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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **REMAINS OF U. S. SERVICEMEN RECOVERED IN NORTH KOREA**

Remains believed to be those of six American soldiers will be repatriated from North Korea across the demilitarized zone at Panmunjom Friday morning, Korea time.

A joint U.S.-North Korean team operating in Kujang County along the Chong Chon river, 100 miles north of Pyongyang for the past month recovered the remains. This area is the site of November 1950 battles between the U.S. Eighth Army (2<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions) and Chinese communist forces. This is the first joint remains recovery operation in North Korea this year, and the 10<sup>th</sup> overall since these joint recoveries began in 1996. Since July 1996, these joint teams have recovered what are believed to be the remains of 35 soldiers. Three have been identified.

These operations are the result of negotiated agreements between the governments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, led by the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office. The DPMO has also obtained agreements to conduct archival research in North Korea of wartime military records that may relate to American POWs. Four such visits have been conducted since 1997, with hundreds of documents obtained which relate to American prisoners.

With more than 8,200 servicemen missing in action from the Korean War, the DPMO and the military Services have mounted a massive outreach effort to locate families of the missing from the Korean War and the Cold War.

The expanded outreach effort is to accomplish several goals. First, family member reference blood samples are needed to compare to mitochondrial DNA sequences from recovered skeletal remains. Second, family members often possess personal or wartime documents that may aid in identifying an unaccounted-for serviceman. Finally, the military Services are seeking to keep family members updated on specific recovery operations. If remains are recovered and identified, families will be asked to make decisions regarding the burial of the serviceman.

Beyond the Korean War outreach effort, families of Cold War unaccounted-for servicemen are also being sought. Through the work of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, the remains of 18 servicemen shot down during the Cold War have been recovered and identified, with more than 120 still unaccounted-for.

Each of the Services has established a toll-free number to keep these families fully informed on Korean War and Cold War remains recovery operations. Family members of these servicemen should contact the appropriate Service casualty office to provide their name, address and relationship to their loved one.

If the missing serviceman was in the Army, the number is (800) 892-2490. The Navy number is (800) 443-9298. The Air Force number is (800) 531-5501 and the Marine Corps number is (800) 847-1597. Families of civilians missing from these conflicts may contact the State Department at (202) 647-6769.