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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 12 American soldiers, missing in action from the Korean War, will be repatriated Saturday, July 22, Korea time.

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

A joint U.S.-North Korean team operating in Unsan and Kujang counties, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang, recovered the remains during an operation that began June 25. The area was the site of battles between Communist Chinese forces and the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division, and 2nd and 25th Infantry Divisions in November 1950.

The 20-person U.S. team is composed primarily of specialists from the Army's Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii.

This recovery operation is the 13th in North Korea since 1996. Four more are scheduled for this year, with the fifth operation scheduled to conclude on Veterans Day, November 11, 2000. As a result of negotiated agreements with the North Koreans, led by the Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office, 54 sets of remains have been recovered and five have been positively identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. Another 10 are nearing the final stages of the forensic identification process.

Of the 88,000 U.S. service members missing in action from all conflicts, more than 8,100 are from the Korean War.