

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



European Institutions Office

Herman Van Rompuy
President of the European Council

Brussels, 8 December 2011
Our Ref: B1122

Dear Mr Van Rompuy,

EU-Russia Summit

Ahead of the EU-Russia Summit on 15 December, I wanted to draw your attention to the human rights situation in the country and to ask you to raise the following issues during the dialogue.

We are concerned about reports of protesters arrested by police in Russia during peaceful demonstrations against alleged vote manipulation in the recent elections. Several well-known opposition activists were detained preemptively, and some were sentenced to administrative detention. We have heard reports of beating and other ill-treatment by police, and unacceptable detention conditions which amount to ill-treatment. Please would you ask the Russian authorities to release all peaceful protesters, investigate allegations of beatings and other ill-treatment, and ensure that the right to freedom of assembly is guaranteed.

We are also concerned about the continuing difficulties which are being faced by human rights defenders in Russia. Our recent report, [Beaten up for speaking out: Attacks on human rights defenders in the Russian Federation](#), reveals that journalists, human rights defenders and civil society activists in Russia are subjected to harassment and intimidation and sometimes killed because of their work. The authorities' repeated failure to investigate these cases effectively violates Russia's human rights obligations. Given the EU's commitment to protect human rights defenders' work, and the statements on this issue by the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum, we encourage you to ask the Russian authorities to fully, promptly and independently investigate these attacks and bring their perpetrators to justice.

We should naturally be happy to provide you with any other information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Nicolas J. Beger
Director