# Dutch Police Detain Journalist Carrying MH17 Debris

January 09, 2017



Police at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport detained a Dutch national for more than two hours when he returned from Ukraine's Donbass region carrying debris from Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 in his bag on Saturday.

Michel Spekkers, who describes himself as a "beginner freelance investigative journalist," told The Moscow Times that he visited Donetsk to make a documentary film. While in Donetsk, he said, he was told that fragments of the downed aircraft could still be found in and around the crash site.

Spekkers told The Moscow Times that at the crash site he found metal fragments and material he believed could be either "plastic" or "bone."

Spekkers said he had made a deal with Dutch authorities prior to his arrival at Schiphol that would see him return the remains voluntarily. But according to Spekkers, when he arrived at the airport, they also demanded that he turn over all digital data he was carrying, including

photographs.

When he refused to comply with the authorities' request, his personal belongings were confiscated, he said.

Skekkers said that he has lodged a complaint against the police and that the data on his devices is currently sealed to authorities. A judge's decision on whether the police can access the data, or the devices must be returned to the journalist, is pending.

Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over eastern Ukraine as it was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur on July 17 2014, killing all 298 people aboard. Preliminary investigations determined that the Boeing 777 airliner had been hit by a Russian-made "Buk" surface-to-air missile system.

On Sept. 28 2016, the Joint Investigative Team (JIT) released a report on the downing of the airliner in they concluded that the Buk missile had been fired from territory that was under control of pro-Russian separatists.

The Russian government has refused to accept the findings of the JIT.