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*LUOGO E DATA*

*Dear Brazilian government officials,*

*After becoming aware of the publication of the Presidential Decree N° 10.935, dated January 12th, 2022, we hereby want to join the Brazilian Speleological Society (SBE) and the whole speleological and environmental community to demonstrate our deep concern for the future of the Brazilian caves. Such decree represents a setback in the Brazilian protectionist legislation, which once was a model shining to the World.*

*In Brazil there are unique karst phenomena not only in carbonate rocks but also in many other rock formations such as quartzite, schist, etc. where karst phenomena in the rest of the World are much less developed, and that therefore it is an absolute priority to preserve the integrity of these areas to allow speleological research and study by scientists in the centuries to come.*

*As long as this decree is valid, all Brazilian speleological Heritage, as well as all biological, archaeological, mineralogical, paleontological, geomorphological, scientific, cultural, and historic heritages in the Brazilian karst (cave) regions will be in danger because this decree is a tool with high potential to destroy them. We recognize that good enterprises are necessary and important for the economic development and generation of jobs in any region or country.*

*However, when commercial interests prevail over the well-being of the population and such enterprises are located in areas of priceless natural and cultural heritage, good legislation is necessary to avoid their destruction and to stimulate sustainable development. Therefore, with all due respect and consideration for the Brazilian authorities, we Italian speleologists ADD HERE THE AFFILIATION NAME hereby declare our repudiation and total disapproval of Decree N° 10.935, which we do expect to be revoked.*

*Brazilian Speleological Society must be invited to help in the elaboration of a new law for the protection of caves and karst because they have the most competent Brazilian experts in this field with a very high international reputation. It is demonstrated by the fact that in 2025 Brazil will host the 19th International Congress of Speleology, which is the most important speleological event in the World, where participants from more than fifty countries will land in Brazil to share the state of the art of speleology, as well as to discuss the protection of caves and karst.*

*Remaining available to better document and support what is stated in this letter we will be there, for sure, and hope to meet a Brazilian law that takes into account sustainable development, focusing on preservation, not on destruction.*

*Sincerely,*