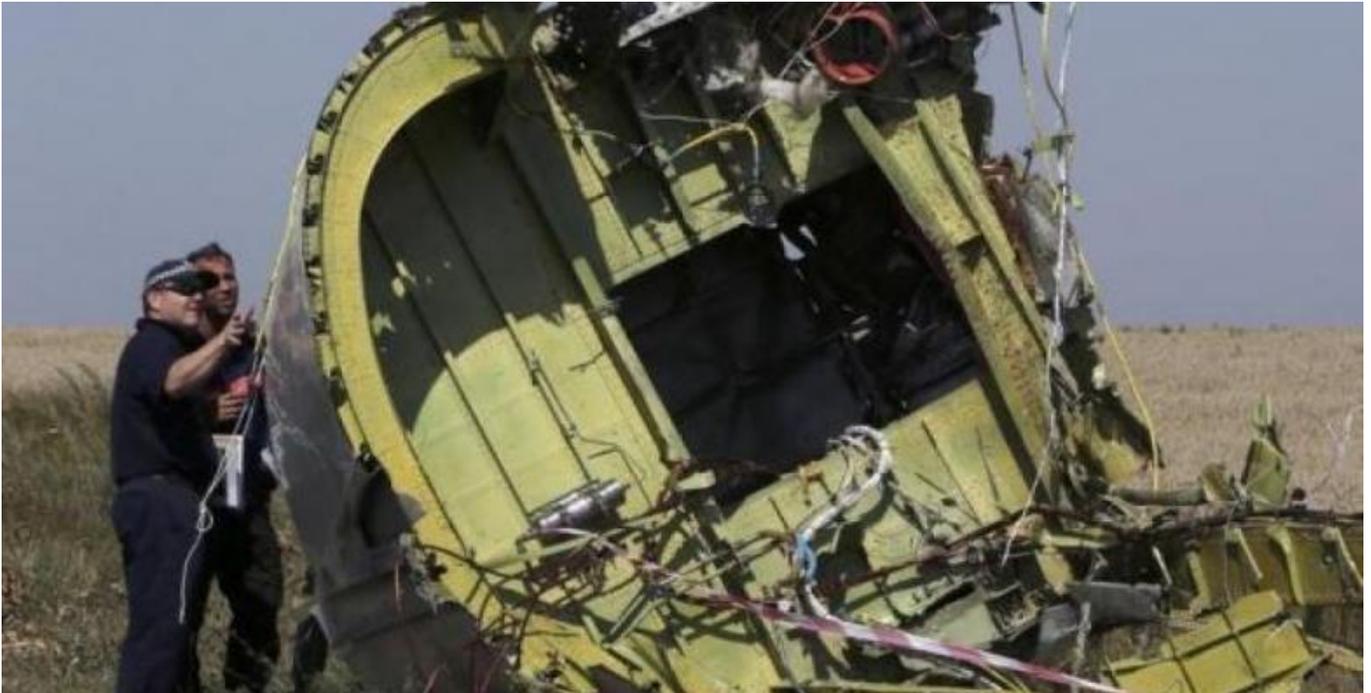


U.N. Security Council to discuss Dutch report on MH17 downing

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Several foreign ministers are expected to attend the United Nations meeting on Friday morning, diplomats said, since they were already scheduled to attend a Security Council debate on Iraq on Friday afternoon, chaired by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

The jetliner crashed in Ukraine in pro-Russian rebel-held territory on July 17, killing 298 people, two-thirds of them from the Netherlands. Ukraine and Western countries accuse the rebels of shooting it down with an advanced, Russian-made missile.

Russia has rejected accusations that it supplied the rebels with SA-11 Buk anti-aircraft missile systems.

A preliminary Dutch Safety Board report released last week said MH17 crashed due to a "large number of high-energy objects" penetrating the fuselage, a conclusion supporting a theory that it had been shot down by a ground-based missile.

U.N. political chief Jeffrey Feltman is due to brief the 15-member Security Council on the report, diplomats said.

"We're a little bit puzzled about why Russia has called for this briefing," said a senior council diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We'll find out on Friday."

Dutch U.N. Ambassador Karel van Oosterom sent a copy of the report to the Security Council last week. In an accompanying letter, he stressed that the Dutch Safety Board, which coordinated an international investigation of the disaster, operates independently.

He said the team included experts from the International Civil Aviation Organization, the European Aviation Safety Agency, Australia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia, Ukraine, Britain and the United States.

A final report on the crash is due next year.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu last week blamed Ukraine, according to the Interfax news agency. "The catastrophe happened in the airspace belonging to Ukraine, which bears full responsibility for what happened," he was quoted as saying.

On July 21, the Security Council adopted a resolution on that demanded armed groups allow "safe, secure, full and unrestricted access" to the crash site and that those responsible "be held to account and that all states cooperate fully with efforts to establish accountability."

Although a small number of Malaysian inspectors and Dutch body recovery experts reached the site, fighting between the rebels and Ukrainian forces kept Dutch air crash investigators away. However, there are hopes that a shaky Sept. 5 ceasefire may soon allow safe access.

(Reporting by Michelle Nichols; Editing by [Jonathan Oatis](#))

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