



March 17, 2022

**Dear UIS Delegates,**

The UIS Bureau has expressed its deep dismay and concerns regarding the military offenses being carried out in Ukraine and warns against the severe outcomes that conflict will have on the speleological community.

Therefore, we address you to forward the statement below. We would appreciate you to send it to your speleological contact list.

## **UIS BUREAU STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE**

*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. Speleology is characterized by mutual respect and cross-border cooperation without reservations.*

*UIS cooperates with many Russian and Ukrainian cavers, speleologists, and karst scientists. The UIS Bureau strongly believes in speleology as a platform for dialogue even in times of war, and we are convinced that the isolation and exclusion of speleological communities is detrimental to all.*

*But war is a humanitarian disaster and a disaster for nature. The UIS Bureau expresses its deep dismay and concerns regarding the military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation as conflict generates a grave humanitarian crisis. The UIS Bureau expresses its support for all civilians caught up in this conflict, and our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine, at this difficult time.*

*With this formal statement, the UIS Bureau expresses its solidarity and affirms its intention to continue to support speleologists from Ukraine and Russia and to seek to maintain international speleological collaboration and communication amidst geopolitical tensions.*

***UIS Bureau***