



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMERICAN VETERANS ASSIST RUSSIAN VETERANS IN MIA SEARCH

U.S. veterans have joined their Russian counterparts in an effort to account for Soviet soldiers who are missing in action.

On Wednesday, retired Air Force General Robert "Doc" Foglesong, U.S. Chairman of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, presented 500 DNA blood collection kits to retired General Ruslan Aushev, Chairman of the Commonwealth of Independent States Committee for Warrior-Internationalists. The presentation in Moscow was part of General Foglesong's first visit to Russia since being appointed by President Bush in April.

During his visit, he also met with senior Russian officials and urged them to reenergize the support of the Russian side of the commission, so that efforts on both sides might be more productive as each seeks to account for its missing military service members.

The DNA kits are used by Department of Defense scientists to gather blood samples from family members in order to match the DNA from remains of American servicemen. Russian veterans asked for assistance to locate and purchase the kits. Three American veterans groups purchased the kits and asked General Foglesong to present them to the Russians as soon as possible.

The groups are Rolling Thunder; VietNow; and the National Vietnam Veterans Foundation. These American veterans organizations follow closely the U.S. government's efforts to account for their fallen comrades, those who are missing from the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Korean War, and World War II. Each group keeps its members informed of the latest worldwide activity of the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, as well as the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory.

The U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs works with Russian officials and citizens to seek information that may help to account for missing Americans.

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