



Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union  
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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Ofcom Cleaners Begin Official Dispute Following Suspensions of Colleagues**

London, UK — 09 June 2017 —

Cleaners at Ofcom Headquarters have begun an official industrial dispute following the suspension of two colleagues on baseless charges.

Facilities Management company Mitie, the cleaners' employer, has suspended Mr Tedy Bariqui Leiva and Mr Herney Melendez from their jobs at Riverside House, 2a Southwark Bridge Road. Mr Bariqui Leiva is suspended for alleged bullying and intimidation following his significant recent role in securing the London Living Wage for himself and his colleagues. Mr Melendez's suspension is for baseless allegations of theft, which were raised in the wake of his refusal to offer a witness statement supporting the misconduct allegations against Mr Bariqui Leiva.

In April 2017, the Riverside House cleaners approached CAIWU, the Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union, for support in the successful London Living Wage campaign, which brought them into line with Ofcom's publicly-stated policy of ensuring all its staff benefit from fair wages, terms and conditions of employment.

The union says it will support its members to use all available methods, up to and including industrial action, in order to secure the reinstatements of Mr Bariqui Leiva and Mr Melendez. On Friday June 9th the union declared an official dispute with Mitie over the suspensions, and will shortly be balloting its members about industrial action.

A CAIWU spokesperson said, 'Mitie has produced no evidence whatsoever to support these baseless allegations against our members. We believe Mr Bariqui Leiva is being victimised for his union activities during the London Living Wage campaign, and Mr Melendez for his refusal to incriminate his colleague. Mitie's industrial relations record is very poor and this isn't the first time they've victimised union activists. They recently sent out letters illegally threatening workers with disciplinary action after they took part in a peaceful and legal demonstration near Riverside House.'

**END**

**Notes to editor:**

For more information, please contact Alberto Durango, CAIWU national organiser, on 075 900 98084 or Bruce Coker, CAIWU organiser, at [bruce@caiwu.org.uk](mailto:bruce@caiwu.org.uk)

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