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• Meanwhile, society was maturing, public attitude toward political activism was quietly changing
2011: Growing Tensions

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• September 24: Putin comes back; illusions shattered
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- September 24: Putin comes back; illusions shattered
- Knocked down at a wrestling match
December-February: The Awakening

- Official Dec. 4 election results: United Russia gets 49% votes, down from 64%
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- December through February: Ever larger protests, 50,000 → 120,000
- Election observers drive
The Five Demands

1. Immediate release of political prisoners and the illegally detained
2. Invalidation of results of the falsified elections
3. Sacking of [CEC Chief Vladimir] Churov; investigation of all reports of fraud; punishment for those responsible
4. Liberalization of electoral laws; free registration of opposition parties
5. New free and fair elections
Regime’s Reaction

- First reaction in December 2011: confusion, denial, small concessions
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• New prisoners and refugees
• New laws against protests, NGOs, media, and the Internet
After May 6: Uniting the Movement

- Opposition Coordinating Council
- Alternative popular elections: October 2012
- Online and offline
- Quota-based elections
- 45 seats, 209 candidates, 81,325 voters
New Challenges and Opportunities

• Coordinating Council: developing & following a strategy, preventing infighting, balancing centralization vs. spontaneity
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• Beyond the capital: experiences in Astrakhan, Gagarin, Khimki
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• New tactics: White Circle, auto rallies, White Square, #OccupyAbai, Writers’ Stroll, etc.
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