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Russia Says MH17 Investigation's Findings Are Groundless

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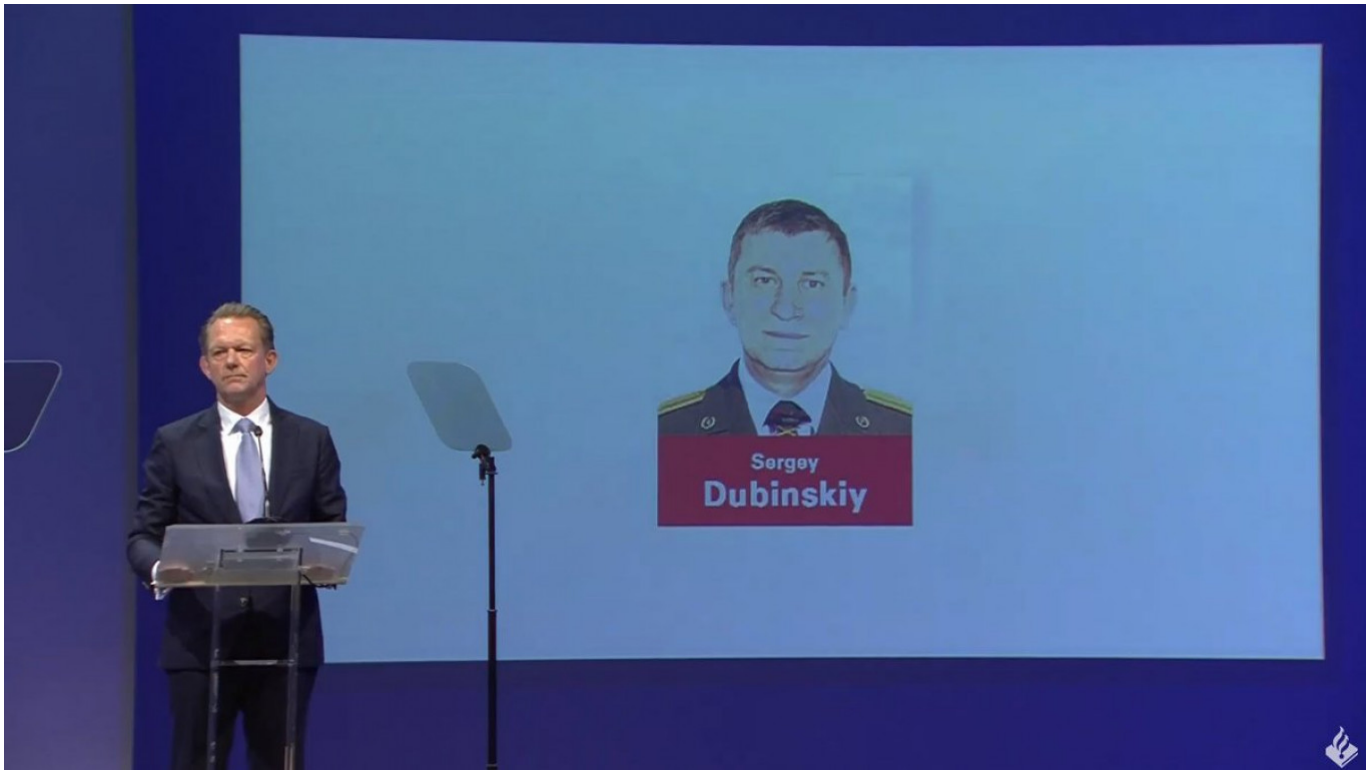

Aric Toler / Twitter

Russia's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that it regretted the findings of the international investigation into the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17and called murder charges against Russian suspects groundless.

Three Russians and a Ukrainian will face murder charges for the 2014 downing of the MH17 jet over eastern Ukraine that killed 298 people, in a trial scheduled to start in the Netherlands next March, the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) said Wednesday.

Related article: Investigators Name 4 Top Suspects Behind MH17 Crash

"Once again, absolutely groundless accusations are being made against the Russian side, aimed at discrediting the Russian Federation in the eyes of the international community," the Russian Foreign Ministry said on its website.

Two of the suspects named by the investigation, Igor Girkin and Sergei Dubinsky, also denied their involvement in the shooting down of the plane.

“I am not going to comment on this case. I can only say that the militia did not shoot down the Boeing,” Girkin, a former minister of defense of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) in eastern Ukraine, told Interfax on Wednesday.

Dubinsky, who served as head of the counterintelligence agency of the Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR), called the allegations against him “nonsense,” saying that transporting military equipment was not in his competence.

“The Buk was supposedly from the 53rd brigade of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. So, the head of counterintelligence of the unrecognized [Donetsk] republic also commands the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation? What do they smoke there in their ‘free country?’” he was cited as saying by the BBC Russian service.

Dubinsky said that he does not see a reason to talk to the JIT investigators.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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