

Statutes of International Union of Speleology (UIS)

Adopted by vote of the UIS General Assembly at the 4th International Congress of Speleology (Ljubljana, 1965) and modified at the:

- 5th International Congress of Speleology (Stuttgart, 1969),
- 7th International Congress of Speleology (Sheffield, 1977),
- 12th International Congress of Speleology (La Chaux-de-Fonds, 1997),
- 14th International Congress of Speleology (Kalamos, 2005)
- 17th International Congress of Speleology (Sydney, Australia, 2017)

Preamble

According to the Union Internationale de Spéléologie's Act of Societies Article 11 (official paper of the Republic of Slovenia No. 60/5) created during the 4th International Congress of Speleology in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, on September 16, 1965, and amended during the session of the General Assembly held on July 23, 2001 in Brasilia DF, Brazil during the 13th International Congress of Speleology, the Union's General Assembly set the Union's stable address in Slovenia in accordance with the Slovenian law about Associations (Zakon o društvih, Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia 64/11).

Article 1: Scope

These *Statutes* are the basic act of the International Union of Speleology (UIS).

Article 2: Name and general function

1. The name of this organization is: Mednarodna speleološka zveza UIS, Union Internationale de Spéléologie (hereafter referred to in English as "International Union of Speleology," "Union," or "UIS").
2. The UIS office and address is 6230 Postojna, Titov trg 2, Slovenia.
3. The UIS is a legal subject of Slovene law.
4. The UIS has a logo and other symbolic emblems defined in the *UIS Visual Identity Guide*.
5. The UIS is governed by its General Assembly.
6. The UIS General Assembly elects the UIS Bureau to conduct the business of the UIS.
7. The UIS Representative to Slovenia is appointed by the UIS Bureau.
8. The UIS can be associated with caving and other organizations in Slovenia and abroad.
9. The UIS works on a volunteer basis and is open to the public.
10. The UIS publicizes its activities directly by publishing reports and/or through public media.
11. The UIS can have real or other property, which must be listed as property of the UIS in its inventory. Property of the UIS can be bought or sold through the decision of the UIS Bureau.
12. The UIS is a non-profit organization that may sell goods and services and accept donations that are not contrary to its non-profit status.
13. The UIS can be dissolved by a vote of more than two-thirds of the members of its General Assembly. In the case of UIS dissolution, the General Assembly of the UIS will decide to whom the assets, property, and authority of the UIS will belong.

Article 3: Purpose

The purpose of the UIS is to promote fellowship between people in all countries who are interested in caves, karst, and related features and terrains (called "speleologists" in UIS documents), to develop and promote all aspects of speleology (scientific, technical, cultural, sporting, social, and economic), and the protection and management of the world's speleological and karst heritage in ways conducive to sustainable development in all locations

where caves or speleological activities occur. The administration of the UIS is described in detail in the *Internal Regulations* and associated documents described therein.

Article 4: Members of the UIS

(a) The UIS is an association of countries (called “Member Countries”). The Member Countries are not represented by the actual national governments but by speleologists in those countries by whatever means they decide, typically by national speleological organizations.

(b) Speleologists of each Member Country nominate, by their choice of means, two Delegates: a Delegate and a Substitute Delegate. These Delegates are persons authorized to represent their countries and ensure the link between the UIS Bureau and the speleologists of their country, particularly on matters regarding the information, documentation, and financing of the UIS. Use of “Delegate” in these *Statutes* implies the Substitute Delegate if the Delegate is not available.

(c) The term of office for each Delegate is the period between two Regular meetings of the UIS’s General Assembly. Each Member Country can re-nominate the same Delegates at the end of their term or nominate different people as the Delegates. Countries wishing to change their Delegates must inform the UIS Bureau of their nomination in writing before the opening of the General Assembly.

(d) Organizations interested in the development of speleology and in the activities of the UIS may apply in writing to become an Associated, Affiliated, or Cooperative Organization of the UIS.

(e) Associated, Affiliated, and Cooperative organizations may appoint a representative to the UIS, who may participate in the UIS’s open meetings but does not have the right to vote in the UIS’s decisions. This representative ensures the contacts and the exchange of information between the organization and the UIS Bureau.

(f) Member Countries that have not paid their annual fees for more than four consecutive years, without an accepted reason, lose their membership to the UIS. If someone from that country is serving on the UIS’s Bureau at that time, that person loses his or her Bureau position. Affiliated Organizations which have not paid for their annual fees for more than two consecutive years, without an accepted reason, lose their affiliation to the UIS.

Article 5: Bureau of the UIS

(a) During each Regular General Assembly meeting, the Delegates elect by secret ballot a Bureau comprised of a President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Operations, Secretary General, and Treasurer, collectively known as the “officers” or “Executive Committee” of the Bureau, and Adjunct Secretaries. The number of Adjunct Secretaries is described in the *Internal Regulations*.

(b) Bureau Members must be proposed by any UIS Delegate, Commission President, or Bureau Member (including Invited and Honorary Members). Each elected Bureau Member must be a citizen of a different Member County, including Invited Members but not Honorary Members.

(c) Bureau members are elected by absolute majority on a first ballot or by relative majority on a second ballot. In case of tied votes on the second ballot, the candidate with the greater

number of votes on the first ballot is elected. If this first ballot was also tied, a third vote will be held between only the tied candidates.

(d) Candidates for the Bureau should be nominated and announced at least two days prior to the election. Individuals can be nominated for no more than one position at one time. Elections will occur in the following order: President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Operations, Secretary General, Treasurer, and Adjunct Secretaries. Candidates who lose election for one position may run for a lower position. If there are an insufficient number of candidates for a position, then nominations will be open to the floor of the General Assembly.

