

Dear Dmitry Medvedev, President elect of Russia

We, the undersigned, coming from – politics, business, culture and other areas of civil society – are writing in the hope that you, the newly elected President of Russia, might finally bring security, freedom, peace and respect for human rights to the people of Chechnya.

Your predecessor, Vladimir Putin, established his domestic standing on the back of violent atrocities in Chechnya and the Caucasus. As his successor, we call on you to implement the following five point plan for Chechnya:

- First, to end the war, torture and suffering in the region.
- Second, to ensure the defence of human rights and the rule of law.
- Third, to permit a free and open media to cover events on the ground.
- Fourth, to allow the voice of political opponents to be heard not suffocated and permit unrestricted access of humanitarian organisations to Chechnya.
- Fifth, to implement democracy in Chechnya and promote self-determination by organising the first free and fair elections in more than a decade under the close scrutiny of independent observers.

Mr Medvedev, you are just about to begin your first term as President of Russia and public opinion across the world will inevitably judge you upon your commitment to re-introduce civil liberties and human rights in Russia. Your actions in Chechnya will be a litmus test of your humanity and morality and will indicate whether we are in fact seeing the emergence of a new Russia from under the dark cloud in which it has sadly been covered.

We call on you as the new President of Russia to restore the rule of law, peace and human rights in Chechnya. This can only be achieved if the Chechens' right to self-determination is recognised through free and fair elections. By doing this you will help end the Chechen people's struggle, establish stability in the Caucasus and restore Russian dignity.