

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE****REMAINS OF U.S. SERVICEMEN RECOVERED IN NORTH KOREA**

Remains believed to be those of 17 American soldiers, missing in action from the Korean War will be repatriated in formal ceremonies Tuesday, Korea time. This is the largest number of remains recovered in a single joint recovery operation since U.S. teams began their work in North Korea in 1996.

The remains will be flown on a U.S. Air Force aircraft from Pyongyang, North Korea, under escort of a uniformed U.S. honor guard to Yokota Air Base, Japan, where a United Nations Command repatriation ceremony will be held.

Operating near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea, a joint U.S. - Korea team recovered 14 remains believed to be those of U.S. Army soldiers from the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division who fought against Chinese forces Nov.-Dec. 1950. Approximately 1,000 Americans are estimated to have been lost in battles of the Chosin campaign.

Additionally, a second team recovered three sets of remains in Unsan and Kujang counties and along the Chong Chon River, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang. The area was the site of battles between Communist forces and the U.S. Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions in November 1950. The Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office negotiated an agreement with the North Koreans last year which led to the scheduling of this year's operations.

The 28-person U.S. teams are composed primarily of specialists from the Army's Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii (CILHI).

This year's schedule of operations in North Korea is the largest yet, with ten individual operations scheduled near the Chosin Reservoir, as well as in the Unsan, Kujang and Kaechon City areas. Twenty-five individual operations have been conducted since 1996 in North Korea, recovering 144 sets of remains believed to be those of U.S. soldiers. Eight have been positively identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. Another 12 are in the final stages of the forensic identification process.