

European Parliament Urges Cooperation Between Putin, Protesters

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Continuing concern with human rights and democratic principles has prompted members of the European Parliament to call on president-elect Vladimir Putin to engage protesters in dialogue, the European body said in a statement Thursday.

"Parliament regrets that the choice of voters was limited in the recent elections and demands comprehensive analyses of 'all irregularities with a view to strengthening democratic rules for future elections,'" the statement said, citing OSCE and Council of Europe reports that the election was "deeply skewed in favor of one candidate."

European parliamentarians called on President Dmitry Medvedev to follow through on promised political reforms. They also urged opposition groups to work together with the government, to unite around reform issues and to cooperate on a comprehensive reform package to be ready before Putin's May 7 inauguration.

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