

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),
- at the 7th International Congress of Speleology (Sheffield, 1977),
- and the 12th International Congress of Speleology (La Chaux-de-Fonds, 1997).

Article 1: Aims

The aims of the Union Internationale de Spéléologie are the development of relations between speleologists of all nations and the co-ordination of their activities internationally.

Article 2: Members of the Union

- (a) The Union Internationale de Spéléologie is an association of persons (termed national delegates) authorised to represent the speleologists of the nations (called member nations) affiliated to the Union.
- (b) Speleologists of each nation are to nominate, by their choice of means, two national delegates: a principal delegate and a vice-delegate. These delegates ensure the link between the Bureau of the Union and the speleologists of their nation, particularly on matters regarding the information, documentation and financing of the Union.
- (c) The term of office for each delegate is the period between two ordinary general meetings of the Union's General Assembly. Each member nation can re-nominate the same main delegate and vice-delegate at the end of their term, or can nominate a new person, who becomes the new delegate or vice-delegate. Nations wishing to change their delegates or vice-delegates must inform the Bureau of the Union of their nomination in writing before the opening of the general meeting of the General Assembly.
- (d) Institutions interested in the development of speleology and in the activities of the Union may apply in writing to become affiliated with the Union.
- (e) Affiliated institutions may nominate a delegate to the Union, but have no right to vote in the Union's matters. This delegate ensures the contacts and the exchange of information between the institution and the Bureau of the Union.
- (f) Member nations that have not paid for their annual fees for more than 5 consecutive years without excuse, lose their membership of the Union and lose any position they may have in the Union's Bureau. Affiliated institutions which have not paid for their annual fees for more than 5 consecutive years without excuse lose their affiliation to the Union.

Article 3: Bureau of the Union

- (a) During each ordinary General Assembly, the titular national delegates (or vice-delegates in case of unavailability of the delegates) elect by secret ballot a Bureau comprised of one President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary General who also acts as Treasurer, and Adjunct-Secretaries whose total number is determined by the General Assembly.
- (b) Bureau members must be titular national delegates (vice-delegates) or persons proposed or recommended by the General Assembly. Each must be a citizen of a different nation, i.e. no nation may have two or more members on the Bureau.
- (c) Bureau members are elected by the attending titular delegates, 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 number of votes on the first ballot is decisive; if this first ballot was tied also, the older candidate is elected.
- (d) The President, Vice-Presidents and Adjunct-Secretaries can hold their position for no more than two consecutive terms. The Secretary General can be re-elected without any time limitation.
- (e) Should the position of President become vacant, presidential functions are assumed by the senior Vice-President until the following general meeting of the General Assembly. In case of vacancy of the position of Secretary General, the Bureau shall appoint a temporary Secretary General.
- (f) Between Congresses the Bureau represents the Union and takes all decisions concerning the administration of the Union.
- (g) The Bureau may consider applications for Union sponsorship of international meetings. It shall not approve sponsorship of meetings during the years when an International Congress of Speleology is held. All matters related to speleology are considered during the International Congresses only.
- (h) The Bureau directs the flow of all Union information.

Article 4: General Assemblies

- (a) The General Assembly of the Union holds an ordinary general meeting during each International Congress of Speleology. For the ballots, each nation has only one vote.
- (b) The delegates of member nations that have not paid for their fees for more than three years at the date of the general meeting have no right of vote.
- (c) During its general meeting, the General Assembly of the Union elects, by the relative majority of the attending titular delegates (or substitute vice-delegates), one of the candidate nations to organise the next International Congress. If there is no candidate nation during a Congress, or in case of renunciation by the elected nation, the Bureau of the Union proposes new candidates and organises a consultation of all titular delegates by mail; an election is then obtained by the relative majority of the votes received within a deadline set by the Bureau.

- (d) At the initiative of the Bureau or at the request of not less than 10 % of the member nations of the Union, an extra-ordinary general meeting of the General Assembly can be called. The delegates of member countries can vote by writing down their views on the different items on the agenda. Decisions are made by a simple majority.
- (e) The General Assembly approves the activities of Commissions, Working Groups and Committees.
- (f) Upon the proposal of the sitting Bureau, the General Assembly can give, honorary titles to outgoing members.

