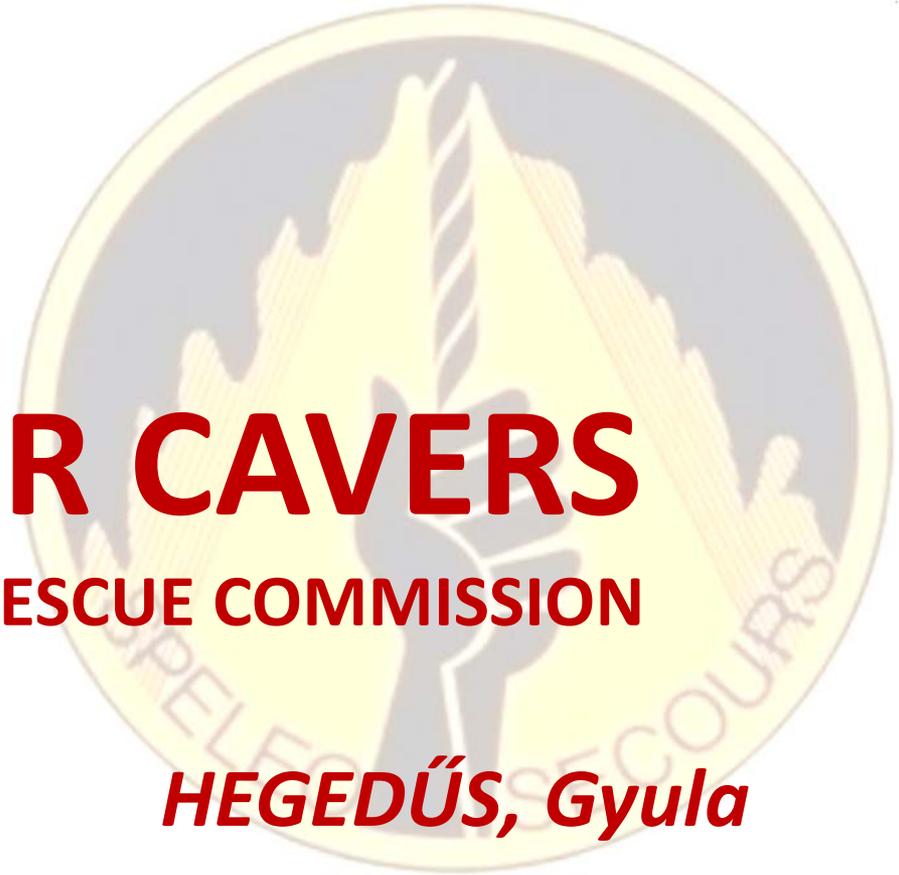
The UIS logo consists of the letters 'UIS' in a large, blue, blocky font, with a small blue circle positioned between the 'I' and 'S'.

CAVERS FOR CAVERS

HISTORY OF UIS CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION



HEGEDŰS, Gyula

***14th International Cave Rescue Conference
Ramales de la Victoria/Cantabria/Spain
6-9 June, 2024***

The beginnings of speleology

- Caves have been visited since prehistoric times



- Scientific and technical aspects began at the 19th century

pre UIS organized Congresses

- 1927 – German-Hungarian Speleo Congress (Budapest, Hungary)
- 1949 – International Meeting of Speleology (Valence-sur-Rhône / France)
- 1950 – First Worldcongress of Cavers (Monterrey, Mexico)
- 1953 – Premier Congrès International de Spéléologie (Paris, France)
- 1958 – 2nd International Speleological Congress (Bari-Lecce-Salerno, Italy)
- 1961 – 3rd International Speleological Congress (Wien-Obertraun-Salzburg, Austria)

**German-Hungarian Speleo Congress
Budapest, Hungary
14-25 September, 1927**



**Σ 50 participants
from 6 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia,
Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary)**

International Meeting of Speleology

- **Valence-sur-Rhône / FRANCE**
- **August 22–23, 1949**
- **by Société Spéléologique de France**
- **French, British, Greek, Swiss and Italian speleologists**
- **Planned the First International Congress of Speleology
(for Paris / FRANCE in 1953)**



**First Worldcongress of Cavers
Monterrey, Mexico
1950**





**Premier Congrès International de Spéléologie
Paris, France
7-12 September, 1953**

20 countries

**2nd International Speleological Congress
Bari-Lecce-Salerno, Italy
5-12 October, 1958**



3rd International Speleological Congress
Wien-Obertraun-Salzburg, Austria
15-28 September, 1961





