

Resolution No. 419

CALL FOR MORE UNILATERAL POW/MIA ACTIONS BY VIETNAM

WHEREAS, 2,583 Americans were listed as missing and unaccounted-for at the end of the Vietnam War. As of February 2018, the number of missing is nearing 1,600 due to a combination of increased U.S. Government emphasis, better research and identification technology, stronger diplomatic ties with host governments, and access to aircraft crash and ground battlefield sites; and

WHEREAS, Vietnam had a comprehensive wartime and post-war process to collect and retain information and remains, and, according to the National League of POW/MIA Families, this unilateral effort enabled the Vietnamese to locate and return remains to U.S. custody along with records that continue to offer significant potential; and

WHEREAS, onsite joint field operations are also achieving increased results. The process now includes both U.S.-led Joint Excavation Teams and Vietnamese-led Recovery Teams that are assisted by fewer Americans who are experts in their fields of forensic science, EOD and medical. This formula allows a greater number of teams to “increase the pace and scope of field operations,” as requested by Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, increased military-to-military relations is also benefiting the Full Accounting Mission. U.S. Navy assets are increasingly allowed to participate in underwater survey and recovery operations, which has long been advocated for by the VFW; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, that we encourage Vietnam to continue to expand the number and frequency of Vietnamese-led recovery operations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in this cooperative effort, that we urge Vietnam to continue to authorize its officials to locate and release immediately to the United States all records relating to Americans missing from the Vietnam War, and to urge the Vietnamese people to turn over the remains of Americans or information on American burial sites, as well as any reports of live American servicemen.

Submitted by Commander-in-Chief
To Committee on NATIONAL SECURITY & FOREIGN AFFAIRS