

Experts pore over evidence of downed MH17 aircraft
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A team that includes Dutch and Ukrainian investigators have begun examining evidence from Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 that was downed in eastern Ukraine in July 2014, killing all on board, Dutch prosecutors said yesterday.

Two thirds of the 298 people travelling on the aircraft when it crashed, were Dutch. The Dutch Safety Board concluded in a final report last month that the plane was shot down by a Russian-made Buk missile.

Pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces were battling each other in eastern Ukraine at the time and many Western experts and governments immediately blamed the rebels.

Russia disputes a Buk may have been used.

The Netherlands has proposed establishing an international tribunal to prosecute the perpetrators, but no suspects have yet been named.

The approximately 20 experts in metals, paints, weapons, ballistics and explosives will examine crash site wreckage with the aim of "tracing and prosecuting the perpetrators," the prosecutors said in a statement.

The meeting should "lead to a significant step forward in the criminal investigation and towards legal and convincing evidence in particular," it said.

The team of specialists from the Netherlands, Australia, Malaysia, Belgium and Ukraine gathered on Monday and will work for the next three weeks. The wreckage was transported from the crash site to a hangar at the Dutch Gilze-Rijen airforce base where it now lies, assembled on a steel wire lattice.

Among the material being examined are soil samples from possible missile launch sites and debris that could belong to a BUK-missile. – Reuters, November 25, 2015.

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