

Australia vows to pursue justice for MH17 victims
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Australia vowed Wednesday it would not be "bullied" in the pursuit of justice after a Dutch-led investigation found flight MH17 was shot down by a Russian-made missile fired from war-torn eastern Ukraine.

Among the 298 passengers and crew on board the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 who died during a routine flight between Amsterdam and Kuala Lumpur on July 17 last year, 38 were Australian citizens and residents.

Even though the inquiry did not say who pulled the trigger, countries including Australia, Britain, France and the US accuse pro-Russian separatist rebels of the atrocity.

Moscow denies involvement and blames the Ukrainian military.

"We will not be bullied by anyone. We will continue to pursue justice for those aboard MH17," Foreign Minister Julie Bishop told national radio.

In July, Russia vetoed a UN resolution to establish a special tribunal to try those who shot down the flight but Bishop said the fight to determine the truth would continue.

"Russia is seeking to discredit the investigation," she said.

"It's had some months to get its lines right... Russia's protestations are not surprising, however we will not be deterred in our effort to gain justice."

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull welcomed the report from the Dutch Safety Board, while focusing his thoughts on the loved ones of those who died.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the victims of the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17," he said in a statement.

"I know this is a particularly distressing time for those who lost loved ones on board MH17."

In a highly anticipated announcement, the chairman of the Dutch Safety Board, Tjibbe Joustra, said Tuesday that the plane was likely downed by a missile fired from a Russian BUK surface-to-air system.

Maps shown to reporters indicated it was believed to have been fired from territory held by pro-Russian separatists.

Moscow responded by saying it had "serious doubts" about the goal of the inquiry. – AFP, October 14, 2015.

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