



TEXTS ADOPTED

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The 2026 undemocratic elections to the Russian State Duma and its implications on civil society

European Parliament resolution of 8 October 2026 on the 2026 undemocratic elections to the Russian State Duma and their implications for civil society (2026/2907(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Russia,
- having regard to the international obligations to which Russia is bound under international law,
- having regard to the statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on behalf of the EU of 21 September 2026 on the Russian State Duma elections held on 18 to 20 September 2026 and their non-applicability on Ukrainian territory,
- having regard to the statement of 21 September 2026 by MEP Ville Niinistö, Chair of the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, denouncing the parliamentary elections in Russia and their illegal conduct in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine,
- having regard to the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 29 September 2026 entitled 'Fake 'elections' in Russia and its destabilising attacks on Europe',
- having regard to the statement of 6 August 2026 by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on the decision of the Russian Federation not to invite the OSCE to observe the elections to the State Duma,
- having regard to the report entitled 'Nowhere is safe: exporting the rule of fear beyond borders – transnational repression by the Russian Federation' submitted on 21 September 2026 to the UN Human

Rights Council by the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Russia,

- having regard to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document,
 - having regard to the Hague Regulations of 1907, in particular Articles 42 and 43 thereof,
 - having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, in particular Article 47 thereof,
 - having regard to the UN Charter,
 - having regard to Rule 136(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the fake elections to the Russian State Duma held from 18 to 20 September 2026 were illegitimate and undemocratic and conducted without any genuine political competition in an increasingly authoritarian environment of systematic and institutionalised repression; whereas Russia continues to wage an illegal war of aggression against Ukraine;
- B. whereas so-called elections were illegally held in the territories of Ukraine currently under Russian occupation, namely in Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, in parts of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and in the illegally occupied Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova and the illegally occupied Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia;
- C. whereas the 2026 fake elections to the State Duma were the first national legislative vote held under wartime conditions and were marked by the expansion of electronic voting across 33 regions, multi-day balloting, coercion and forced voter participation in temporarily occupied areas, resulting in a fabricated turnout of 59,58 % and a record majority of 349 out of 450 seats (over 77 %) for the ruling United Russia party;
- D. whereas Russia's authoritarian regime has used increasingly fraudulent and farcical elections for decades to provide it with a semblance of democracy while continuing to concentrate all power in the hands of Vladimir Putin; whereas the government suppresses any dissent with the support of loyalist security forces, a subservient judiciary, a state-controlled media environment ensuring a continuous flood of propaganda and disinformation, and a legislature consisting of a ruling party and pliable opposition factions;

- E. whereas the Russian authorities have systematically excluded democratic opposition forces from genuine political competition, with opposition politicians imprisoned, exiled or barred from standing; whereas the exclusion of Yabloko candidates from the federal list further limited the choice available to Russian voters, removing from the electoral process one of the last remaining opposition forces and the only registered party with an anti-war platform; whereas anti-war political figures, including Yabloko deputy chairs Maxim Kruglov and Lev Shlosberg, have been imprisoned and prominent party figures, including Nikolay Rybakov, Boris Vishnevskiy, and Vladimir Dorokhov, have been targeted, designated as 'foreign agents' or barred from running;
- F. whereas there were widespread reports of election fraud, including ballot stuffing, statistical anomalies, vote transfers and turnout spikes;
- G. whereas the Russian Federation deliberately and repeatedly denied access to international observers by refusing to invite the OSCE/ODIHR or the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to observe the elections, despite commitments under the 1990 Copenhagen Document; whereas changes to Russia's electoral laws have made it virtually impossible to conduct any meaningful monitoring; whereas the parliamentary elections of 18 to 20 September 2026 were already the third consecutive nationwide electoral process held without impartial and independent international election observers in the country;
- H. whereas the Russian regime, under Vladimir Putin's increasingly authoritarian rule, systematically suppresses any form of dissent and denies Russian citizens meaningful participation in political life and their fundamental freedoms, through the persecution of opposition politicians, civil society organisations and independent media, intimidation, criminalisation and systematic and institutionalised repression, politically motivated trials and arbitrary prison sentences in inhumane detention conditions, while repeatedly undermining democratic principles, constitutional safeguards and the right to genuine democratic representation;
- I. whereas the second Brussels Dialogue with Russian pro-democracy and anti-war actors was held at the European Parliament on 23 June 2026;
- J. whereas the elections were conducted during Russia's ongoing illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, which has fundamentally affected the political and legal environment in the Russian Federation and has been accompanied by further repression of domestic dissent;
- K. whereas the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in its

resolution entitled Fake 'elections' in Russia and its destabilising attacks on Europe', strongly condemns the undemocratic and illegitimate nature of the elections; whereas the resolution also expresses its firm condemnation of Russia's relentless and brutal attacks against Ukraine and hybrid operations against EU Member States;

