

# Key MH17 Suspect Tsemakh Says Netherlands Offered Him Citizenship

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Vladimir Tsemakh gave his first interview since being swapped in a high-stakes prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine. **Screenshot Youtube**

In his first interview since being released in a prisoner swap between Russia and Ukraine, key MH17 witness Vladimir Tsemakh said Dutch and Australian officials offered him Dutch citizenship and a house in the Netherlands during interrogations.

Tsemakh, a Ukrainian citizen, was kidnapped in the Donbass by Ukrainian security services on June 27. He had been recorded on video saying that he commanded an anti-air brigade in eastern Ukraine and hid evidence of a Buk missile system, leading observers to [speculate](#) that Tsemakh may be a key witness in the 2014 downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17. In September, Tsemakh was sent to Russia as part of a high-profile prisoner swap between Kiev and Moscow.

**Related article:** [Ukraine Releases Key MH17 Witness Amid Prisoner Swap Talks With Russia](#)

In the [interview](#) with the state-run RIA news agency, Tsemakh described how he was questioned by Russian-speaking Dutch and Australian police officials in Ukraine this summer.

“They offered [me] witness protection, Dutch citizenship and a house in the Netherlands,” Tsemakh said, adding that he refused their offers.

Tsemakh also said that he considers himself a victim of Ukrainian terrorism.

“They had no evidence against me. I did not participate in the [MH17] events...I only found out about the accident ... in the morning the next day.”

Tsemakh is currently believed to be residing in territory controlled by pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

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