

SAMCHEOK CITY'S INTERNATIONAL CAVE EXPO - 2002

Kim Il Dong, Mayor, Samcheok City, Republic of Korea.
Presenter: Hong Seongyong, Deputy Mayor

ABSTRACT

Cave City, Samcheok, has many karst features including more than 50 caves. Among these, the exemplary cave, Hwanseongul, was developed in environment-friendly ways to become a major tourist attraction. Our city considered the development of other wild caves as tourist attractions. A major aim was to ensure the preservation of cave environments.

Samcheok City conducted a series of International Symposiums from 1999. In 2002, Samcheok International Cave EXPO, the first Cave Expo in the world, was hosted by the City. It had the major themes of *The Deepest Secret - Caves* and of *A Mysterious World Created by Water and Time*.

The Expo was a great success held over 32 days from July 10 to August 10, 2002, with participation of 21 countries and 53 cave related organisations. One and a half million people visited the Expo. The Expo received the support of Korean government, International Union of Speleology and the International Show Caves Association.

Cave Expo was composed of a series of major displays including the:

- Cave Mystery Pavilion
- Cave Exploration Pavilion
- Imax Theatre
- Solar Energy Pavilion
- Genuine Cave Pavilion
- Underground Jewellery Pavilion
- Dinosaur Pavilion
- International Cave Pavilion

All these facilities explained much about caves from Korea and around the world. Most are maintained as well known tourist attractions today.

There were also interesting performances such as the Belgium stilt walkers, the Brazilian Samba dances amongst many other presentations during Cave Expo. A meeting of the International Union of Speleology and an International Cave Symposium with the theme of *The Sustainable Management of Caves: Academic and Policy Implications*.

Major facilities have been well preserved and managed. In addition, Samcheok City plans to use these facilities as the educational resources over the next decades.