



## Invitation to join

AFTINET is a national network of over 90 community organisations and many more individuals concerned about trade and investment policy.

AFTINET grew out of the successful campaign by community organisations against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), which had attempted to restrict the ability of governments to regulate both investment and key areas of social policy.

The collapse of the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Meeting and of the 2003 Cancun Meeting and the divisions at the 2005 Hong Kong Meeting showed that the world trading system is failing to meet the needs of developing countries for fairer trade rules which do not erode social policies. Community organisations have continued the debate about international trade agreements and have demanded greater accountability by the Australian government for its role in the WTO and bilateral trade agreements like the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement.

## AFTINET Principles

There is widespread concern that current trade policy gives priority to the flow of goods, services, investment and finance at the expense of local development, protection of the environment and human rights.

Trade agreements can restrict the scope of legitimate government regulation in many areas. Under the guise of deregulation and free trade, regulatory powers are in fact transferred to international institutions beyond the reach of democratic accountability.

Trade disputes processes, conducted behind closed doors, have defined environmental regulation, food safety regulation, and local industry policies as barriers to trade. These decisions can be enforced through trade sanctions.

There is a wealth of international law developed through the United Nations (UN) on human rights, labour rights, cultural development, rights of indigenous people, the environment and health and safety. UN processes are more transparent and accountable than those of the WTO, and its agreements are enacted through domestic legislation in each member country. In some cases WTO disputes processes have undermined established principles recognised in international environment and health law such as the precautionary principle, that is, the right to restrict potential dangers to health and environment.

Thus trade processes can deliver favourable trade and investment conditions for some corporations but foster a race to the bottom on regulatory standards.

Developing country government and non-government organisations have criticised the lack of transparency of WTO process and its domination by the governments of the most powerful economies.

**We reject a “fortress Australia” protectionist strategy and welcome the development of fair trading relationships with all countries. However we believe that trade and investment policy should be based on local conditions and fair regulatory standards and should be decided through democratically accountable processes.**

## AFTINET Aims and Objectives

- a critical re-assessment of the WTO and other trade structures and dispute processes;
- greater public discussion and accountability for government trade policy and for international trade negotiation processes;
- a trade and investment framework which does not erode local ability to regulate on issues of economic development, the environment, human rights and labour rights;
- more effective representation of developing countries and more effective international regulation through the United Nations on the environment, human rights and labour rights.

## AFTINET will

- monitor trade and investment negotiation processes;
- establish contacts with similar international networks;
- exchange information and basic educational material on trade issues;
- raise community awareness and debate through public events and activities and
- seek to change trade and investment policy based on these principles

### **Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network Ltd**

The AFTINET constitution provides a basic democratic structure for the organisation. Members elect a working group which administers the organisation. The working group keeps membership and financial records and reports to annual general meetings of members. AFTINET is registered under commonwealth legislation as a company limited by guarantee to limit the financial liability of members to their membership fee. Organisations and individuals who do not wish to become members can become subscribers. This means they receive all other benefits of membership but cannot vote at meetings and are not bound by the constitution.

A copy of the constitution can be obtained from the address over the page.

## AFTINET SUBSCRIPTION FORM

You can subscribe as an individual or an organisation.

### Subscribers will receive

- regular AFTINET publications
- regular email bulletins with relevant news, analysis and events on trade and investment issues
- access to the bulletin to publicise their own activities relevant to AFTINET
- news about specific AFTINET initiatives
- optional access to a discussion list with more frequent email discussion for those who want this option.

Please subscribe me / my organisation to AFTINET.

Name / Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration:

Name / Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

I / We agree with the AFTINET principles and will join with others to implement them.

I / my organisation wish(es) to be a member under the constitution.  Yes  No

OR

I / my organisation wish(es) to be a subscriber (without membership rights.)  Yes  No

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## How to subscribe to AFTINET Tax Invoice - ABN 83 659 681 462

### Please indicate type of membership\*

- \$165 International / National / Large Organisation (includes large state organisations)
- \$44 Small Organisation (less than 100 members or few resources)
- \$55 Passionate Individual Member
- \$33 Individual waged
- \$10 Individual concession

*\*All membership fees are GST inclusive*

- I would also like to be on the interactive/discussion AFTINET mailing list and receive more frequent e-mails

## Donations

AFTINET receives no government or corporate funding and relies on the active support of members. Please consider giving a donation.

I would like to make a one-off donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to pledge a monthly donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

You can pay by cheque, money order or credit card. Cheques should be made payable to AFTINET.

I enclose a cheque / money order for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my (please circle) VISA / MASTERCARD / BANKCARD.

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date : \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Post cheques and completed form to AFTINET, Level 3, Suite 3B, 110 Kippax Street, SURRY HILLS NSW 2010.

## Over 70 organisations have already subscribed to AFTINET, including

Australian Council of Trade Unions  
National Council of Churches in Australia  
Australian Catholic Social Justice Council  
UnitingCare NSW / ACT  
Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union  
Australian Nursing Federation  
Australian Education Union  
National Tertiary Education Union  
Community and Public Sector Union  
Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union  
Greenpeace  
Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW  
Oxfam/Community Aid Abroad  
AID/WATCH  
Public Interest Advocacy Centre  
Friends of the Earth Australia  
Consumer Law Centre (Vic)  
Environment Centre (NT)  
Women's Electoral Lobby (WA)



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