



*Embassy of the United States of America  
Office of the Ambassador*

May 23, 2018

Ms. Ann Mills-Griffiths  
Chairman of the Board  
National League of Families of American Prisoners  
and Missing in Southeast Asia  
5673 Columbia Pike, Suite 100  
Falls Church, VA 22041

To the National League of POW/MIA Families:

I am honored to extend my warm greetings, strong support and deep admiration to the participants in the 49th Annual Meeting of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

For more than two decades, Cambodia was a regional leader in POW/MIA accounting missions. The cooperation spurred by these missions helped build a strong relationship between the U.S. and Cambodia that complimented the substantial role we have played in Cambodia's economic and social development. POW/MIA accounting missions have been part of a larger American humanitarian project in Cambodia that also included our support for demining operations and the removal of unexploded ordnance from the Vietnam War era. We are proud of this cooperation, the continued role we play in Cambodia, and of the deep and diverse ties between our peoples.

In light of this long and mutually beneficial relationship, we were deeply disappointed by Prime Minister Hun Sen's decision last September to suspend POW/MIA recovery missions in response to an unrelated U.S. decision related to the repatriation of Cambodian nationals from the U.S. Despite best efforts by the Embassy, the League, and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) to have this decision reversed, it remains in place. Regrettably, this means that the DPAA was unable to conduct recovery work this year in Cambodia, including at a remote, half completed excavation site in Ratanakiri Province we had hoped to finish in April.

We will continue to call upon the Cambodian government to reverse the Prime Minister's decision and allow the DPAA's humanitarian POW/MIA accounting missions to continue. I am committed to putting the effort to pursue a full accounting of our fallen loved ones back on track in the near future.

We were honored to welcome a high-level delegation from the League of Families to Phnom Penh last January. As we told that delegation, the U.S. mission in Cambodia will do all it can to advance the humanitarian cause of obtaining the fullest possible accounting of those who died serving our nation in the Vietnam War.

I offer my best wishes to the League for a productive and successful meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William A. Heidt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a distinct "H" at the end.

William A. Heidt  
Ambassador Extraordinary  
and Plenipotentiary