



Saturday, August 9, 2014

Statement By YB Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai
Minister of Transport, Malaysia

MH370 Continues To Be a Priority for Malaysian Government

After five months of searching for the missing plane, we would like to assure the next of kin of MH370 that our commitment to the search for this flight has remained consistent and has strengthened.

To this end, on August 6, together with our international partners, Australia and China, we announced that the contract to conduct a search of the southern Indian Ocean sea floor has been awarded to Fugro Survey Pty Ltd (Fugro).

Fugro will utilise two vessels equipped with towed deep-water vehicles operated by experts who will undertake responsibility for the search operations. The vessels will scan the sea floor utilising sophisticated side scan sonar, multi-beam echo sounders and video cameras with the hope of locating and identifying aircraft debris. The underwater search of the 60,000 square kilometre area is expected to take up a significant amount of time. Assets are already being mobilised with Fugro Discovery en route to Perth from the United Kingdom. Fugro Equator is currently compiling bathymetry data in the search area and will be the second search vessel to be mobilised once the bathymetry stage has been completed.

In tandem with these comprehensive efforts, the Malaysian Government has also despatched KD MUTIARA, a naval survey ship which will be arriving in the latter half of this month to join the bathymetric survey work. Two vessels equipped with side scan sonar and remotely operated vehicles will be integrated into the overall capability for the underwater search being led by Australian Transport Safety Bureau. Another Royal Malaysian Navy vessel, Bunga Mas, which has been in the area since April 2014, will continue to support the search efforts.

In addition to these ongoing initiatives, Malaysia's national oil corporation, Petroliaam Nasional Bhd (PETRONAS) is providing assistance for the search-and-recovery (SAR) operations.

PETRONAS volunteered to deploy underwater search equipment and a support vessel to be used for deep-water search.

We are also appreciative of the Chinese Government's support with the deployment of their vessel, the Zhu Kezhen which continues to operate in the southern Indian Ocean, surveying the seabed.

To reiterate, the commitment of the governments involved in the search of MH370 has thus far never wavered and this will continue.

To this end, I will be in Australia from August 19, 2014 to meet with the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and the relevant Agencies and teams who are participating in the SAR operations. A tripartite meeting between China, Australia, and Malaysia at the ministerial level will also be held.

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