

The United Nations Independent Expert on Foreign Debt and Human Rights and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung cordially invite you to a side event in the context of the 34th session of the Human Rights Council.

LABOUR RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND AUSTERITY POLICY

FRIDAY 3 MARCH 2017, 13.00 –15.00; ROOM XXV, PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

In response to debt and financial crises States have adopted fiscal consolidation measures, such as reducing the public sector wage bill or the number of people employed in the public sector, and labour market reforms to render the labour market more flexible to increase the competitiveness of their economies. Taken measures include freezing or reducing the minimum wage, extending working hours, and weakening the collective bargaining system through decentralization.

Such reforms have often reduced the legal protection of workers and affected the bargaining power of trade unions, with important implications for workers' standard of living, economic equality and social cohesion, among others. In fact, in a number of cases, these reforms have amounted to violations of human rights obligations and international labour standards.

The panel will discuss labour law reforms that, in the context of structural adjustment and austerity policies, have frequently been implemented in many countries, either on their own initiative or at the behest of external creditors. The thematic report by the UN Independent Expert, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, on the impact of structural adjustment and fiscal consolidation policies on labour and human rights submitted to the 34th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council will constitute a basis for discussion ([A/HRC/34/57](#)).

OPENING REMARKS:

- ❖ **HUBERT RENÉ SCHILLINGER, OFFICE DIRECTOR, FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG GENEVA**

SPEAKERS:

- ❖ **JUAN PABLO BOHOSLAVSKY, UN INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON FOREIGN DEBT AND HUMAN RIGHTS**
- ❖ **FRANZ EBERT, RESEARCH FELLOW, MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUTE**
- ❖ **EVELYN ASTOR, INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION**
- ❖ **IOANNIS IOANNIDIS, GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

MODERATION:

- ❖ **JERONIM CAPALDO, ILO (TBC)**

☞ **Sandwiches and light refreshments will be served prior to the event** ☞

NB: valid UN accreditation for the HRC session is needed to attend the event. Please notify the organizers at least 3 working days before the event should you need accreditation to access the Palais des Nations via iengel@fes-geneva.org