

English quotes from an interview of one of the panellists of “The Role of Productive Employment and Social Protection in Realizing the Millennium Development Goals”

The G20 meeting in Pittsburgh was especially important because it put employment high on the public policy agenda for dealing with the crisis. And I am sure it will also be included in the upcoming Toronto agenda. The ILO presence at the recent meeting of labour ministries in Washington and its efforts to establish recommendations is pushing us forward in accordance with ILO principles. It is helping countries to see that employment must be high on the agenda.

And today interaction and interdependence among countries has consequences, like the financial crisis, that are out of our control. That is why in 2008, the crisis hit Argentina even though we were well-prepared after the previous crisis in 2001 when we took measures to keep the levels of economic activity high. The president took good measures to keep employment stable. So even though our economy and employment are growing again, we hope we will not be hit by the measures being taken in Europe. We are hoping that Europe will reflect a bit more and not take any measures that will generate unemployment or lower social security. I know from experience that these austerity measures are not the right decision.

The challenges facing the global jobs pact will be overcome because the pact has moral value. It appears just when countries needed it. Indeed, many countries have adopted policies that are included in the pact. And these policies were well received. But this global pact still needs to become really global. Every country should adopt it as an essential tool for economic growth and social justice.