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| Mimo Garcia | Brescia on October 18, 2024 |

Dear colleagues, thank you very much for the invitation and the opportunity to be here among you today.

It is a great honor for me. And it is also a recognition of my work as a Bulgarian lay judge since April 2021.

Since my term ends in April 2025, I can objectively draw a conclusion because I already have a lot of experience.

I want to start by saying that I have been involved in many things - acting; blogging; creation and hosting of online broadcasts; writing books; film directing; television commentary; creation of a platform for psychology and speech therapy; participating in a reality show format, but in no other area have I felt more useful to society than as a lay judge.

I encourage people to become lay judges  because it is a way to help their communities.

Complaining from the couch is not a solution. The cure is to be active citizen!

My fellow lay judges and I were active last year when a task force was preparing a new law for the judiciary system.

This went hand in hand with constitutional changes, many of which were later rejected by the Constitutional Court.

Unfortunately, the proposal of us, the lay judges, was not accepted. The regular government fell and thus stopped work on the new law altogether.

In Bulgaria, on October 27, we will vote for the seventh time in parliamentary elections within four years. A regular term of parliament generally lasts four years.

These snap elections stop the possibility of serious dialogue for the lay judges.

I am increasingly aware that the European Commission should propose common rules for lay judges, because governments and national parliaments don’t take the subject seriously.

They have very important issues to solve, but we are not unimportant, we guarantee justice, and without justice there is nothing.