protectionist way is not self-evident[14]. Four remarks should be made at this step: (1) as said De Wet (1995: 446-447), the neoliberalistic approach suggests that labor standards interfer in the market processes and distort the free trade, so that the non-observance of core labor standards would be a tool to strengthen exports and foreign direct investment. It believes in market mechanisms which will throw out of the market the "employers-without-concern-for-their-employees" (low wages, unsafe working conditions, and so forth); (2) even the OECD acknowledges that there is no correlation between real-wage growth and the degree of observance of freedom of association rights. There is no evidence that freedom of association rights worsened in countries liberalizing trade. There is no evidence that the promotion of such rights impeded a subsequent trade liberalization. There is no evidence that freedom of association strongly influences the determination of export prices. Indeed, freedom of association could increase labour costs as well as reduce them in raising job satisfaction and productivity. There is no evidence that "low" core standards could lead to "low" real-wage growth, or that "high" core standards imply higher real-wage growth; (3) there is no evidence that low-standards countries have a better export performance than high-standards countries; there seems to be a two-way relationships between successfully trade reforms and improvements in core standards, so that the enforcement of core labor standards appear as strenghtening the long-run economic performance of the countries; (4) we do not know the real impact of international codes of conduct for multinationals (such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Entreprises and the ILO Tripartite Declaration) on the enforcement of core labor standards in developing countries (OECD: 1996: 6-9; 36-37; 45-46).

The "lone ranger syndrome" (or "free-rider problem") plays a major role in the political will of States' leaders to improve labor conditions in their own countries. Moreover, in increasing labor standards within developing countries, developed countries could negatively affect the competitiveness of their own

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[14] Steve CHARNOVITZ, «Fair Labor Standards and International Trade», *Journal of World Trade Law*, vol. 20, January-February 1986, p. 61-72; Guy CAIRE, *Freedom of Association and Economic Development*, Geneva, ILO, 1977.