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**Association GOLOS – Domestic Monitoring of Elections**

**to the 6th State Duma of the Federal Assembly**

**Russian Federation, 4. December 2011**

**Final Report**

**1. Introduction**

The Association GOLOS has conducted a large-scale observation of the elections to the 6th State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russia Federation. In 48 Federal Subjects, long-term observers from the Association GOLOS monitored the events of the elections. On election day itself and for the investigation of the election results, around 1,700 correspondents from the newspaper “Grazhdanskij golos” [Eng.: Citizen’s voice] conducted a short-term observation, visiting around 4,000 polling stations in 40 regions.[[1]](#footnote-1)

GOLOS organised a “Map of violations”, a website on which citizens of the Russian Federation were able to report violations throughout the entire election period. On the “Map of violations”, a joint project run by GOLOS and the internet publication Gazeta.ru, more than 5,000 reports of violations were submitted by election day; following election day the number of reports rose to 7,800.

In the week before election day, a widespread and coordinated campaign was let loose against the Association GOLOS, which consisted of legal persecution (a fine was issued), defamatory reports in the media, interference with the work of staff and correspondents, and hacking attacks on the website and staff email accounts.

The election of deputies to the State Duma was neither free nor fair, nor did it meet the demands of the Russian electoral code and international electoral standards. The fundamental principles of elections were not adhered to, namely true competition and the equal rights of all sides involved, a neutral administration, independent election commissions, a vote conforming to the law and a correct vote-counting process. All phases of the election period were marked by a range of violations against the electoral code, which were designed to distort the will of the electorate and thereby remove the possibility of an appropriate representation of citizens’ interests in the most senior legislative organ of the country.

1. It was originally planned that 2021 correspondents would be present in the precinct election commissions and 91 in the territorial election commissions. Some of the correspondents, however, did not wish to participate in the election monitoring as a result of pressure put on them, whilst others were refused entry to the polling stations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)