

Russian Foreign Minister Accuses Netherlands of Concealing Facts About MH17

By [Daria Litvinova](#)

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Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has accused the Netherlands of concealing from Russia findings from the investigation into the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, TASS news agency reported Monday.

“We're fighting for a fair investigation of the tragedy, but the key facts are still being hidden [from us],” Lavrov was cited as saying at a youth forum “Territoriya Smyslov na Klyazme,” known in English as Terra Scientia.

MH17 crashed over territory held by pro-Russian rebels in July 2014, killing all 298 aboard, who were mostly Dutch citizens. Prosecutors from the countries most affected — the Netherlands, Malaysia, Belgium, Australia and Ukraine — are investigating the crash.

Experts and Western governments alike have accused pro-Russian rebels of shooting down the passenger aircraft with a Russian-made Buk surface-air-missile system, but Moscow says it was hit by a Ukrainian fighter jet rocket. On Aug. 11 Dutch prosecutors announced they had found fragments of what appeared to be a Buk missile.

“Members of the investigation conducted by the Dutch security service met with us recently. We asked questions — for instance, why they made the announcement about the elements of the Buk missile only in August, when they'd found them several months ago. We also asked them to show the fragments to us — they refused to do so,” Lavrov said.

The minister said that Russia was the only country to insist on the implementation of the resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council regarding an investigation into the cause of the crash.

The resolution was adopted on July 22 last year. Russia was among the countries that initiated the resolution. The document called for a cessation of all military operations in the area and demanded that the site of the crash be available for investigators.

A resolution proposing an international tribunal be established to prosecute perpetrators of the tragedy was introduced to the UN Security Council by Malaysian diplomats last month. It was vetoed by Russia in late July.

“The international tribunal resolution was introduced to the UN Security Council only to strengthen the image of Russia as a guilty party in this horrific crime,” Lavrov said.

Contact the author at d.litvinova@imedia.ru

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