

UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA REACH AGREEMENT ON POW/MIAS

May 15, 1997, New York

United States and North Korean negotiators have reached agreement on two of the three broad issues discussed last week in formal talks in New York City.

Both sides agreed to conduct three joint recovery operations in 1997 for remains of Americans buried in North Korea and to begin joint archival investigations this summer.

There was no agreement reached on interviewing American defectors in North Korea, but both sides said discussions would continue on this issue.

Last week negotiations ended in New York City when the North Korean delegation was unable to respond constructively to U.S. proposals in any of the three areas, said Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel James W. Wold.

However, working-level contacts were maintained after the formal talks, which led to the exchange of formal documents of agreement. A copy of a joint statement is attached.

JOINT STATEMENT

Delegations of the United States and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea held talks in New York May 4-13, 1997, on the issue of accounting for missing U.S. servicemen from the Korean War.

The talks proceeded in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

In the talks the two sides agreed to conduct three joint recovery operations in 1997 and, in principle, to conduct joint archival investigations this summer.

Both sides agreed that human remains experts from the two countries would hold working-level contacts as soon as possible in order to implement the agreement.

Both sides expressed hope that this agreement will build trust between the two countries and make positive contributions towards their developing bilateral relationship.