

Ex-Soviet states too have BUK missiles, says Russia after MH17 report

Malaysian Insider

Oct 15, 2015

Many former Soviet Union countries have the same kind of BUK missile blamed for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over Ukraine last year, the Russia ambassador to Malaysia said today.

Valery N. Yermolov told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur that he was "somewhat surprised" that Malaysian leaders had also blamed the Russian-made BUK missile for the incident, following the technical report by the Dutch Safety Board released two days ago.

"We see that many former Soviet Union countries are armed with BUK missiles. Nato countries are armed with BUK missiles, like Greece.

"This means that this BUK missile was not made by Russia but by a former Soviet Union country," he was quoted as saying by news portal Malaysiakini.

The Dutch-led probe concluded in a report that the jetliner, headed from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, was shot down by a Russian-made BUK missile fired from war-torn eastern Ukraine on July 17 last year.

All 298 people on board were killed, most of them Dutch nationals, including some 80 children. Malaysia lost 43 citizens in the incident.

The report found that a missile had detonated in mid-air just outside the cockpit. While it did not specify who fired the missile, it said it had come from the area held by pro-Russian rebels.

"No scenario other than a BUK surface-to-air missile can explain this combination of facts," the report had said.

Since the incident last year, Russia has sought to deflect claims suggesting it might be responsible for the downing of the commercial jetliner.

It used its veto power at the United Nations against a proposal by Malaysia and other parties for a criminal tribunal to bring the perpetrators to justice.

A criminal investigation, led by the Dutch, is still underway. – October 15, 2015.

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