



**From precarious  
to decent work**

**Du travail précaire  
au travail décent**

**Del trabajo precario  
al trabajo decente**

**Workers Symposium on  
Policies and Regulations  
to Combat Precarious Employment**  
Geneva, 4 - 7 October 2011

**Colloque des travailleurs  
sur les politiques et les réglementations  
destinées à lutter contre l'emploi précaire**  
Genève, 4 - 7 octobre 2011

**Simposio de los trabajadores  
sobre políticas y reglamentación  
para luchar contra el empleo precario**  
Ginebra, 4 - 7 de octubre de 2011

# Economic and social policies to combat precarious work

- The growth in precarious work and employment not just the consequence of inadequate legal frameworks or poor enforcement
- It has emerged historically in an economic context that was propitious to its growth, namely one of soft labour markets, of exacerbated and global competition, and of relative retrenchment of State intervention in the economy
- So addressing the legal framework is a necessary but not sufficient condition to reducing precarious work



# Economic and social policies to combat precarious work

- The spread of precarious work can be imputed to a combination of factors:
  - The aggressive pursuit of both financial and trade liberalization supposedly to unleash investment and productivity;
  - The development of a managerial philosophy that values and emphasizes “flexibility” in all aspects of operations as a competitive advantage;
  - The post-1970s abandonment of full-employment as the main goal of macroeconomic policy and its replacement with price stability with the doctrine of the NAIRU, and the consequent focus by policy-makers on the need to make the labour market more “flexible” to lower unemployment;
  - With the growing erosion of the tax base (thanks to economic and fiscal competition), a gradual reduction in the social security coverage and shift to individual self-insurance;
  - Greater unemployment and lower levels of social protection have led to a general decrease in the “reservation working conditions” for a growing proportion of wage earners.



# Economic and social policies to combat precarious work

- How can we create a social and economic context that is ‘friendly’ to the development of “good” jobs?
- How can systems of social protection be designed to reduce precarious work?

