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## **Creation of quality jobs crucial to fighting Latin American poverty, says UN official**



ILO Director-General Juan Somavia

15 December 2010 – The creation of quality jobs is a key element in an economic recovery that is turning out to be uncertain for the Latin American and Caribbean region and for the world as a whole, the United Nations top labour official has warned.

“The quality of employment determines the quality of a society,” the Director-General of the International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)), Juan Somavia, [told](#) the opening session of his agency’s American Regional Meeting in Santiago, Chile, yesterday. “Giving up this idea means condemning millions of workers to an uncertain future. This will only help to perpetuate the cycle of poverty across generations.”

Even though Latin America and the Caribbean have recovered from the crisis more quickly than other parts of the world, the region faces economic and labour uncertainty, he said. “The future looks uncertain, not only for the rest of the world but for the Latin American and Caribbean region as well,” he added.

The UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) presented a document on Monday showing that the region’s economic output is expected to slow down from six per cent in 2010 to 4.2 per cent in 2011.

Mr .Somavia expressed particular concern about the need to protect and create jobs for young workers, whose unemployment rate is three times higher than that of adults.

“Just like the quality of employment defines the quality of a society, the future of a society is determined by the employment of its young workers,” he said. “An economy that is not able to provide jobs to its youth is an economy that steals away their future and that lets down families and the society as a whole.”

He also highlighted the role most regional countries played during the crisis by implementing counter-cyclical policies and protecting and promoting employment. The ILO’s latest data published ahead of the week-long meeting shows that the urban unemployment rate for region in 2010 has returned to its pre-crisis level.

The ILO regional meeting brings together labour and employment ministers as well as workers’ and employers’ leaders from 35 countries in the Americas.

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