

U.S.-NORTH KOREA CONCLUDE POW/MIA TALKS

October 24, 2011 E TV News

The Department of Defense announced Sunday that the United States and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) officials reached an arrangement to resume recovering the remains of American servicemen missing from the Korean War.

The three-day talks held in Bangkok were led by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs Robert J. Newberry. His negotiating team included representatives from across the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the U.S. Pacific Command and the United Nations Command-Korea.

The arrangement calls for U.S. teams to work in two areas in North Korea: Unsan County, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang, and near the Chosin/Jangjin Reservoir where more than 2,000 soldiers and Marines are believed to be missing. The arrangement includes details on logistics and matters that will ensure the effectiveness and safety of remains recovery teams operating in the DPRK. Accounting for Americans missing in action is a stand-alone humanitarian matter, not tied to any other issue between the two countries.

The operations in North Korea are expected to begin next year and will mark the first since 2005, when the U.S. halted missions due to increased tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Prior to that time, U.S. specialists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command conducted operations in that country for 10 years, recovering remains believed to be more than 225 servicemen since 1996.

Of the approximately 83,000 Americans missing from all conflicts, more than 7,900 are from the Korean War with 5,500 of those believed to be missing in the DPRK.