**4th International
Speleological
Congress**

**Postojna-Ljubljana-Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia
12-26 September, 1965**



Union Internationale de Spéléologie

September 12, 1965

Congress Hall – Postojna Cave

Opening Ceremony of the 4th ICS

September 16, 1965

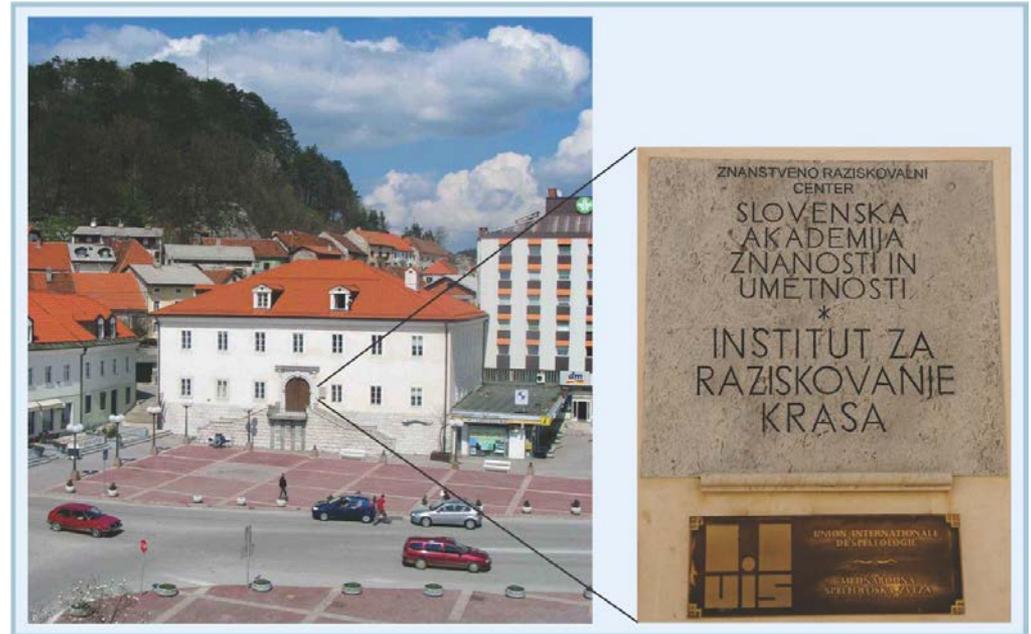
University of Ljubljana

General Assembly of the 4th ICS

- 23 countries decided to establish UIS**
- Approval of the Statutes**
- Election of the first Bureau**

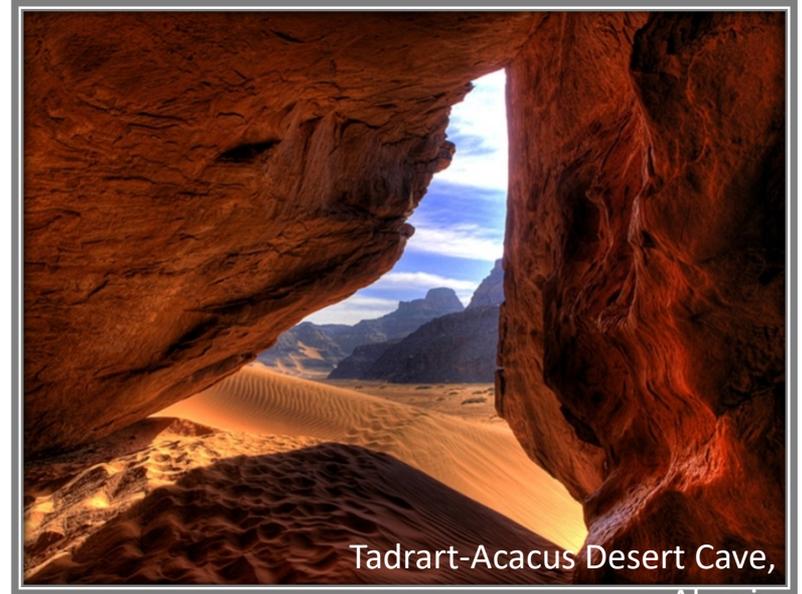
Office

- since 20 July 2002, the UIS has had its offices at:
Titov trg 2, 6230 - Postojna, SLOVENIA.
- the space is generously provided by the Slovenian Government via the Institute of Karst Research of the Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences
- the UIS archives are located in these offices



What is the UIS?

- the UIS is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that promotes interaction between academic and technical speleologists of all nationalities to develop and coordinate international speleology in all of its scientific, technical, cultural and economic aspects.



- the acronym UIS stands for the Union Internationale de Spéléologie, in the original French. Although the name may be written differently in other languages, the original acronym is maintained.

What is the UIS?

- the UIS has 57 member countries in six continents involving tens of thousands of cave scientists and explorers



- the UIS has hosted an International Congress of Speleology (ICS) every four years

UIS member countries (2023)

