

Dear colleagues.

Dear friends.

Dear judges.

It is a great honor for me to speak to you on this occasion. It is an honor to speak to you in my capacity as President of the European Judges.

It is not every day that judges take to the streets and demonstrate, nor should it be.

But you have found it necessary and I fully agree with you.

That's also why I'm here today to support you.

To let you know that the European Association of judges (EAJ) is behind you. MABIE is one of our 42 European members.

You have found it necessary to demonstrate to show the society that the rule of law is challenged to the limit in Hungary.

Without free and independent judges, democracy does not work. Without free and independent courts to keep a watchful eye on the legislative and executive branches, democracy does not work.

Your organization MABIE is active in the European Association and has repeatedly requested our help. In recent years, we have adopted resolutions on, among other things, your remunerations, and at Christmas, we wrote to your Minister of Justice and pointed out that it was not fair to equate remuneration improvements with so-called legal reforms.

At the European meeting in Warsaw last spring we adopted a resolution on your salaries - on your remunerations. There had been no changes of your salaries while salaries in other branches had been automatically changed. In our resolution we considered that the current levels and conditions of remunerations of judges in Hungary is contrary to European and other international standards and therefore we called the Hungarian authorities to immediately increase salaries of judges and to ensure future salaries with other branches of government.

In an open letter by 20 December 2024 to your minister of Justice Bence Tuzson I expressed my concern about an agreement between the minister and the three top leaders of the judicial administration bodies in Hungary, which in exchange for raise of salaries of judges and judicial staff, provided a blanket approval for undefined , structural reforms capable undermining judicial independence.

Judges must be properly remunerated in line with similar groups in society. And legal reforms - regardless of content - must be discussed with relevant stakeholders before they are adopted.

None of these things are adequately fulfilled. That's why we are demonstrating today.

You have our full support in your fight for the rule of law.

Good demonstration!