

JOIN AFTINET

Tax invoice – ABN 83 659 681 462

Members receive regular news and analysis, as well as access to the Bulletin to publicise their own activities.

I declare that **I / my organisation** wish(es) to be a member under AFTINET's constitution and that **I / we** agree with the AFTINET principles (below) and will join with others to implement them.

Name / Organisation _____ Contact person _____

Postal address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Type of membership: (all membership fees include GST)

Individual:

- \$77 Passionate
- \$55 Waged
- \$15 Concession

Organisation:

- \$330 International/National/Large Organisation (includes large state orgs)
- \$110 Small Organisation (less than 100 members of few resources)

AFTINET receives no government or corporate funding and relies on your support. **Please consider donating:**

- Make a one-off donation of \$ ____
- Pledge a monthly donation of \$ ____

Payment details:

- Please charge \$ __ to my (please circle) VISA / MASTERCARD / BANK CARD:

Card number: _____ expiry date: ____ / ____

Name: _____ signature _____

- I enclose a cheque for \$ __ (cheques should be made payable to The Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network)

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 trade agreements, and its agreements are enacted through domestic legislation in each member country. In some cases trade 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. Some trade and investment agreements give rights to foreign investors to sue governments if public regulation harms their investment.

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 trade negotiations and the 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

Australian Fair Trade & Investment Network Ltd

About AFTINET

AFTINET is a national network of community organisations and many individuals which campaigns for fair trade based on human rights, labour rights and environmental sustainability.

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 World Trade Organisation (WTO) is failing to meet the needs of developing countries for fairer trade rules which do not erode social policies.

AFTINET's members have demanded greater accountability by the Australian government for its role in the WTO and in bilateral and regional trade agreements like the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

AFTINET supplies education materials, regular bulletins and speakers at public events. We make submissions to government and opposition parties to change Australian trade policy. We form links with similar organisations in other countries to argue for fairer rules for international trade and investment.

AFTINET:

- monitors trade and investment negotiation processes;
- establishes contacts with similar international networks;
- exchanges information and basic educational material on trade issues;
- raises community awareness and debate through public events and activities and
- seeks to change trade and investment policy based on these principles

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.

Structure and constitution

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 is available by emailing campaign@aftinet.org.au

AFTINET members include:

- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Conservation Foundation
- Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
- Public Health Association of Australia
- ActionAid
- AID/WATCH
- Greenpeace
- Friends of the Earth
- Oxfam
- Union Aid abroad - APHEDA
- Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
- Australian Nursing Federation
- Australian Education Union
- Australian Services Union
- Community and Public Sector Union
- Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW

Contact us

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