Argentina

Armenia

Australia

Austria

Belgium

Bosnia & Hercegovina

Brazil

Bulgaria

Canada

China

Colombia

Costa Rica

Croatia

Cuba

Cyprus

Czech Republic

France

Germany

Greece

Hungary

India

Indonesia

Iran IR

Israel

Italy

Japan

Kyrgyzstan

Lebanon

Lithuania

Libya

Luxembourg

Malaysia

Mexico

Mongolia

Morocco

Netherlands

New Zealand

Norway

Philippines

Poland

Portugal

Puerto Rico

Romania

Serbia

Slovakia

Slovenia

South Africa

South Korea

Spain

Sweden

Switzerland

Turkey

Ukraine

United Kingdom

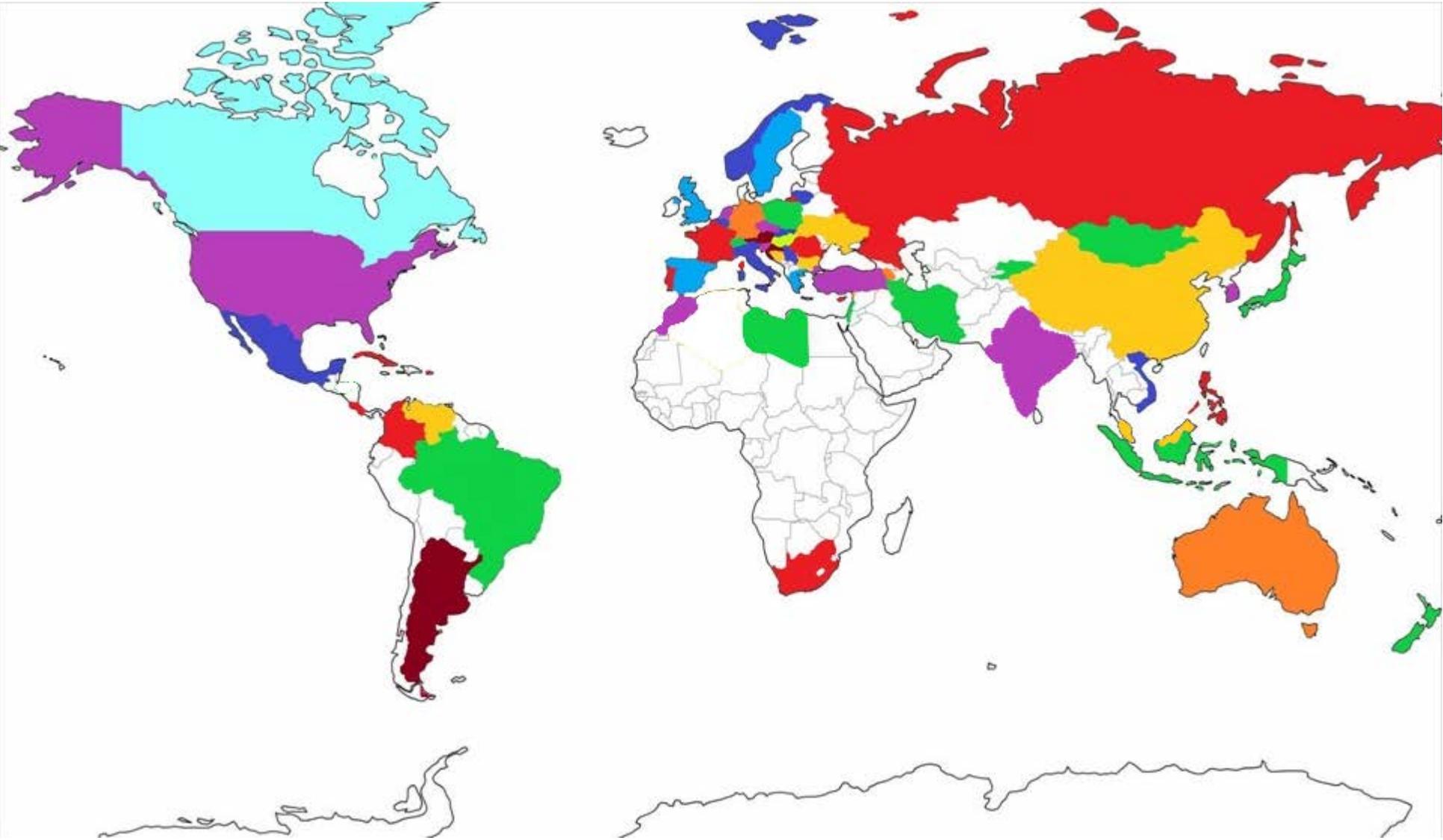
USA

Venezuela

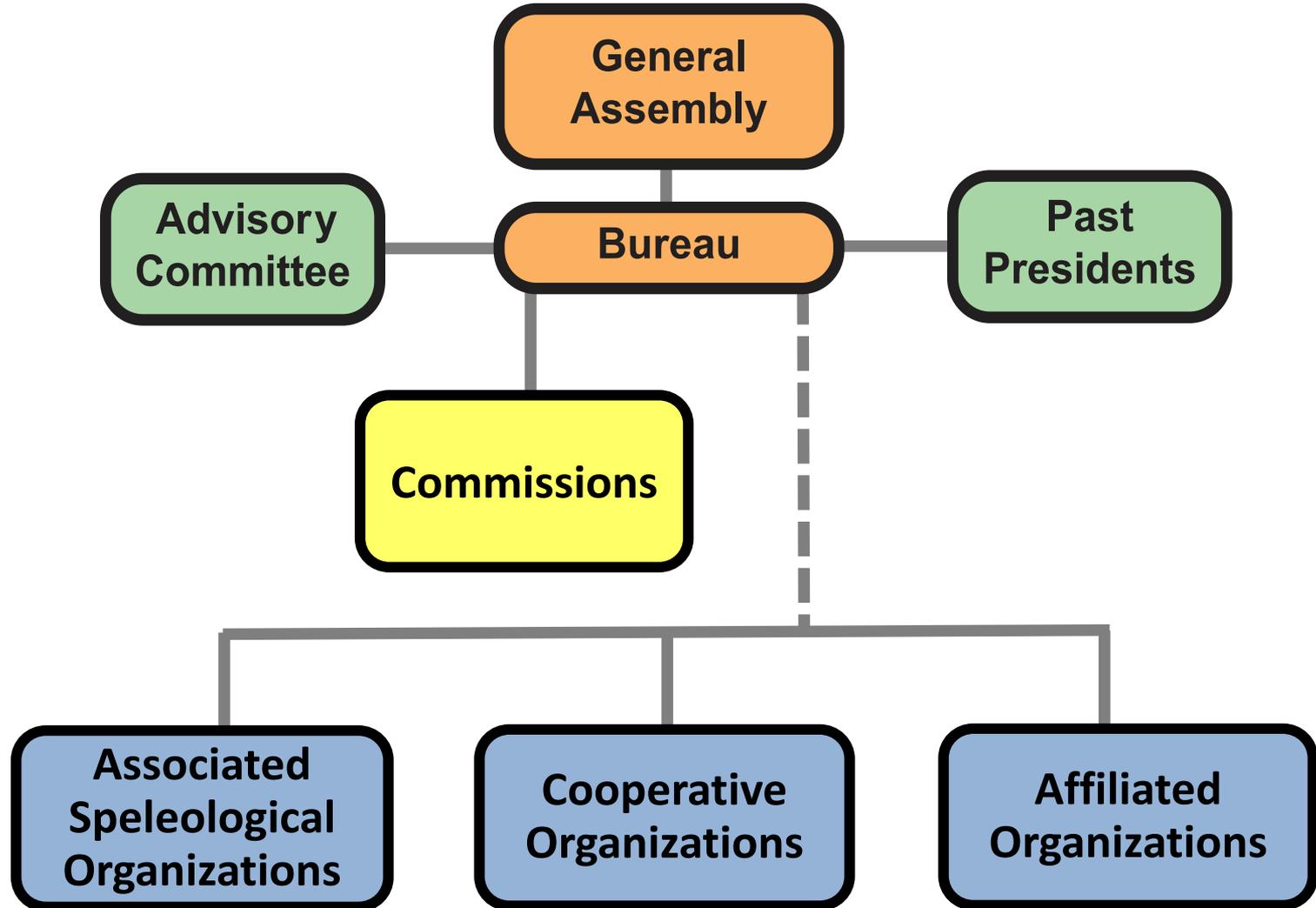
Vietnam

Σ 57 countries

UIS member countries (2023)



Structure of the UIS



UIS Commissions

The UIS currently has 20 Commissions:

Archaeology and Paleontology

Artificial Cavities

Arts and Letters

Bibliography

Biology

Cave Diving

Cave Mineralogy

Cave Rescue

Education

Glacier, Firn, and Ice Caves

History of Speleology

Informatics

Informatics Subcommittees:

Cave Data Exchange Standards

Cavers' Multi-Lingual Dictionary

Publications Exchange

Survey, Mapping, and Map Symbols

UIS-WikiCaves

Karst and Cave Protection

Karst Hydrogeology and Speleogenesis

Long, Deep, and Large Caves

Materials and Techniques

Physical Chemistry and Hydrogeology

Pseudokarst

Speleotherapy

Volcanic Caves



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Speleotherapy

Volcanic Caves



Establishment of the UIS CRC

*CRC was among the first three commissions
proposal was made by Alexis de Martynoff*

