

## VP Habsburg Douglas addresses OSCE conference in Tokyo

OSCE PA Vice-President Walburga Habsburg Douglas (MP, Sweden) called for a “sincere political push” by governments and lawmakers to help close the gender gap in society, politics and business, in a speech in Tokyo on Tuesday.

Speaking at the 2014 OSCE-Japan Conference, Habsburg Douglas said that beyond pledges, tangible support for meeting gender equality goals is what is most needed.

“Political will – or the lack thereof – is the biggest contributor to implementation gaps. In that sense, let our failures be a lesson: rhetoric alone is not enough. It must be accompanied by a sincere political push that includes programmatic activity, financing and sustained support,” Habsburg Douglas said.

The OSCE PA Vice-President highlighted the Assembly’s repeated recommendations, made through its Annual Declarations, that urge OSCE participating States to recognize the acute vulnerability of women in conflict situations, ensure their equality before the law, facilitate their participation in public and political life and protect them from violence and trafficking.

Habsburg Douglas noted that there have been “significant improvements” in gender balance within national delegations to the OSCE PA following the efforts of Dr. Hedy Fry (MP, Canada), the OSCE PA’s Special Representative on Gender Issues, to include a clause in the PA’s Rules of Procedure stating that each delegation should have both genders represented.

Such collective efforts by the OSCE PA can and should be “imported by its parliamentarians to their home countries

to help build capacities and enhance women’s participation in public and political life,” the Vice-President said.

She also urged the OSCE’s Asian Partners for Co-Operation to consider implementing such policies into their own legislative frameworks.

Habsburg Douglas, who is also Head of the Swedish Delegation to the OSCE PA, further highlighted successes in gender balance in her home country, where the government is made up of more than 50 per cent women. She cited policies to support the participation of women at the party level as a key foundation for a gender-balanced government.

The OSCE PA Vice-President also warned against the misperception that women are only interested in “soft” fields, such as education and health, noting that her country’s Minister for Defence is female.

The full text of Habsburg Douglas’s speech is available at [www.oscepa.org](http://www.oscepa.org).



Walburga Habsburg Douglas at the OSCE PA’s Bureau meeting in Copenhagen on 7 April 2014.

## On visit to Copenhagen, Krivokapic meets with Secretariat staff, Danish MPs



For the second time since being elected Assembly President last July, Ranko Krivokapic visited the International Secretariat on Wednesday, meeting with PA staff members for discussions that focused on preparations for the upcoming Annual Session in Baku. Meeting with Deputy Secretaries General Gustavo Pallares and Semyon Dzakhayev, Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Communications Director Richard Solash, and Programme Officer Maria Chepurina, President Krivokapic was thoroughly briefed on the ongoing work of the General Committees, including the expected workload for supplementary items and amendments. Krivokapic and staff also discussed his planned bilateral meetings.

The President, accompanied by Secretary of the Montenegrin Delegation Andjela Radunovic and Adviser Jelena Davidovic, was also briefed on the Session’s general programme, preparation for the Standing Committee meeting, expected participation from national delegations and side events scheduled during the Session. Other topics of discussion during the two-hour meeting included recent activities of the Assembly, including Third Committee Chair Isabel Santos’s visit to Kazakhstan last week and the situation in Ukraine.

Following his visit to the Secretariat, President Krivokapic and his staff, plus Deputy Secretary General Pallares, proceeded to the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) for meetings with the President of the Parliament, Mogens Lykketoft, and the Head of the OSCE PA’s Danish Delegation, Peter Juel Jensen. Krivokapic briefed Lykketoft on the preparations for the Annual Session, including debates that are expected on the situation in Ukraine. In his meeting with Jensen, the President encouraged active Danish participation in the the Assembly and offered thanks for the generous support the Folketing provides to the PA by hosting the International Secretariat.