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Dutch Prosecutors: Fragments from MH17 Site May Be from Russian-Made Missile

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Debris from a Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777 that crashed on Thursday lies on the ground near the village of Rozsypne in the Donetsk region.

Some of the debris recovered from the crash site of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in eastern Ukraine may be fragments of a Russian-made missile system, Dutch prosecutors leading an international investigation said Tuesday.

MH17 crashed over territory held by pro-Russian rebels in July 2014, killing all 298 aboard, who were mostly Dutch citizens.

"The Joint Investigation Team (JIT) investigates several parts, possibly originating from a Buk surface-air-missile system," a statement from prosecutors said. "The parts are of particular interest to the criminal investigation as they can possibly provide more information about who was involved in the crash of MH17."

Experts and Western governments have accused pro-Russian rebels of shooting down the passenger aircraft, but Moscow says it was hit by a Ukrainian fighter jet rocket.

Prosecutors said on Tuesday they would enlist the help of weapons and forensics experts to establish the origins of the parts.

"The forensic investigation is continuing and we cannot speculate about its eventual outcome," prosecution spokesman Wim de Bruin said.

Prosecutors from the countries affected most — Netherlands, Malaysia, Belgium, Australia and Ukraine — are investigating the crash, but it is not clear where, when or how any suspects would be tried if they are identified. Russia vetoed a Dutch-led proposal to establish a UN tribunal last month.

Separately, air crash investigators are meeting with the Dutch Safety Board in the Netherlands this week to discuss progress and see a reconstruction of the remains of the aircraft, which were taken from the crash site in Ukraine to a Dutch air force base.

The board, which is conducting the civilian investigation into the cause of the crash, is expected to issue its final report in October, but not to apportion blame.

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