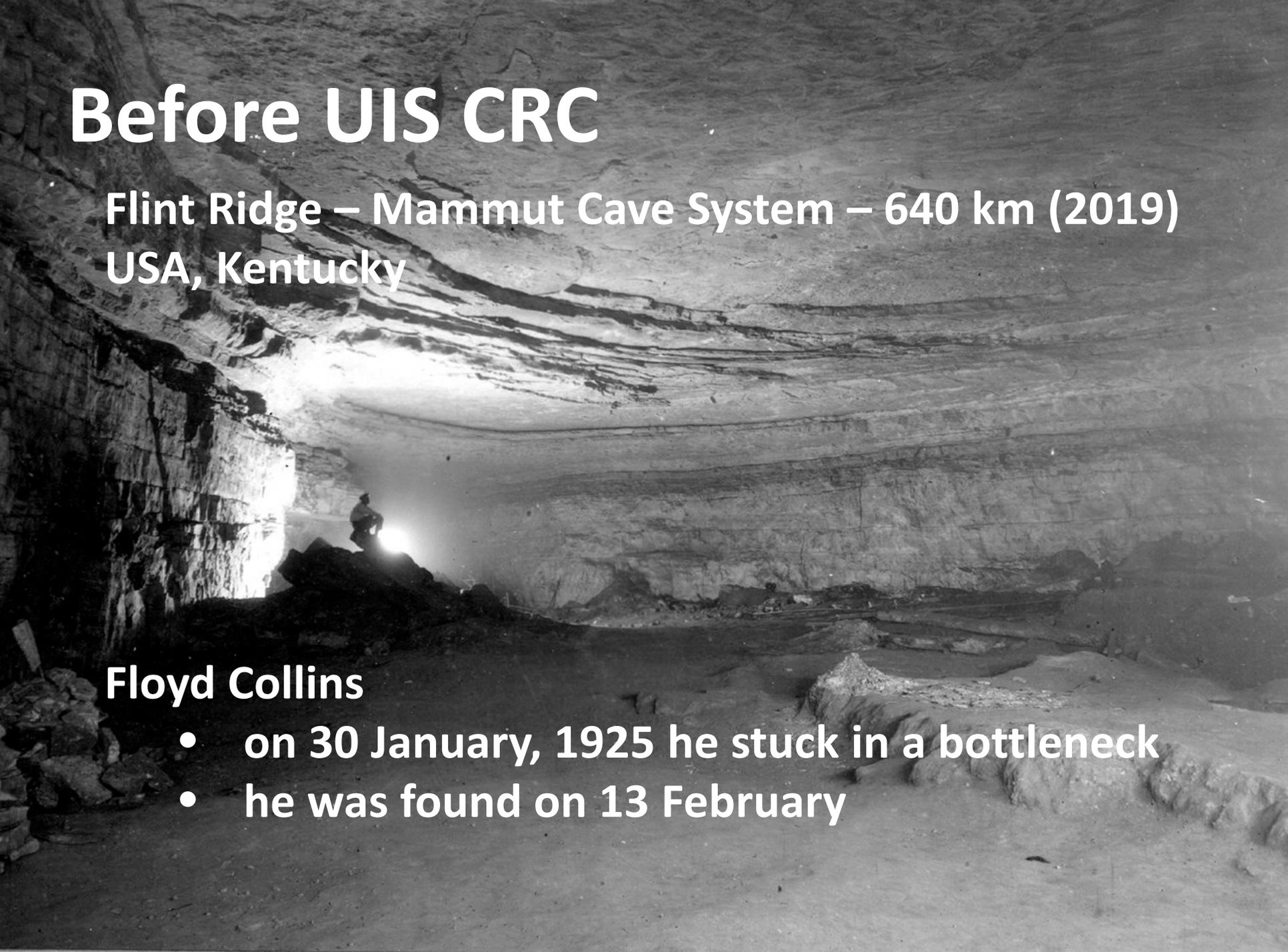


Before UIS CRC

Flint Ridge – Mammut Cave System – 640 km (2019)
USA, Kentucky

Floyd Collins

- on 30 January, 1925 he stuck in a bottleneck
- he was found on 13 February





**Cave Rescue Organization in Yorkshire,
the first in the world, in 1935**

**Mendip Rescue Organization in Somerset
in 1936**

**Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organization
in 1952**

Before UIS CRC

first international meeting

*Bruxelles and Han-sur-Lesse/Belgium
13-15 April, 1963*



8 countries participated:

England

Belgium

France

Lebanon

Luxembourg

Italy

Romania

Switzerland

Discussed topics :

- *necessity for caving leaders to be ready to carry out rescues themselves*
- *involvement of the country where a rescue operation is being conducted*
- *recognition of legal power*
- *search for an adaptive stretcher*
- *post-siphon rescue problems*

Key persons of UIS CRC

Alexis de Martynoff

Mike Meredith

André Slagmolen

Christian Dodelin

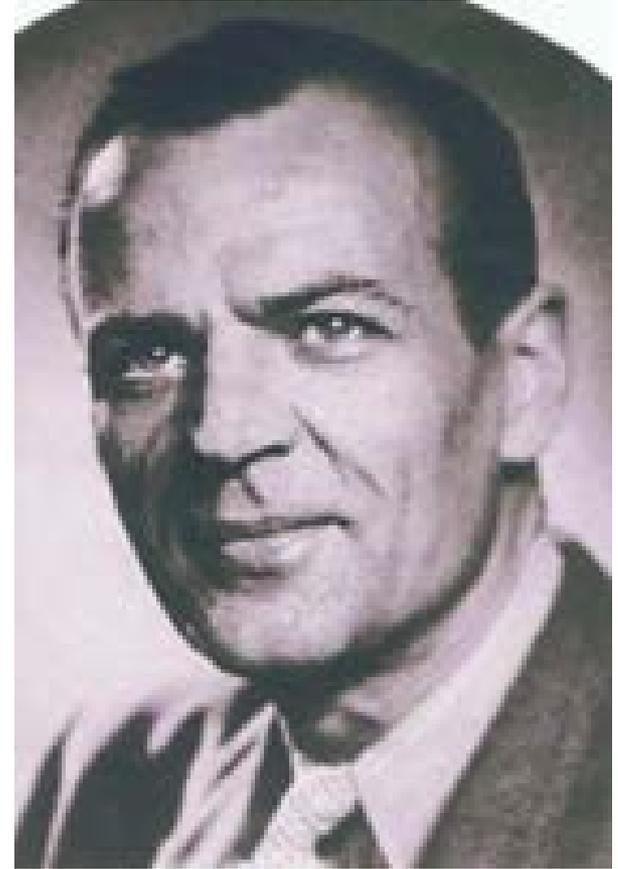
György Denes

Gyula Hegedűs



Alexis de Martynoff (1907-1985)

