



## Not this way: September the 29th, General Strike.

The Spanish Trade Union Confederations of Comisiones Obreras and the Unión General de Trabajadores have taken the decision of initiating a process of actions which will be culminated by the General Strike of the coming September the 29<sup>th</sup>. It is our aim to express the Spanish workers' sound rejection towards the financial cuts in social policies and the abolition of worker's rights by the Government, under the coverage of European directives.

**The Spanish Government and other European Governments have disappointed the citizenship they represent.** The tremendous economic settlements which are being adopted as a "shock treatment" to get out the crisis are socially unfair, as well as they mean a step back in labour law. Also, these formulas are wrong in economic terms, as they compromise the possibilities of economic growth and employment creation.

Also, the Spanish Government has mended its ways by provoking a radical shift within its economic and social policy. Now it is clearly oriented in three directions. First of all, towards a severe cut in public expenditure which falls back into the workers and pensioners shoulders. In the second place, the Government has taken the decisions of undertaking a severe reduction in public investment which will hold economic growth back and increase the unemployment rate. At last but not least, the Executive has imposed a labour reform that will suppose the elimination of some rights for every citizen at his work.

After an irresponsible performance of the employers' organizations – which were only focused in obtaining benefits by making working conditions cheaper and by undermining the position of workers – the Government has decided to carry out a labour deregulation which could be followed with further social and labour cuts.

- **The labour reform will not create employment.**

- **The labour reform will not reduce the duality between temporary contracts and fixed contracts** and will increase temporality.
- **The labour reform will make redundancies cheaper and easier**, as the objective causes covered by the law will be extended.
- **The labour reform will empower employers to modify working conditions on their own accord** (schedules, geographical and functional mobility, etc.)
- **The labour reform will weaken collective bargaining**, by making it easier to companies to adopt measures to avoid the fulfilment of the content of collective agreements.
- **The labour reform will privatize the unemployment management** and will expand the field of action of temporary work agencies towards the management of risk population groups and public employment.

To sum up, **the Government has given the power of the State at the service of those demanding “flexibility” in the labour market. Furthermore, these groups still believe this reform is not enough, as they do not want more flexibility but an scenario of total flexibility.** When what it is demanded is less social contributions, a cheaper process of redundancy, less judicial protection, to decrease the power of collective agreements and a lower regulation of contracts, what these groups are actually calling for is the absolute deregulation of the labour market. The implementation in this field of neoliberal policies that have previously failed in the financial markets – and which are the origin of this crisis – would lead us to a third world labour situation.

We strongly reject those policies developed by European Union Governments under the rules of those who started the crisis. The financial markets are now setting out settlement policies at reducing working and living conditions of the European citizens' expenses.

An economy which is not creating employment is useless for the citizenship, as so it is a Government acting against the interest of the people. The most representative Spanish Trade Unions are not willing to accept policies which are presented as the only possibilities. These proposals are based upon a false determinism, and they are nothing but the option of resignation and immobilism.

Other options and other policies are possible. It is necessary to be committed for a more social Europe in which social negotiations are not subjugated any more to market

dynamics. The reasons why UGT and CCOO have called for general strike next September the 29<sup>th</sup> are the following:

- We demand a policy to reduce public deficit through increasing incomes instead of decreasing expenditure. Hence, we also called for a planning to meet the deficit objectives of the Stability and Growth Pact of the European Union within a period compatible with the reactivation of economy and the employment creation.
- We demand the withdrawal of the labour reform, a detrimental law which makes redundancies easier for employers and make working conditions worse.
- We defend collective bargaining as the frame for working conditions protection, and we strongly oppose against the attempts of employers organizations to assume the capacity of breaking the agreements on their own accord.
- We claim public pension system as the focal point of our social protection system. The public pension system development and adaptation to the social evolution should only be achieved through social and political agreements.
- We demand a new fiscal policy to strengthen the structure of State incomes. Abolished taxes, such as the patrimony and inheritance taxes, should be recovered. The Government should be committed towards a higher collection of income based upon fiscal progressivity. At the same time, tax evasion must be fought with higher determination.

According to all these reasons, the Trade Union Confederations of the Unión General de Trabajadores and Comisiones Obreras have adopted the decision of beginning a process of actions which will be finished by the General Strike which has been called for next September the 29<sup>th</sup>. It is our aim to express Spanish workers strong opposition against those policies of social cuts and the abolition of workers rights decreed by the Spanish Government and supported by the European Union.