- L. whereas the Russian regime has increasingly expanded beyond Russia's borders into a systematic campaign of transnational repression, as documented in the UN Special Rapporteur's report entitled 'Nowhere is safe', which records nearly 400 cases of targeted physical violence, assassinations, poisonings (including of Elena Kostyuchenko, Irina Babloyan and Natalia Arno), the recent murder of dissident cartoonist Semyon Skrepetsky in Poland, the abuse of INTERPOL Red Notices, and the propagation of Rosfinmonitoring's 'extremist' list through financial databases such as LSEG World-Check to freeze dissidents' bank accounts globally;
 - M. whereas the Russian regime has decimated long-standing human rights organisations by branding them 'extremist', while criminalising major environmental watchdogs such as Greenpeace International, WWF International and Bellona as 'undesirable organisations' and replacing them with government-organised non-governmental organisations under a 'sovereign ecology' framework;
1. Deplores the fact that the fake elections to the Russian State Duma held from 18 to 20 September 2026 were neither free nor fair, violated fundamental international electoral standards, lacked democratic legitimacy and were a complete sham orchestrated under repression, thereby depriving citizens of their constitutional right to a free and democratic vote; deplores the fact that the Russian opposition, civil society and independent media have been brutally suppressed and that critics of the regime have been imprisoned, murdered or forced into exile;
 2. Denounces all electoral violations committed by the regime of Vladimir Putin during the Russian legislative elections of 18 to 20 September 2026, as well as the preceding long-standing and intentional destruction of any remnants of democracy in Russia; stresses that the officially announced turnout figures and electoral results cannot be regarded as credible evidence of public support for the ruling authorities, their policies or Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; underlines that Russia's fake elections were held in a climate of fear and intimidation and against the background of an illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine; notes that, during the fake elections, there were no genuine alternative candidates, no free media, no credible observers and no political freedoms; concludes that the elections were illegitimate and undemocratic;

3. Condemns the fact that so-called elections were conducted in Crimea and in parts of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions that are temporarily occupied by Russia;
4. Condemns the organisation of so-called elections in the Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova and the establishment of Russian polling stations in the Georgian region of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region, South Ossetia; reiterates its steadfast support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova within their internationally recognised borders and deplores the continued mistreatment and repression of the inhabitants of the temporarily occupied territories;
5. Refuses to recognise the Russian State Duma as the legitimate representative and legislative body of the Russian Federation and refuses to recognise any legal or political consequences deriving from the illegal organisation of so-called elections by Russia in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine; denounces the inclusion in the new State Duma of 46 individuals who either served in the Russian invasion forces in Ukraine or held posts in the occupation administrations; notes that Nursultan Mussagaleev, who Ukrainian authorities have accused of ordering the torture and execution of a civilian near Bucha in 2022, is among them; condemns the human rights violations committed by the Russian occupation authorities who forced Ukrainian citizens in Ukrainian territories to register and vote in the fake elections to the Russian State Duma; calls on the Council and the Member States to adopt the same position of non-recognition; calls for the EU institutions and Member States to refrain from any official contact with the newly constituted State Duma and its members, to oppose their participation in interparliamentary assemblies, and to consider null any act of this State Duma purporting to legislate for, annex or ratify the status of temporarily occupied Ukrainian territory;
6. Highlights how the decision of the Russian institutions not to invite the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission to observe the elections further underpins the complete lack of legitimacy of the Russian institutions; notes with concern the lack of domestic electoral observation following sustained pressure on and, ultimately, the forced closure of Russian election observation organisations such as Golos; calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Grigory Melkonyants, co-chair of Golos, and of other election monitors who have been imprisoned or persecuted for their work;
7. Denounces the judicial ban on the Yabloko party, the arbitrary exclusion of candidates and the systemic criminalisation of anti-war sentiment in Russia; demands the immediate, unconditional release and full political rehabilitation of all political prisoners, human rights defenders, anti-war activists, journalists and detained minors in

Russia, including Alexei Gorinov, Lev Shlosberg, Maxim Kruglov, Maria Ponomarenko and Alexander Kynev, and urges the Russian authorities to guarantee them immediate access to independent medical care;

