
Rebels Turn Over Downed Jet's Black Boxes to Malaysian Representatives

22/07/2014



The prime minister of the self-proclaimed people's republic of Donetsk, Alexandr Borodai, presented the two devices to the head of the Malaysian delegation during an official ceremony held at the seat of the separatist government.

Meanwhile, all 15 members of the UN Security Council voted on Monday to condemn the downing of the Malaysian jetliner and to demand that the anti-Kiev militias who control the crash site cooperate with the international investigation.

Russia, who is accused of supporting the mainly ethnic-Russian militias in eastern Ukraine, approved the resolution after some modifications to the text.

Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur was carrying 298 passengers and crew when it was shot down last Thursday near the city of Donetsk. There were no survivors.

The resolution also called for a cease-fire in the vicinity of the crash site.

Ukraine announced earlier Monday that the process of recovering bodies from the wreckage of the Boeing-777 was over.

Emergency workers found 282 bodies and fragments corresponding to 16 other bodies, Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Groisman said.

Members of the anti-Kiev militias had been storing bodies in refrigerated train cars and the train with the victims' remains left on Monday for Kharkov, a city under the control of the Ukrainian government.

The majority of the dead were from the Netherlands and Dutch forensic experts who reached the crash site on Monday inspected the body-laden refrigerated cars before the train set out for Kharkov.

"(U)nfortunately, the Russian-backed separatists who control the area continue to block the investigation," U.S. President Barack Obama said Monday.

"They have repeatedly prevented international investigators from gaining full access to the wreckage. As investigators approached, they fired their weapons into the air. These separatists are removing evidence from the crash site, all of which begs the question – what exactly are they trying to hide?" Obama said.

"(G)iven its direct influence over the separatists, Russia and President (Vladimir) Putin, in particular, has direct responsibility to compel them to cooperate with the investigation," the U.S. leader said.

In Moscow, meanwhile, a senior Russian military officer said a Ukrainian warplane may have been near the Malaysian jetliner in the moments prior to the crash.