Article 5: Functioning of the Union

- (a) The Bureau is accountable to the General Assembly. The activities of the Bureau are defined by Internal Rules that are in accordance with the present statutes. These Internal Rules indicate the prerogatives, roles and responsibilities of each member of the Bureau.
- (b) The Bureau is responsible for the establishment of permanent Commissions, temporary Commissions or Working Groups in charge of studying specific problems, and for the establishment of non-scientific Committees. Membership of Commissions, Working Groups, and Committees is open to all speleologists who wish to participate. Commissions, Working Groups and Committees usually meet during Congresses or at International Meetings. The members elect their own President, who is responsible for the Commission, Working Group or Committee and who reports to the Bureau of the Union. Commissions, Working Groups or Committees are required to keep the Bureau of the Union informed of their activities. The Bureau can take necessary actions to develop Commissions, Working Groups and Committees, or to suspend them if they are insufficiently active or no longer deemed necessary.
- (c) The Bureau decides of the admission of institutions into the Union.
- (d) The official languages of the Union are these of the International Congresses of Speleology (French, English, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian).
- (e) The Union obtains its finances from:
 1. Individual fees paid by participants to International Congresses of Speleology and to all International Meetings under UIS patronage. The amount of the fee is decided during an ordinary general meeting of the General Assembly and it is collected by the organisers of the Congresses and Meetings at the same time as the registration fees.
 2. Annual fees paid by the speleological associations of member nations of the Union or given by official or private institutions.
 3. Annual fees paid by institutions which are affiliated to the Union.
 4. Irregular contributions of various origins (private or official institutions, learned or commercial societies, etc.), provided that these contributions do not jeopardise the ethical principles of the Union.
 5. The sale of publications either offered to the Union or prepared under its supervision.
 6. Other donations or legacies directed to the Union.

- (f) The Secretary General -Treasurer receives and manages all financial resources of the Union, following the guidelines established by the Bureau, He/she arranges and is responsible for proper accounting procedures, which will be checked by two auditors during the general assembly. These two auditors are national delegates elected by the General Assembly; they must belong to nations other than that of the Secretary General -Treasurer.

Article 6: Commissions, Working Groups and Committees

- (a) The Commissions and Working Groups (scientific) and Committees (non scientific) are directed by the Bureau.
- (b) The organisation of Working Groups, Commissions and Committees of the Union is as follows :
1. Departments should be in charge of protection, scientific research, exploration, documentation and education. A Department is directed by a President nominated by the President of the relevant Commission or Working Group after the latter is approved by the Union's General Assembly. The Department is responsible for sending the reports and the proposals of Commissions and Working Groups to the Union, for further transmittal to UNESCO.
 2. Commissions should focus on specific problems during the four years between two ordinary general meetings of the General Assembly, and can be renewed by vote of the General Assembly.
 3. The transformation of a Working Group into a Commission must be approved at the following ordinary general assembly.
- (c) The Bureau makes the following recommendations for the functioning of Commissions and Working Groups:
1. The activity of Commissions, Committees and Working Groups must be organised as simply as possible.
 2. In general, Commissions, Committees and Working Groups should not need a formal vote to function.
 3. If a formal vote is deemed necessary, it should be based on one vote per member nation that is actively participating in the work of the Commission, Committee and Working Group.
 4. If a Commission, Committee or Working Group wants to organise an activity in a member nation, it must inform the General Secretary of the Union, in order to obtain the agreement of the speleological organisation of the nation concerned via its titular delegate.
- (d) The members of the Bureau are *ex officio* members of all the Commissions, Working Groups and Committees, but without any right of vote.

Article 7: Modification of Statutes and Dissents

- (a) Any proposal for modification of the Statutes of the Union must be submitted by written notification to the Bureau of the Union at least 6 months before the general meeting of the General Assembly to be held during the following International Congress. The proposal shall be studied by a Statutes Committee together with any other proposals related to the Congress, and it shall be subject to the judgement of the General Assembly. If proposals for modifications important to international speleology are presented between the International Congresses of Speleology, the voting procedure will be that applied during an extraordinary general meeting of the General

Assembly. Member nations can vote by written ballot on all matters on the agenda. Decisions are by simple majority.

- (b) In the case of disagreement on the interpretation of the present Statutes, the original text in the French language shall be definitive.
