Contribution ID: **51** Type: **Speaker**

The Fractured Labour Process And Responses To It

The rise of new forms of 'precarious' work in South Africa over the last few decades has necessitated a return to the study of the capitalist labour process. Labour broking, outsourcing, contract work and casual work are often described as 'atypical' forms of work but, as we will demonstrate, they have fast become the norm. In this paper we will detail how workplace restructuring has gone hand-in-hand with processes of labour casualiation and the implications for the decent work agenda. We demonstrate how trade unions have largely failed to keep pace with these developments and have neglected to organise precarious workers. Furthermore, we argue that, despite some recent positive reforms in the rights for precarious workers, the institutional framework that is intended to safeguard worker rights is in many cases denying workers their rights. Taken together this suggests the need for a radical rethink for the role of the state in promoting and safeguarding decent work for all.

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Track Classification: Plenary