of all five political groups. A legal expert of the Venice Commission provided advice to the delegation.

In the absence of a fully-fledged International Election Observation Mission, the Assembly's *ad hoc* committee was not in a position to conduct an election observation. It did, however, have the opportunity to visit a number of polling stations in Moscow and the Moscow region on 18-19 September 2021.

Building upon the information collected within the framework of the remote pre-electoral meetings, the findings of the Venice Commission, as well as *in situ* meetings with political stakeholders, the Central Election Commission, and domestic observers and civil society organisations, the aim of the Election Assessment Mission was to assess the general atmosphere around the elections.

The delegation appreciated the good co-operation of the authorities as well as the generally smooth voting process on the election days, while noting concerns, notably expressed by certain political stakeholders, about the electoral framework and environment which appear to have impacted the electoral process. These will be summarised in a memorandum for the Bureau and feed into the report on the honouring of commitments and obligations by the Russian Federation.

The Election Assessment Mission expects the Russian authorities and the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to continue co-operation and political dialogue with the Monitoring Committee so as to address the long-standing issues relating to the electoral framework, process and practices.

Composition of the delegation:

Pierre-Alain Fridez (Switzerland, SOC)

Joseph O'Reilly (Ireland, EPP/CD)

Jacques Maire (France, ALDE)

Alberto Ribolla (Italy, EC/DA)

George Katrougkalos (Greece, UEL)