

**Dutch want 'thorough probe' into MH17**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**Jan 22, 2015**

MH17 The Netherlands is to pursue a 'thorough investigation' into the cause of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 in eastern Ukraine in July last year.

This was stated on Tuesday by Dutch Foreign Minister Bert Koenders during an event held at the International Peace Institute in New York where he delivered a lecture on the 'United Nations at 70', highlighting its constructive and useful role in all spheres of world affairs but also urging reforms.

A total of 298 passengers, 196 of them Dutch, and crew were killed when the aircraft was shot down on July 17 while on a flight from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur.

"2014 was difficult for the world community. With the MH17 tragedy, the Kingdom of Netherlands experienced in a direct way how intertwined today's global crises are. Foreign affairs have become terribly personal for many of my compatriots.

"We lost almost 200 (Dutch) citizens but also many families around the world (lost their beloved ones). We are still working hard with all those who facilitate the investigation whose aim is to hold those responsible to account," Koenders said while addressing the packed IPI auditorium.

But, he added, the incident also revealed that in his country, like in many other countries, that "international crises can touch individual citizens even far away", making internal and foreign policy become more than ever inter-related.

Asked to explain the official position of the Dutch government on the MH17 downing and whether it had been determined who or what caused the downing of the plane, Koenders told Bernama that a "thorough investigation" was under way.

Describing the question as "very, very important", Koenders said that the answer to this question had to be done in a "very professional way that shows that we take this investigation of this shooting down very seriously".

Koenders replied at length to this correspondent as he said that he was unable to pinpoint at this point who was responsible for the shooting down of the MH17 plane.

"We have an investigation team that has worked intensively in the Ukraine as also in The Hague in close cooperation with other countries in a so-called joint investigation team... the countries are Australia, Malaysia... and also, obviously, we had to work with the Ukraine to get the wreckage, and getting all that access was very complex.

"And as we speak, there is an independent investigation that takes place in the context of

this cooperation with other countries, run, primarily, by a Netherlands-based independent group which has a Dutch structure but also has cooperation with other countries," he said, adding that the group hopes to provide its findings in a report later this year.

### **Providing proof without any reasonable doubt**

This would make it "very clear" on the basis of a thorough investigation to determine exactly what happened and provide proof that is without any reasonable doubt.

"That takes a little time to be very clear so that we can, hopefully, ascertain without any doubt the responsibility (of the perpetrators)..."

But the Dutch foreign minister, who said that it was an enormous task getting hold of the aircraft wreckage and collating all the information from around the world, also emphasised the importance of the legal process to bring those responsible for shooting down of the plane to justice.

"I want to underline the importance of the fact that the shooting down of the plane has been also part of discussions in the Security Council. We do this in a completely objective way, that is why it is important to mention this so that we can in a second part, in the legal process, ensure that those who are responsible for this are in front of a judge at some point of time - better sooner than later," Koenders said.

A UN official, insisting on anonymity, told Bernama that the MH17 issue was a big domestic issue in the Netherlands. He also said that this issue would be raised in the meeting between Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Koenders also dwelt on the reform of the United Nations. He said that while the UN was a "beacon of hope", there was also need for it to adapt to the changing world. For one, the UNSC needed to address conflicts and should change, he said.

But Koenders said that the veto rights should be curbed, saying that it was necessary to publicly explain whenever a veto was exercised.

The Dutch foreign minister emphasised stronger use of diplomacy and dialogue in conflict situations, saying that the conflicting parties had to talk.

- Bernama