- born in Kharkow/USSR at 27 September 1907
- died in Bruxelles/Belgium at 25 April 1985
- in 1952 he founded the Belgian Cave Rescue
- he was president of the UIS CRC for 16 years between 1965 and 1981
- he dealt with the prevention by teaching and education



Mike Meredith

(1943-2023)

- in 1981 Mike was elected as president of UIS CRC. He was in that position until 1987
- his cave's career began with Burnley Caving Club
- later he joined the staff of Wherside Caving Centre as Chief Instructor
- living in Grenoble he became a leading light in the Furets Jaune de Seyssins caving club
- later he continued his caving in Austria
- after 1987 he went into Malaysia where he became Vice-Chair of Biodiversity Conservation Society Sarawak



André Slagmolen (194?-2007)

- he was the secretary of the UIS CRC since 6th International Cave Rescue Conference held in Aggtelek/Hungary in 1983
- he became the third president in Cividale/Italy in 1987
- he was one of the founder of the Belgian Cave Rescue in 1952
- he died in 22 April 2007



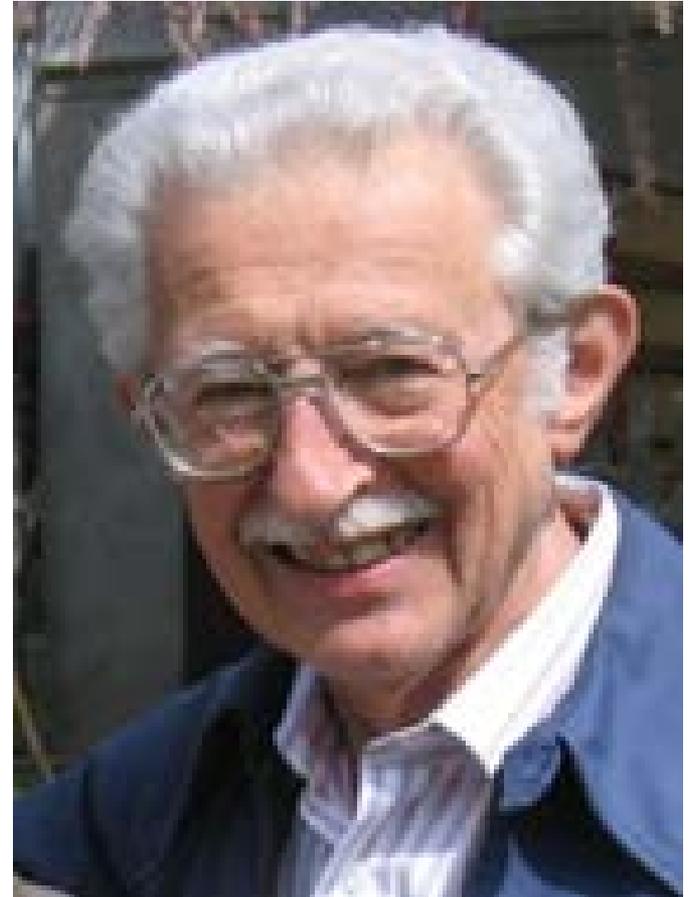
Christian Dodelin (1948-2021)

- he fill the position as president of UIS CRC since Athens/Kalamos (Greece)/2005
- he is caver since 1970
- instructor at the French Caving School
- he joined to French Cave Rescue (Spéléo Secours Français – SSF) in 1982
- participated of more than fifty rescue operations
- he was president of SSF from 1996 to 2004
- leader of international cave rescue training since 1997



Gyorgy Denes (1923-2015)

- he was elected as secretary general of the UIS CRC in Zakopane/Poland in 1979
- as vice president in Aggtelek/Hungary in 1983
- as honorary president in Aggtelek-Jósvafő/Hungary 2007
- he participated in reorganization of HSS in 1958, where he became secretary, secretary general and finally honorary president
- he established the HCRS in 1961



Gyula Hegedűs (1950-

- starts his caving activity in 1973
- member of HSS and HCRS since 1974
- filled different positions in HSS and its president since 2020
- president of HCRS Supervisory Board 1999-2007
- president of Karst and Cave Foundation 2000-2020
- member of ESF CRC 2019-
- UIS adjunct secretary 2017-2022
- member of UIS CRC Board 2005-2022 and its president since 2022-



Events of UIS CRC



the original plan:

- meeting on ICS
- conference at half time

- **Mozet/Belgium 1971**
- **Eisriesenwelt/Austria 1975**
- **Sheffield/Great-Britain 1977**
- **Zakopane/Poland 1979**
- **Aggtelek/Hungary 1983**
- **Cividale/Italy 1987**
- **Budapest/Hungary 1989**
- **La Chaux-de-Fondes/Switzerland 1997**
- **Sart-Tilman/Belgium 2002**
- **Athens-Kalamos/Greece 2005**
- **Aggtelek-Jósvafő/Hungary 2007**
- **Dryanovo/Bulgaria 2011**
- **Brno/Czech Republic 2013**
- **Vaumarcus/Switzerland 2015**
- **Sydney/Australia 2017**
- **Le Bourget du Lac/France 2022**

