



United States Department of Defense

## News Release

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### **SUPPORT BY CAMBODIA AND LAOS HELPS U.S. POW/MIA SEARCH**

Concluding two days of talks in Cambodia and Laos last week, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs, Jerry D. Jennings, announced several positive steps in America's effort to account for servicemen missing in action from the Vietnam War.

Jennings, who oversees U.S. policies to account for POWs and MIAs, characterized his talks in these two countries as very positive. "I am encouraged by the progress we are seeing and believe recent new developments will lead to positive results," Jennings said.

During meetings with senior Cambodian officials, Jennings learned that Prime Minister Hun Sen accepted his invitation to speak in July at the 2004 POW/MIA Consultations in Siem Reap, Cambodia. These consultations mark an effort by the four countries to capture lessons learned on this sensitive issue and work toward a common vision for the future of POW/MIA accounting.

Lao officials agreed to Jennings' proposal for a five-ministry archival research initiative. Under this plan, Lao archivists will review documents for any information relating to American POWs and MIAs and provide their findings to U.S. officials for analysis. The Lao committed to working with U.S. technical experts over the next few weeks on details in order to formalize the arrangement by the end of July.

Lao officials announced that their delegation will also participate in the 2004 POW/MIA Consultations and voiced strong support for the initiative. These four-nation consultative talks were held for the first time last year in Bangkok, Thailand.

For additional information about POW/MIA recoveries, visit <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo>, or call the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office at (703) 699-1169.