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February 26, 2021

Masayuki Hyodo  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Sumitomo Corporation  
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Re: Repeated Human Rights Violations at Sumitomo Office Building

To Sumitomo Corporation,

This letter serves as a human rights complaint against Sumitomo Corporation. Sumitomo Corporation has failed to uphold its Human Rights Policy and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines, and has failed to address repeated human rights violations at its Miami office property, known as Miami Tower. Over the course of 16 months, SEIU Local 32BJ has repeatedly requested to meet with Sumitomo Corporation in regards to the human rights violations at its property. Requests have been made via email, phone, and in-person at its North American headquarters. The company has yet to respond.

SEIU Local 32BJ represents 75,000 janitors in major markets up and down the Eastern Seaboard. Our members work closely with major commercial real estate firms, property managers and responsible contractors in these markets to ensure that property service workers are able to access their basic right to a safe workplace.

At Miami Tower, janitors employed by the cleaning contractor SFM Services have been repeatedly exposed to unsafe working conditions.<sup>1</sup> Workers have been threatened, retaliated against, and experienced other forms of intimidation related to their attempts to form a union. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has fined the cleaning contractor over \$10,000 for three violations related to hazardous working conditions. Multiple Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs) have been filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for violating workers' right to form a union. Local and national media outlets have reported on these events. More recently, workers at the property were on strike for three days in protest of violations of their rights.

Sumitomo Corporation has failed to uphold its own human rights policies. On its website, Sumitomo has published Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines.<sup>2</sup> These guidelines express a commitment to the following policies across its supply-chain: upholding the freedom of association and the right to join a union without intimidation; non-discrimination of workers regardless of political affiliation or union membership; and safe and healthy work environments and observance of laws and regulations on health and safety. In addition, Sumitomo's Human Rights Policy states that the company will seek to engage in dialogue with relevant stakeholders concerning human rights violations.<sup>3</sup> Sumitomo has yet to respond to the repeated concerns we have raised regarding the violations of their CSR guidelines at Miami Tower.

In the United States, workers have a federally protected right to organize a union and to a safe workplace. At Miami Tower, this right has been violated by the cleaning contractor SFM Services. By failing to address the working conditions at its property and respond to SEIU Local 32BJ's efforts to engage in dialogue, Sumitomo Corporation has failed to operate as a responsible global partner.

For further information regarding the human rights violations at Miami Tower, contact SEIU 32BJ's Research Department at [ANoffke@seiu32bj.org](mailto:ANoffke@seiu32bj.org).

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<sup>1</sup> To read more about the irresponsible cleaning standards and working conditions in the Miami market, see: Lopez, Yadira. "Janitors Protest Unsafe Working Conditions during Pandemic | Miami Herald." The Miami Herald, September 11, 2020. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/article245732070.html>; Ceballos, Joshua. "Miami Tower Janitors Say They Faced Retaliation for Striking | Miami New Times." The Miami New Times, February 16, 2021. <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/miami-tower-janitors-say-they-faced-retaliation-for-striking-11855697>; SEIU Local 32BJ, and UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge. "Sweeping in Change: South Florida Janitors Unite for Responsibility in The Commercial Real Estate Industry." Miami, FL, November 2019. [https://www.seiu32bj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Sweeping-in-Change\\_So-FL-Justice-for-Janitors.pdf](https://www.seiu32bj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Sweeping-in-Change_So-FL-Justice-for-Janitors.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sumitomocorp.com/en/jp/sustainability/csr>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.