Mozet/Belgium

17-21 September, 1971

16 countries participated

*Germany, England, Belgium, Bulgaria, Congo,
Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy,
Lebanon, New Zealand, Poland, Switzerland,
Yugoslavia*

Program

*presentation of the first cave stretcher,
demonstration of caving radio communication,
diving rescue, legal problems, responsibilities
and insurance policies*

*Decided such an international meeting should
be organized every four years*



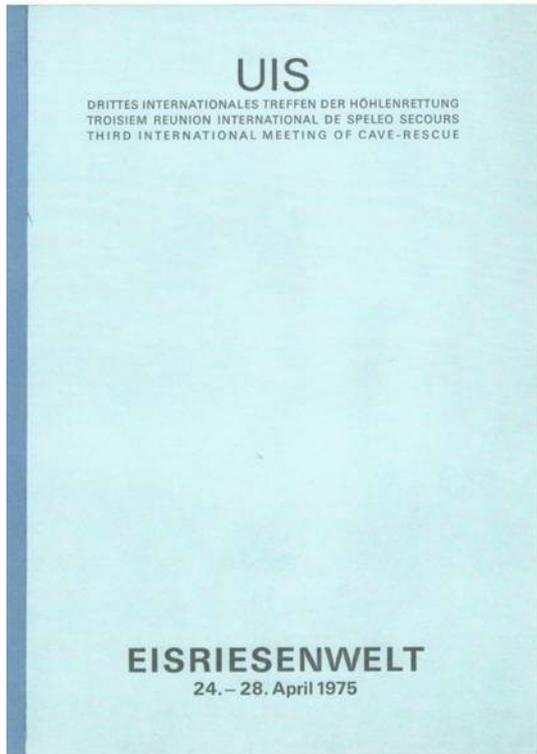
Eisriesenwelt/Austria 1975

12 countries participated

***Austria, Belgium, England, France,
Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland,
Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia***

Program

- ***create Sub-Commission to develop a catalogue of safety materials developed for use in rescue work***
- ***demonstration with more than 9 stretchers and others ways to move injured people***
- ***first demonstration of removing obstructions in caves***
- ***first meeting of cave doctors***



Sheffield/Great-Britain

10-17 September, 1977



- *17 countries informed UIS CRC that they have cave rescue services*
- *using 10 years of experiences the NCRC (USA) and UIS CRC developed a scoring system which would act as a measure of overall technical or the gross ability of a rescue service*
- *the system count with*
 - *emergency medical skills*
 - *training*
 - *team size*
 - *special skills*
 - *organization*
 - *mobilization*
 - *equipments as for*
 - *communication and vertical caving,*
 - *extraction and patient transportation tools*

Zakopane/Poland 2-6 October, 1979

14 countries participated

***Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria,
Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great-
Britain, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, USSR,
Spain, United-States and Yugoslavia***



During this 5th international conference it was decided to form a bigger direction and to create three subcommissions

president :

vice-president (American area) :

vice-president (East europe area) :

vice-president (West europe area) :

secretary-general :

prevention :

material :

technique :

Alexis de Martinoff (Belgium)

Daniel. Smith (USA)

A. Efremov (URSS)

Giuseppe Guidi (Italy)

György Denes (Hungary)

Petko Nedkov (Bulgaria)

Hermann Kirchmayr (Austria)

Mike Meredith (Great-Britain)

Aggtelek/Hungary

2-8 October, 1983



More than 160 participants from 16 countries
Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, United-States, USSR, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia

50 lectures were given about

- *cave-rescue equipments*
- *communication equipments*
- *methodology*
- *first aid and other medical aspects*
- *rescuers training*
- *statistics on causes of accidents*
- *organisation background*
- *prevention of accidents and*
- *experiences of rescue operations.*

Rescue demonstrations were performed by
Hungarian, Austrian, Russian, French and Italian rescue teams

Cividale/Italy

30 Aug.-5 Sept., 1987

16 countries participated

*Austria, Argentina, Belgium,
Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic,
France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece,
Hungary, Italy, Romania, Spain,
Switzerland, USA and Yugoslavia*

Program included:

- *9 medical presentation about pharmacy, medical actions, the administration of drugs and histoplasmosis*
- *12 technical presentations about various stretchers, cave-diving rescue, drilling material and the UIS catalog of materials*
- *18 presentations in prevention section about statistics of rescue operations and circulation of informations*



Budapest/Hungary

9-13 August, 1989



143 participants had arrived from 21 countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, USSR, Venezuela and Yugoslavia



***13 lecturers presented 18 presentations
15 practical demonstrations
12 medical doctors sat around a table from 7 countries***

a common cave rescue exercise was also organized

La Chaux-de-Fondes/Switzerland

10-17 August 1997

event was organized as part of the 12th ICS

presentations dealt with:

