

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION (ISCA) AND
THE UNION INTERNATIONALE DE SPELEOLOGIE (UIS)**

Speleologists have always considered karst and cave protection as a primary goal. Consequently, the Department of Karst and Cave Protection was established within the UIS.

Show cave managers, devoted to present the wonders of caves to the public, have always paid special attention to the preservation of those caves they manage. The issue of cave protection has been discussed during ISCA meetings.


Both UIS and ISCA are well aware of the strong attraction of people to the special environment of caves and the risk of irreparable damage due to activities that do not comply with the principles of environmental protection. ISCA and UIS, with all due respect to their respective autonomies, uphold similar views on cave protection and are certain that common trust and dialogue are essential for a fruitful cooperation.


During the 13th International Congress on Speleology in Brazil, July 2001, it was agreed upon to develop a strong collaboration between UIS and ISCA. Following such a decision, on the occasion of the ISCA meeting in Italy, October 2001, a contact was made between both organizations. At that time it was ascertained that UIS and ISCA share a common position in terms of both wild and show caves preservation.

Following the decision taken in Korea, July 2002, by the UIS Bureau and the Executive Committee of ISCA, it is now established and agreed upon that:

- 1) Caves have been considered as a real patrimonial treasure, and UIS and ISCA both intend to assume duties concerning their preservation
- 2) UIS acknowledges the necessity of the existence of show caves, and ISCA expresses its respect for the legitimate concerns about cave preservation
- 3) ISCA will work for show caves open to the public to be managed in a sustainable and environmentally sound way. UIS will support ISCA in this task
- 4) ISCA and UIS will carry on a common deliberation on cave activities, including the issue of underground adventure tours, to encourage that they are undertaken in a manner consistent with environmental principles and rules
- 5) UIS and ISCA will entertain a permanent and open exchange and dialogue, based on common trust, in order to ensure all the above. On the occasion of their respective congresses and assemblies both organizations will report on the developments concerning the matters listed above.

This Memorandum is accepted and signed by both Presidents in Postojna, Slovenia, on October 22, 2002.


Jose Ayrton Labegalini
President
Union Internationale de Spéléologie


Jorge Cabezas Fontanilla
President
International Show Caves Association