(e) The President, Vice Presidents, and Adjunct Secretaries can hold their positions for no more than two consecutive terms. The Secretary General and Treasurer may be re-elected without any time limitation.

(f) Between Congresses, the Bureau represents the UIS and makes all decisions concerning the administration of the UIS. Bureau members should bring information and perspectives from their countries but do not represent their countries; their first duty is to the good of the UIS and all of its Member Countries. Decisions are made by a simple majority vote of all Bureau members present.

Article 6: Representative to Slovenia

(a) The UIS Representative to Slovenia is appointed by a majority vote of the UIS Bureau, either in person or electronically if conditions for authentication and non-repudiation are met.

(b) The UIS Representative to Slovenia shall be responsible for the following as they relate to Slovenian law and obligations in Slovenia:

1. ensures the implementation policy and management priorities of the UIS;
2. facilitates official visits of members of the UIS General Assembly and Bureau and their meetings;
3. communicates for and represents the UIS in official matters concerning legal registration, activities, operations, and organization;
4. manages UIS financial affairs as directed by the UIS Bureau;
5. assures logistical and administrative support to the UIS General Assembly and Bureau.

Article 7: General Assembly

(a) The General Assembly of the UIS is the collected Member Countries as represented by their Delegates. It serves as the highest rule-making and administrative authority in the UIS. Its function is to provide oversight and approval for major activities of the UIS as conducted by the Bureau.

(b) The General Assembly meets during each International Congress of Speleology, where the President and Secretary General deliver their reports. For any decisions by the Assembly, each country has only one vote. The General Assembly meeting is presided over by the UIS President or other designated Bureau Member.

(c) At the initiative of the Bureau or at the request of not less than one third of the Member Countries of the UIS, an Extraordinary General Assembly meeting can be called; the UIS's *Internal Regulations* define this process.

(d) Member Countries that have not paid their fees for more than three years at the date of a General Assembly meeting have no right to vote.

(e) During its meeting, the General Assembly elects, by the majority of the attending Delegates, one of the candidate countries proposing to organize the next International Congress. If there is no candidate country or no country selected during a Congress, the UIS Bureau will propose new candidates within 6 months and may organize an Extraordinary General Assembly to select the country that will host the Congress. In case of renunciation by the elected country, the UIS Bureau will select a new country to host the Congress.

(f) The General Assembly approves the activities of the Commissions.

Article 8: Functioning of the UIS

(a) The Bureau is accountable to the General Assembly. The activities of the Bureau are defined by the *Internal Regulations* and are in accordance with these *Statutes*. The *Internal Regulations* describe the prerogatives, roles and responsibilities of each member of the Bureau, the protocols for the UIS's activities, and the UIS's relationships with other organizations. Where these *Statutes* do not provide information or guidance, the *Internal Regulations* will be followed.

(b) The General Assembly is responsible for the establishment of Commissions. Membership of Commissions is open to all speleologists who wish to participate. Commissions usually meet during the UIS's Congresses or at other International Meetings. The members elect their own President, who is responsible for the Commission and who reports to the Bureau. Commissions are required to keep the Bureau informed of their activities. The Bureau can take necessary actions to develop Commissions, or to suspend them if they are insufficiently active or no longer deemed necessary.

(c) The Bureau may establish Committees as needed for specific issues or assistance. The tasks, duration, and membership of a Committee depend on its purpose. The Bureau will define each Committee's purpose, and may define its tasks, duration, and membership or assign some or all of those duties to the Committee.

(d) The official languages of the UIS are also those of the International Congress of Speleology: English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish.

(e) The UIS obtains its finances from:

1. annual fees paid by the speleological associations of Member Countries of the UIS as defined in the *Internal Regulations* as approved by the General Assembly;
2. annual fees paid by Affiliated Organizations of the UIS;
3. contributions from private and public individuals, institutions, organizations, corporations, and other sources, provided these contributions do not conflict with the UIS's *Code of Ethics* or other regulations, guidelines, and standards;
4. the sale of any goods or services either offered to the UIS or prepared under its supervision, which include (with Slovene current commercial activity codes, which may be amended in the future without modifying these *Statutes*):
 - i. Retail sale of newspapers and stationery in specialized outlets (G47.6.2);
 - ii. Retail sale of sporting equipment in specialized outlets (G47.6.4);

- iii. Publishing of all printed and digitally developed materials (books, journals, periodicals, etc.) (J58.1.4);
- iv. Educational materials (P85.5.9);
- v. Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserve activities (R91.0.4);
- vi. Other sports activities (R93.1.9);
- vii. Activities of professional membership organizations (S94.1.2);
- viii. Advertising activities (M.73.110);
- ix. Other professional, scientific and technical activities n.e.c. (M.74.900)
- x. Photographic activities (M.74.200);
- xi. Organization of conventions and trade shows (N.82.300).

(f) The Treasurer receives and manages all financial resources of the UIS, following the guidelines established by the Bureau, and arranges and is responsible for proper accounting procedures which will be examined annually by an independent auditor hired by the UIS and checked by two auditors during the Regular General Assembly meeting. These latter two auditors are elected by the General Assembly and must belong to countries other than that of the Treasurer.

Article 9: Commissions

The Commissions are internal organizations within the UIS that are directed by the Bureau. They are organized to study, collaborate, or work on some specific aspect of speleology with experts and interested parties from around the world.

Article 10: Modification of Statutes

(a) Any proposal for modification of the *Statutes* of the UIS must be submitted by written notification to the UIS Bureau at least six months before the meeting of the General Assembly. The proposal shall be studied by a committee established by the Bureau, and it shall be subject to the judgment of the General Assembly. Decisions are made by a simple majority of the General Assembly.

(b) In the case of disagreement on the interpretation of these *Statutes*, the original text in the English language shall be definitive.