- *cave accidents in France,*
- *cave rescue in Switzerland*
- *histoplasmosis*
- *waterproof stretcher for divers rescue*
- *victim's assistance and epidemic dangers in the caves of Middle Asia*



Efrain Mercado was named as regional coordinator for the FEALC

Sart-Tilman/Belgium

1-3 November, 2002



organized on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Belgian Cave Rescue

117 participants from 14 countries:

Austria, Belgium, Corea, Cuba, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Hungary, Japan, Luxembourg, Morocco, Poland, Switzerland, USA

40 lectures were presented on the next topics:

- *cost of cave rescue operations and interest of a cave rescue team*
- *presentation of some rescue operations*
- *medical presentations, histoplasmosis*
- *passage widening with Hilti cartridge*
- *cave ventillation*
- *round table with international interventions as subject*

Athens-Kalamos/Greece

21-28 August, 2005



on the occasion of the 14th ICS

- *André Slagmolen retired as president of UIS CRC*
- *Christian Dodelin was elected as new president*

main topic was cave rescuers education



Aggtelek-Jósvafő/Hungary

15-18 May, 2007



83 participants from 26 countries:

Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Spain, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Puerto Rico, Czech Republic, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, USA

38 papers and video reports and demonstration were presented about next main topics:

- *organizational aspects of cave rescue*
- *contributions of cave rescue squad for civil protection during disaster*
- *medical aspects of cave rescue activity*
- *cave rescue educations and trainings*
- *equipments, technics and radio transmission demo*
- *serious rescue operations in different countries*



Aggtelek Agreement were created!

<https://uis-speleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/UIS-Recommendations-for-Cave-Rescue.pdf>



UIS Governmental Recommendation on Cave Rescues (Aggtelek Agreement)



UNION INTERNATIONALE DE SPÉLÉOLOGIE

CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION
COMMISSION des SPÉLÉO - SECOURS
KOMMISSION für HÖHLENRETTUNG

UIS GOVERNMENTAL RECOMMENDATION ON CAVE RESCUES (Aggtelek Agreement)

French is the reference language for this document

Le français est la langue de référence pour ce document

El frances es el idioma de referencia para este documento

The representatives of the 26 countries present at the 11th UIS Conference of Cave Rescue support certain basic recommendations concerning cave rescue operations.

Les représentants des 26 pays rassemblés lors de la 11^e Conférence de la Commission Speleo Secours de l'UIS affirment quelques principes fondamentaux pour leurs actions de secours:

Los representantes de 26 países venidos a la 11^a Conferencia de la Comisión de Espeleorescate de l'UIS estamos de acuerdo sobre algunos principios básicos de los actos de rescate:

1. Only experienced cavers should create cave rescue teams. The specific cave environment requires that all underground rescuers are experienced cavers.

Seuls les speleologues experimentés se forment et s'entraînent pour composer les équipes de secours. La particularité des grottes et couloirs oblige tous intervenants à être au premier lieu

Dryanovo/Bulgaria

8-15 May, 2011



100 cavers participated from 15 countries:

Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Great-Britain, Hungary, Italy, Lebanon, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine and USA

24 papers and 2 demonstrations

- *new rescue techniques on rock wall*
- *new rescue techniques in cave*
- *equipment presentations*
- *new rope techniques demonstrations*
- *medical demonstration*
- *diving demonstration*
- *new diving equipment for rescue*
- *communication in caves*
- *"sit harness syndrome"*
- *work-related hypothermia*
- *usefulness of cooperation*
- *Italians presented their activity at an earthquake*



Brno/Czech Republic

21-28 July, 2013

16th INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY



WHERE HISTORY MEETS FUTURE

on the occasion of the 16th ICS
2 session meetings
reviewed the activities of the past 4 years

- events
- technical developments
- trainings and educations

defined the tasks ahead



Vaumarcus/Switzerland

13-19 April, 2015



110 cavers from 14 countries:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Slovenia and Switzerland

32 presentations about

- *equipments tests*
- *introduction of*
 - *cave rescue services of different countries*
 - *European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA)*
 - *EU Civil Protection Mechanism*
- *medical session diving rescue*
- *prevention and training*
- *emergency medical assistance by air*



Sydney/Australia

23-29 July, 2017



- on the occasion of the 17th ICS a short meeting was held in 2017
- there were no other activities since that time due to the long illness and the death in 2021 of Christian Dodelin



Le Bourget du Lac/France

24-31 July, 2022

- **UIS decided to reorganize CRC and a meeting was held within framework of Cave Rescue Symposium**
- **at that symposium, those present agreed on the importance of reorganizing the commission**
- **the decided first task was to re-build the relationships with the rescue organizations in the UIS member countries and to re-establish communication channels between all, by organizing a mailing list, homepage, etc.**



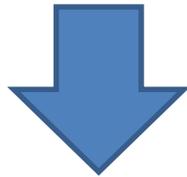
Ramales de la Victoria/Spain 6-9 June, 2024

Belo Horizonte/Brazil 2025

...../..... 2027

...../..... 2029

...../..... 2031



towards next years

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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hegedusgyula@t-online.hu

