

Mr Gérard Larcher  
President of the French Senate  
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Berlin, 31.08.2018

Dear Mr President Larcher,

On 18 March 2018, member of the French Senate Joël Guerriau took part in the presidential elections in the Russian Federation as an international election observer.

Mr Guerriau was presented in the Russian media as a member of the French Parliament and gave a mostly positive public assessment of the election. His findings contradict the conclusions of the international election observation mission of the ODIHR-OSCE and the independent citizen observers' organization Movement "Golos".

The Code of Conduct for International Election Observers states that international election observation missions must be of sufficient size to "determine independently and impartially the character of election processes in a country and must be of sufficient duration to determine the character of all of the critical elements of the election process in the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods."<sup>1</sup> The assessment presented by Mr Guerriau stands in sharp contrast to these rules.

Moreover, by deliberately contradicting the findings of the ODIHR-OSCE long-term election observation mission, Mr Guerriau aimed to misinform the Russian public about the real international perception of the electoral process. This can be seen as an attempt to damage the reputation both of ODIHR/OSCE and the French Senate.

The European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE) is a civil society initiative of fourteen European election observation organizations with a secretariat in Berlin. Before EPDE was declared an "undesirable organization" by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation on 13 March 2018, the Russian election observation organization "Golos" was a member of EPDE.

The EPDE Secretariat asks you to clarify:

Did MP Guerriau inform the French Senate about his intention to observe the Presidential Elections in Russia, and what was the response to this from the Senate?

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of principles for international election observation and code of conduct for international election observers, <https://www.ndi.org/DoP>.

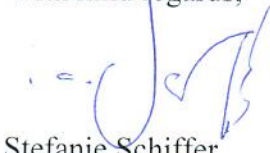
Did MP Guerriau inform the French Senate on who organised and financed his observation mission in Russia?

Does the French Senate intend to investigate the behaviour of the MP Guerriau and inquire whether he breached the “Code of Deontology” of the French Senate?

EPDE has pointed out the misuse of the instrument of international election observation during a high-level conference organized in March 2017 in the European Parliament, and has developed a series of recommendations that you can find in the attached brochure. Here you will also find details on the international observer missions that the Federation Council and the State Duma of the Russian Federation invited to the presidential elections in March 2018 in the Russian Federation.

We thank you in advance for your commitment to this question and look forward to your response.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stefanie Schiffer', is written over the typed name.

Stefanie Schiffer

Chair EPDE

Annex: EPDE booklet “Politically biased election observation—a threat to the integrity of international institutions”.