



Gilat Satellite Networks: monitoring Russia's elections

For a majority of the world – including Russia – results of Russia's March 2012 election were a foregone conclusion: the candidate Vladimir Putin would be re-elected to the President's office once again. No political pundit picked a different scenario. However, there was a difference this year. This year, the Russian government sought to bring a high level of transparency to the elections to reassure its population and the world outside that the elections were clean, reliable and above board. To ensure that anyone with an Internet connection anywhere in the world could view on-line and in real time practically any polling station throughout Russia's seven time zones, the Rostelcom Group, Russia's national telecommunications operator created a project linking every polling station to the Internet.

Russia is a very large country. Its geographic spread from Europe in the West to the Pacific Ocean in the West and from the frozen tundra of the Arctic Circle in the North to the desert regions of South Asia, all citizens wishing to take advantage of their right

The recent Russian election result may not have been surprising, but what was surprising was the amount of work that it took to make the elections as transparent as possible. This was achieved using video links and satellite- and Gilat was selected to work on the project. Timur Sarsenov, Deputy General Manager, Gilat Satellite Networks (Eurasia), explains how this huge task was achieved.

to vote could do so. On the technology side, RTComm, a part of the Rostelcom group, was the architect of a project for providing video feeds of the election through the Internet. For RTComm, this meant having to develop and provide an infrastructure, with full redundancy that would provide video surveillance of close to 95,000 sites. The number of polling stations across the country was 95,000. Many of them had more than one camera, enabling the capture of different angles including ballot boxes, polling

sites, registration tables, entrances and others.

RTComm selected Gilat Satellite Networks as its key partner in providing reliable satellite-based web connectivity for all aspects of the elections project. RTComm chose Gilat's satellite based connectivity as the optimal communication platform for locations lacking terrestrial connections. Gilat's network provided secure and reliable high-speed connectivity for video-based broadcasting to over 1,600 of the voting centres