**OSCE PA Press Release**

**Habsburg Douglas introduces resolution to combat discrimination against Christians**

COPENHAGEN, 30 June 2011—The chair of an international human rights committee has introduced a resolution to ensure Christians are able to participate fully in public life without discrimination.

Swedish Parliamentarian Walburga Habsburg Douglas introduced the resolution for consideration by the 56 country Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly after recent cases of discrimination against preachers or employees wearing religious jewelry in Europe.

“I am introducing this resolution because religious freedom is a major part of all fundamental freedoms,” Habsburg Douglas said. “I am heartened to see the OSCE already making this a priority issue and hope national parliaments will follow suit to focus attention on the discrimination many Christians and other religious people face for simply practicing their faith.”

The resolution, introduced with cosponsorship from 41 parliamentarians from 17 countries, would call for governments to intensify efforts to research acts of intolerance and discrimination and to work closely with churches to publicize the fight against discrimination.

The proposal also recommends parliaments assess legislation with a view toward discrimination against Christians in labor, expression, assembly and right of conscientious objection.

The OSCE has reported violent attacks against Christian people, property and places of worship throughout the region. The OSCE Lithuanian Chairmanship and Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights will hold this September in Rome a high level meeting entitled “Preventing and Responding to Hate Incidents and Crimes against Christians.”

The resolutions will be considered for inclusion in the Assembly’s Belgrade Declaration, which helps shape OSCE and national policy.Parliamentarians from more than 50 participating OSCE countries will vote on the resolution and declaration in Belgrade.

The Belgrade Annual Session, including committee debates and votes, are open to the press and public. The session runs 6-10 July 2011. For more information on the Annual Session, click [here](http://www.oscepa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1006:twentieth-annual-session-belgrade-2011&catid=36:annual-sessions&Itemid=64).

*The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is comprised of 320 parliamentarians from 55 countries spanning, Europe, Central Asia and North America. The Assembly provides a forum for parliamentary diplomacy, monitors elections, and strengthens international cooperation to uphold commitments on political, security, economic, environmental and human rights issues.*

Media Contact:

Neil Simon

Director of Communications, OSCE PA

neil@oscepa.dk

+45 60 10 83 80