



Ambassador

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*Greetings to the 529th Fighter Squadron Reunion
Austin, Texas - September 11, 2004*

I am honored to extend my greetings to the members of the 529th Fighter Squadron who are gathered in Austin today to celebrate their annual reunion. This reunion proves that the adversity and sacrifice you shared forged a bond of brotherhood that time and distance cannot break.

During the Second World War, the patriotic forces of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, with the full support of the entire population, rose up against the Japanese occupation forces as the Allied Forces launched offensive operations. We will not forget and are truly grateful to the brave men of the 529th Fighter Squadron of the United States Army Air Force for the important part they played in liberating Myanmar from the domination of the fascist Japanese.

All free people owe a debt of gratitude to those who fought in defense of liberty. I take a moment with you to remember your brothers who can no longer answer roll call.

Allow me to take this opportunity to share with you the news regarding the joint recovery operations for the remains of American airmen lost in the Kachin State in Northern Myanmar during World War II. Cooperation between the Ministry of Defense of the Union of Myanmar and the POW/Missing Personnel Affairs of the Department of Defense of the United States started exactly two years ago and the joint efforts of our two armed forces are already yielding positive results. On March 27th, 2003, the first remains believed to be those of crew members of US Army Air Force C-47 transport planes that crashed in Myanmar during air supply flights between India and China were brought back to the Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. This is an ongoing project and we will be continuing to cooperate fully with Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) in fulfilling the "Nation's promise to POW/MIA families and those Americans still waiting to come home".

You have my best wishes for many more reunions and hope that you will one day be able to visit Myanmar and to once again extend a friendly hand to the people of Myanmar whom you helped those long years ago - thus promoting friendly relations between our two countries.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linn Myaing".

*(Linn Myaing)
Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary*