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## **U.S.-RUSSIA POW/MIA GROUP RENEWS COMMITMENT**

The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs renewed their commitment last week to continue cooperative efforts in search of information concerning the circumstances of loss and to establish the fate of missing servicemen.

During the two-day plenary session in Moscow, the commission's co-chairmen, Maj. Gen. Roland Lajoie, USA (retired) and Gen. Major Vladimir Zolotarev, signed the executive summary to the commission's joint report on the results of work conducted from 1995-2000. The executive summary highlights the commission's accomplishments and identifies areas for further research and investigation.

The commission was established in 1992 by the U.S. and Russian presidents. It is a group of senior American and Russian executive- and legislative-branch officials that meets periodically to assess and to coordinate policy, research and investigative efforts on clarifying the fate of missing American and Russian servicemen. Information of value to the commission is gained primarily through archival research and interviews of veterans, government officials, and other knowledgeable Russian and American citizens.

Highlights of last week's meeting included a report in the World War II working group on the successful August 2000 visit to Kamchatka when a team led by Lajoie and Col. Konstantin Golumbovskiy, the Russian deputy chairman of the commission, positively identified a U.S. PV-1 patrol bomber missing in action since March 25, 1944. Plans for a full-scale excavation of the site scheduled tentatively for summer 2001 were initiated by Michael McReynolds, the working group's U.S. co-chairman, and his Russian counterpart.

In the commission's Cold War working group, A. Denis Clift, the U.S. co-chairman, reported that painstaking research conducted by the Russian and U.S. sides has led to new information related to incidents of U.S. aircraft lost near the borders of the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

The Korean War working group discussed prospects for expanding archival research emphasizing reports from search groups involved in the recovery of U.S. aircraft and crews during the war. The concept was favorably received. The archives' management agreed to examine holdings at military museums and other facilities that may retain any records, artifacts or personal effects of U.S. service personnel from that period. The U.S. side raised once again the issue of U.S. military personnel who, based on a number of reports from a variety of sources, were sighted in the Soviet camp system (GULAG). The Russian side agreed to accept the reports, which have been incorporated into a single document, called the GULAG Study, for further examination.

In the Vietnam War working group, the Russian side agreed to continue its research in various archives seeking documentation that might clarify the fate of missing in action American servicemen from the Vietnam conflict. Both sides agreed to cooperate further on evidence that Soviet soldiers also might be missing from the war in Southeast Asia.

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