



Strasbourg, 15 March 2018

Honourable High Representative,

Dear Federica,

Just a few days before the Presidential elections in Russia, the European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE), a civil society network of independent election observation organizations has been classified as "undesirable organizations" by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. This organisation receives funding from the European Union.

Employees of listed international organizations and their partners in the Russian Federation may face up to six years imprisonment, a ban on entering Russia and numerous other sanctions for continuing their cooperation. The recent attacks on EPDE and their partner organisations in Russian media aim to discredit independent election observations.

Therefore, the ruling against EPDE is highly worrisome and sheds critical light on the international commitment of the Russian government to hold free and fair elections.

We kindly ask you to voice your concern on behalf of the European Union and to urge Russian authorities to withdraw this decision.

Thank you for considering our request and your cooperation in advance.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Harms
Co-President of the Euronest Parliamentary
Assembly

Othmar Karas
Chair of the Delegation to the EU-Russia
Parliamentary Cooperation Committee