

Russia says Dutch investigation into MH17 crash 'biased'
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The Dutch investigation into the downing of a Malaysian Airlines passenger jet over eastern Ukraine last year is biased, Russian news agencies quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying today.

"It's a source of regret that, despite all Russia's repeated and lengthy attempts to organise the investigation in such a way that it is comprehensive and unbiased, and for it to consider all the information we have... there is an obvious attempt to draw a biased conclusion, and carry out political orders," Ryabkov was quoted as saying.

Russia also considers a call by Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte for Russia to cooperate fully with the investigation into the downing of MH17 as strange, foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

Russia has always been willing to cooperate in the investigation, Zakharova added, according to Interfax news agency.

Meanwhile, the White House called the report on the 2014 crash an "important milestone in the effort to hold accountable those responsible" for the disaster.

"The United States will fully support all efforts to bring to justice those responsible. Our assessment is unchanged – MH17 was shot down by a surface-to-air missile fired from separatist-controlled territory in eastern Ukraine.

The victims and their loved ones remain in our thoughts and prayers," National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said in a statement.

In Amsterdam, Reuters reports that an international team of prosecutors who are conducting a criminal investigation into the downing of MH17 said it had identified "persons of interest".

The statement followed the publication earlier in the day of the final report on the cause of the crash by the Dutch Safety Board, which found that the plane was probably downed by a Russian-built missile.

Prosecutors said their independent findings so far "point in that same direction".

The statement by the Dutch-led team did not identify any suspects by name. – Reuters, October 13, 2015.

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