
PUTIN: DEMOCRACY MEANS DIALOGUE, PUBLIC CONTROL AND FEEDBACK

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Russia Today, February 06, 2012 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin wants citizens to test draft laws and propose bills that gather enough support online. In a newspaper article Putin explains why Russians will no longer tolerate a [] circus. A In the fourth article in a series outlining his electoral program, Russian Prime Minister and presidential candidate Vladimir Putin explains the organization of Russian democracy, and how it must evolve in order to shape the future of Russian society. The article, published in Kommersant daily, comes days after hundreds of thousands gathered across Russia to express their views on politics and democracy. The world has entered an era of instant access to free information on pretty much any topic, which means that nothing [] not even the political process [] can be concealed from the general public. [] and, more importantly, uncensored access to information on the situation in the country naturally determines the people's demand to be involved in politics and the administration permanently, not on an election-to-election basis, A he said. Under such conditions, feedback from society becomes crucial. That is why the Russian government is already establishing a comprehensive means of communicating with the general public over the web. Putin called on specialists to give the country's leadership a hand in bridging the eternal gap between the people and those in power in Russia, and to make public involvement in government a reality. [] and professional and public unions must be able to 'beta-test' all state documents, A Putin proposed. He pointed out that the government already publishes draft laws online, giving everyone the chance to make suggestions or propose amendments. However he admitted that that is not enough. [] these steps only help to exercise a passive right, meaning a citizen's right to respond to various ideas and projects proposed by the authorities, A said Putin. [] this regard, I suggest introducing a rule for a mandatory revision in Parliament of those initiatives that collect 100,000 or more signatures on the Internet. A [] dont need a situation where all that is left of democracy is the façade Putin maintains that Russia needs new democratic mechanisms to move forward. Russian state bureaucracy is lagging behind and must be modernized [] democratically, he says. The political system must be able to react swiftly to reflect the interests of large groups in society. The country's political climate must be constantly maintained [] but should not be allowed to mutate into a knockabout comedy. [] strongly believe that we do not need the circus of various candidates competing with each other to offer more and more unrealistic promises, A he said. [] dont need a situation where all that is left of democracy is the façade, where democracy is understood as a one-off political entertainment show and casting session for candidates, where substance is forgotten to make way for shocking statements and mutual accusations, where real politics is reduced to shady deals and decisions made behind the scenes, but never discussed with voters. A Putin insists on resisting the temptation to []A politics, creating a [] democracy. A He agrees there is always room for [] techniques A in politics, which cannot be avoided. [] spin doctors and image makers should not control politicians. In fact, I think that our people will not buy that any longer. A The relationship between society and politics should always be based on

truth, allowing for mutual confidence, respect and a constructive dialogue between the people and the authorities.

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