8. Decries the continued suppression by the Russian authorities of any form of dissent, including through repressive legislation and politically motivated prison sentences targeting opposition politicians, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and independent media; recalls that the unlawful 'Foreign Agents Law', enacted in 2012, has imposed severe constraints on Russian civil society;
9. Stands in solidarity with those Russian citizens who, despite national and transnational repression and the severe personal consequences for them and their family members, continue to find the courage to speak the truth about Russia's brutal and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, uphold human values such as dignity, respect and compassion and show the world that another Russia exists; recalls the brutal murder of Alexei Navalny and reaffirms that the Russian regime and Putin personally bear political and criminal responsibility for the deaths of dissidents; expresses its solidarity with victims of political repression and its support for independent journalists, human rights defenders and civil society actors who are resisting Russia's aggression and repression;
10. Urgently calls for EU action against transnational repression, supporting the UN Special Rapporteur's recommendation for a binding UN convention on transnational repression; urges the Member States to investigate Russian cross-border threats, scrutinise Russian INTERPOL Red Notices and require financial institutions to cease the application of Rosfinmonitoring's politically motivated 'extremist' lists;
11. Calls for continued support for Russian democratic forces, including independent journalists, human rights defenders and reform-oriented forces among the democratic political opposition working for a democratic future for Russia and openly speaking out against Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and Russia's hybrid warfare against European democracies; stresses that Russian anti-war democratic forces abroad will be credible partners only if they unambiguously support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, the establishment of accountability and the payment of reparations; calls for the EU and its Member States to strengthen their support for Russian anti-war and pro-democracy civil society, democratic actors and independent Russian-language media, including by supporting access to uncensored information inside Russia; calls on the Commission to ensure sufficient long-term funding;

12. Recalls that the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Russia, Mariana Katzarova, reported that internal repression had reached alarming levels, with more than 4 000 political prisoners, more than 1 200 individuals and organisations labelled 'foreign agents', over 350 organisations banned as 'undesirable', and over 5 000 politically motivated criminal cases; deplores the fact that over 100 minors are currently being detained on political or terrorism charges, Russia ranks third in the world for the number of imprisoned journalists, nearly a third of whom are Ukrainian citizens, including Iryna Danylovyh, and torture is widespread and systematic;
13. Highlights that Russia's defeat in its war of aggression against Ukraine, the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the ending of Russia's imperial ambitions are essential conditions for creating the possibility of fundamental political change towards genuine democracy in Russia; reiterates that Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and its systematic repression at home are mutually reinforcing and both sustain the Russian regime;
14. Reiterates its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders; demands that Russia and its proxy forces immediately, completely and unconditionally terminate all military action in Ukraine, cease all attacks against residential areas and civilian infrastructure, withdraw all military forces, proxies and military equipment from the entire internationally recognised territory of Ukraine, and release and return all prisoners of war, political detainees, kidnapped children and civilians; stresses that the Russian regime continues to display unfathomable brutality through its assaults on civilian targets in Ukraine and that the humanitarian situation in the Russian-occupied territories remains catastrophic, including in the city of Oleshky, which is currently under siege and where civilians, including children, remain trapped without sufficient food, medicine, medical care, running water or electricity;
15. Welcomes the second Brussels Dialogue with Russian pro-democracy and anti-war actors which was held at the European Parliament in June 2026;
16. Welcomes the Council's adoption of restrictive measures against 10 individuals for supporting the systematic and institutionalised repression of democratic opposition and for undermining democracy and the rule of law in Russia; calls on the Member States to introduce extensive EU restrictive measures against further individuals and entities involved in political persecution and Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine; calls for all necessary measures to be taken to prevent sanctions circumvention; commends the Council's sanctioning of those 10 individuals, who include Supreme Court judges, senior officials in the Prosecutor General's

Office and judges involved in barring Yabloko and sentencing opposition politicians;

17. Urges the adoption of targeted EU sanctions against judges, prosecutors, Rosfinmonitoring officials, and operatives involved in repression, including transnational repression; calls for targeted restrictive measures against Russian electoral officials, judges, prosecutors, occupation authorities and other individuals directly responsible for the organisation of the staged electoral process in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova as well as against members of the Central Election Commission and regional electoral commissions responsible for electoral fraud, and against newly elected State Duma deputies not yet listed, in particular those who served in the invasion forces or occupation administrations; calls for Schengen-wide entry bans on all such individuals;
18. Encourages the Member States to develop coordinated solutions for Russian human rights defenders, independent journalists and other people at risk who are lawfully resident in the EU and are unable to renew documents through Russian consular authorities;
19. Reaffirms that relations with Russia cannot be normalised without a just and lasting peace for Ukraine based on full territorial integrity, the complete withdrawal of Russian troops, the release of all prisoners of war, detained civilians and forcibly deported Ukrainian children, Russia's payment of full reparations and compensation to Ukraine and the establishment of full accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity and Russia's crime of aggression against Ukraine, an end to internal political repression, the restoration of the rule of law and full respect for international law; calls for the political and diplomatic isolation of the Russian regime for as long as necessary, including through coordinated efforts to exclude its representatives from key international forums and prevent any normalisation of Russia's participation in international sporting and cultural events;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations, and the authorities of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.