

April 7th, 2021

To Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

Dear Sir,

This is in response to your email of (date) with which you forwarded a copy of a letter dated February 26, 2021, from Local 32BJ, SEIU, Service Employees International Union (the “Union”) to Masayuki Hyodo, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sumitomo Corporation (“SC”).

The Union’s letter to Mr. Hyodo is described as a “human rights complaint,” and claims that SC has failed to uphold with its Human Rights Policy and Corporate Social Responsibility guidelines by failing to address what are referred to as human rights violations at the office building located at 100 SE 2nd Street in Miami, Florida, which is known as Miami Tower. The February 26th letter incorrectly refers to this property as SC’s “Miami office property” and incorrectly refers to the New York offices of Sumitomo Corporation of America (“SCOA”) as SC’s North American headquarters.

While the Union’s letter suggests that Miami Tower is owned by SC, that is not correct. In fact, Miami Tower is owned by an entity known as USPO Miami, LLC (“USPO”). SCOA provides asset management service for USPO. USPO has contracted with SFM Services (“SFM”), a cleaning contractor to perform cleaning, janitorial and related services at the Miami Tower. Under USPO’s agreement with SFM, it is SFM’s obligation to comply with all applicable workplace rules and regulations, including those concerning worker safety and anti-discrimination laws.

SC takes seriously the concerns expressed in the communications sent to them by the Union and the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (the “Centre”) with respect to working and safety conditions for employees of SFM working at Miami Tower. SC has shared them with SCOA and SCOA further shared them with Transwestern Commercial Services Florida, LLC (“Transwestern”), which provides property management services to the building. Transwestern, on behalf of SCOA has shared the content of the communications with SFM, which has advised SCOA that it is in compliance with the applicable health, safety and labor laws cited by the Union and the Centre. We have communicated to them concerning our expectations that they will comply with applicable laws and regulations and we continue to monitor the situation with the assistance of Transwestern.

SCOA has directed Transwestern to continue to monitor these matters and has reminded SFM of its obligations. SC respects and recognizes the right of those employed by SFM at the Miami Tower to have a safe work place as well as their right, if they so decide, to be represented by the Union. We have shared this viewpoint with Transwestern and are confident that they too share these commitments. However the types of decisions that the Union has raised in its various communications to SC, as well as the communications it has sent to SCOA, are matters between SFM and its employees.

SC and its affiliates, including SCOA, are all committed to working to ensure a sustainable environment and to the compliance of those who we do business with, directly or indirectly including SFM, with all applicable laws and regulations, including in their work and provision of services at Miami Tower.

Very truly yours,
Sumitomo Corporation