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**Submission by the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network to
the Senate Inquiry on the Fair Trade (Workers' Rights) Bill 2013,
September, 2013**

The Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) is a national network of 60 organisations and many more individuals supporting fair regulation of trade, consistent with human rights, labour rights and environmental protection. AFTINET welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Inquiry on the Fair Trade (Workers' Rights) Bill 2013.

AFTINET has made numerous submissions to successive governments over the past 13 years supporting the principles on which this Bill is based. Without enforceable commitments by governments to labour rights, trade liberalization intensifies competition which leads to downward pressure on labour rights. We believe that the global trade system should be underpinned by commitments by all governments to implement the basic rights contained in ILO Conventions which are endorsed by the overwhelming majority of governments.

The Australian Government should ensure that all trade agreements include commitments by governments to implement agreed international labour rights, as summarized in the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and relevant ILO Conventions. These include:

- the right of workers to freedom of association and the effective right to collective bargaining (ILO conventions 87 and 98),
- the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour (ILO conventions 29 and 105),
- the effective abolition of child labour (ILO conventions 138 and 182), and
- the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (ILO conventions 100 and 111).
- minimum wages as determined in each particular country consistent with ILO conventions
- health and safety standards consistent with ILO conventions

The implementation of these rights should be enforced through the government-to-government dispute processes contained in trade agreements.

Recognition of special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should include assistance and capacity building for them to implement the labour rights in the agreement.