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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HUMAN REMAINS RECOVERED IN NORTH KOREA

Four sets of skeletal remains believed to be those of American soldiers lost during the Korean War have been recovered in Unsan County, North Korea. The remains were excavated during a 20-day field operation by a joint U.S.-North Korean team which had been conducting joint excavations in the northwestern part of North Korea, about 50 miles southwest of the Yalu River.

The U.S. team from the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii and the Department of Defense had been conducting excavations in an area where several hundred Americans are known to have been lost in fierce combat between U.S. and Chinese forces.

The human remains were returned to American control in a repatriation ceremony on Monday, Aug. 4, at Panmunjom. They will be taken to the CILHI where forensic processes will seek to establish the identifications of the Americans.

This is the second time U.S. specialists from the Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office and CILHI have entered North Korea. In July 1996, a similar joint team located the remains of an American soldier, also in Unsan County. Those remains were subsequently identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

In an agreement signed by the United States and North Korea in June, both sides agreed that further joint recovery operations will be conducted in September and October. North Korea also agreed to allow a U.S. archival team to review American-related records in Pyongyang's military museum. That team arrived in North Korea on Aug. 2.