



Trade Justice Bulletin

June 2022

Inside this edition:

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [New government has a mandate for progressive reform of trade](#)
3. [AFTINET and allies urge the new government to support strong action on COVID-19 medicine monopolies at WTO](#)
4. [Support the global actions for Covid-19 equity during the WTO ministerial conference!](#)
5. [We told the government: Indo-Pacific trade talks need community consultation](#)
6. [Trade justice election forum featured on SBS News in Depth!](#)
7. [AFTINET in the news](#)

1. Introduction

Dear Members,

In this month's bulletin, we want to say **thank you** to all the trade justice activists who took action during the election!

More than **70 supporters** registered for our election forum, and over **360 people** sent emails to their local candidates calling for an end to trade secrecy. Our trade policy scorecard was shared widely, with **thousands of voters** learning about how the main parties stack up on trade.

Thanks to your efforts, we're in a strong position to start building the case in the new parliament for trade policy that safeguards workers' rights, human rights, and the planet.

All the best,

The AFTINET Team.

P.S. Did you know you can now leave a gift in your will to carry on the fight for trade justice? [Learn more](#) about how a gift in your will can help make an impact.

2. New government has a mandate for progressive reform of trade

The newly appointed Minister for Trade and Tourism, **Senator Don Farrell**, and the Assistant Minister for Trade and Manufacturing, **Senator Tim Ayers**, have a mandate for the reform of Australia's secretive trade negotiation process to ensure transparency and accountability.

The ministers will face a number of early tests of Labor's promises on trade. Chief among them will be whether the new government will actively support and co-sponsor a comprehensive proposal at

the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** to temporarily lift patent monopolies on COVID19 medicines, as Labor urged the previous government to do.

The new ministers must also work to improve trade deals signed by the previous government with the **UK** and **India**, which Labor criticised as failing to protect workers' rights and for being negotiated with "zero consultation."

AFTINET has written to welcome the new ministers and requested a meeting to discuss how a Labor government could implement a trade justice agenda in the new term of parliament.

[Read more](#)

3. AFTINET and allies urge the new government to support strong action on COVID-19 medicine monopolies at WTO

Ahead of crucial meetings at the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**, we joined with our allies to write to the new Trade Minister to urge him to support a comprehensive, meaningful waiver on COVID19 medicine monopolies.

Our Convenor, **Dr Patricia Ranald**, told the press:

*"It is a scandal that the WTO has delayed access to COVID-19 medicines for low-income countries because some governments are protecting pharmaceutical monopolies at the expense of human lives. **The Labor government must implement its policy to support a comprehensive waiver on monopolies.**"*

[Read our full statement](#)

4. Support the global actions for COVID-19 medicines equity during the WTO ministerial conference June 12!

Ahead of the WTO Ministerial Conference, our international allies are organising events and actions in support of a waiver on COVID19 monopolies. To see what's happening around the world, check out the [campaign webpage](#). To support the campaign, you can scroll down the website to deliver a letter to an ambassador or send a Tweet to a world leader.

[Take action!](#)

5. We told the government: Indo-Pacific trade talks need community consultation

With US President **Joe Biden** launching the '**Indo-Pacific Economic Framework**' (**IPEF**) just after Australia's election, we sent an urgent letter to the new government to highlight the importance of widespread consultation with civil society organisations during any negotiations.

Despite assurances that IPEF will be a non-binding agreement that safeguards workers' rights and environmental protections, we're concerned that the interests of **Big Tech** and **Big Pharma** will override the rights of citizens unless governments hear the voices of trade unions, environmentalists, public health experts, and digital rights advocates.

[Learn more](#)

6. Trade justice election forum featured on SBS News in Depth!

Our trade justice election forum has hit the airwaves! Tune into [SBS News in Depth](#) podcast to hear our guests – **Dr Patricia Ranald** (AFTINET) **Dr Deborah Gleeson** (PHAA), **Matthew Rose** (ACF), and **Steve Murphy** (AMWU) – speak about how trade can help or hinder the new government in recovering from COVID19 and decarbonising the economy.

[Tune in here](#)

Our guest speakers examined the parties' trade track record and the need for trade transparency, the need to lift WTO monopolies on COVID-19 medicines; and the need for enforceable commitments to labour rights and environmental standards in trade deals. You can also watch the full recording [here](#).

7. AFTINET in the news

- Rights-Based NGO Rates Political Parties on Trade Justice, [Sydney Criminal Lawyers](#), May 6
- What a new Minister should do about trade policies and trade justice, [Pearls and Irritations](#), May 12
- Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement hangs in the balance, [SBS News in Depth](#), May 16
- Why Trade Policy Should Matter in The Election, [Australian Outlook](#), May 18
- New Australian govt urged to back vaccine IP waiver, [Innovation Australia](#), June 6