

The MH17 Malaysian Airlines Tragedy, Blamed on Russia. NGOs Say They Will Seek PM Mahathir Support to Prevent the MH17 Trial of Four Men

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Global Research, August 21, 2019
[Malay Mail](#) 17 August 2019

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Law and Justice](#)

Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) today said they will soon ask for Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's help to prevent the trial of four individuals over the 2014 shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 from starting.

Chandra Muzaffar, president of NGO International Movement for a Just World (JUST), said the trial must not go on as the prior investigations were allegedly "flawed".

"First and most urgent task emanating from this conference, we should do what we can to put a stop to the judicial process initiated by the Joint Investigation Team, the Dutch-led process that would in March 2020 see perhaps the beginning of the trial," he said at the end of a full-day conference here on MH17.

"We have to try to stop this from happening, this is where what we have discussed and what we feel about this should be convened to Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad so he can take it up with the Dutch government, it has to be bilateral level perhaps prime to prime minister," he added.

Chandra said Malaysia could also seek to inform other JIT members that it thinks the trial should not proceed, arguing that the JIT decides based on consensus.

The Joint Investigation Team (JIT) members are the Netherlands, Australia, Belgium, Malaysia and Ukraine.

The JIT had previously concluded that MH17 was shot down on July 17, 2014 by an anti-aircraft BUK missile originating from a Russian military brigade.

The JIT had on July 19 charged three Russians and one Ukrainian over the downing of MH17 where all 298 onboard were killed, and had said trial would start in March 2020.

Chandra was speaking at the "MH17: The Quest for Justice" conference, which was jointly-organised by JUST, the Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF), and the Canada-based Centre for Research on Globalisation (CRG) with the collaboration of the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

Chandra also outlined a few other proposals as part of the NGOs' action plan, including setting up a committee with lawyers to examine legal alternatives to the MH17 trial such as

filing civil lawsuits or setting up commissions of inquiry.

Chandra also proposed the creation of a citizens' movement backing alternative views on the MH17 incident, as well as to set up a committee to focus on the media to promote an "alternative narrative" on MH17, and to liaise with governments on the matter.

Chandra today also claimed that the multi-national investigation's findings of the MH17 being downed via a BUK missile was a "lie".

"Let's say we can discredit the judicial process, come up with alternatives, then I think more and more people will believe that the Buk missile theory has to be set aside," he argued.

Other [speakers at the conference](#) today included Russian documentary filmmaker Yana Yerlashova, digital forensic investigator Akash Rosen, CRG founder Michel Chossudovsky, former pilot Peter Haisenko, Dutch author Kees Van der Pilj, and lawyers John Philpot and Gurdial Singh Nijar.

Among those who spoke were Colonel Mohd Sakri Hussin who handled a mission to retrieve the MH17 black boxes and Malaysia's former ambassador to the Netherlands Datuk Fauziah Mohd Talib, JUST executive director Askiah Adam and PGPF trustee Zulaiha Ismail.

Some of the speakers presented their own alternative theories about the MH17 incident, disagreeing that BUK missiles were involved in the plane's downing.

Two family members of those who were aboard MH17 were originally listed as speakers, but were noted by the organisers as having withdrawn from the session.

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Featured image: President of International Movement for a Just World Dr Chandra Muzaffar speaks at the 'MH17: Quest for Justice' forum at the International Islamic University Malaysia, August 17, 2019. — Picture by Firdaus Latif

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