



15 April 2014

**PRESS BRIEFING BY HISHAMMUDDIN HUSSEIN
MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND ACTING MINISTER OF TRANSPORT**

DSA 2014

Today is the 2nd day of the Defence Services Asia Exhibition (DSA) 2014. We are grateful to receive positive feedback from the exhibitors on this edition of DSA. Many participants and visitors from the defence and security community, regionally and internationally have come all the way to Kuala Lumpur and for that I thank all of you. Earlier today, DSA has been graced by DYMM SPB YDP Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah. His Majesty noted the overwhelming response to DSA and His Majesty also had an opportunity to meet up with Malaysian companies and was pleased to note that the achievements of these Malaysian companies which have been able to work with international partners in an industry which is relatively new and growing in Malaysia.

I have also received courtesy calls from my counterparts and representatives from other governments in the field of defence and security. Overall support has been overwhelming and I am optimistic that this momentum will continue until the closing of DSA 2014 this Thursday.

Introductory Statement on MH370

It has been 39 days since MH370 went missing. We have now entered a new phase for the search operations expanding into deep ocean search with the deployment of the Bluefin – 21 Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AVU). As stated by the Joint Agency Coordinating Centre in Perth earlier today, there are 9 military aircraft, 2 civil aircrafts and 11 ships which have been assigned to search for MH370.

1. International Investigation Team

The Cabinet has agreed to set up an International Investigation Team to specifically look into the MH370 incident. The Ministry of Transport (MOT) will spearhead the efforts to draft the Terms of Reference for the investigation team and will be recruiting the members for the team in accordance with international standards.

The sub committee, led by Aziz Kaprawi, Deputy Minister of Transport has been assigned the task to coordinate the formation of the International Investigation Team.

On that note, Malaysia as the Contracting State and a Council Member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) will observe and comply with the standards and recommended practices of ICAO set mainly to look into the safety of international civil aviation. It is imperative for the government to form an independent team of

investigators which is not only competent and transparent but also highly credible.

The main purpose of the International Investigation Team is to evaluate, investigate and determine the actual cause of the incident so similar incidents could be avoided in the future. I would like to stress that this investigation is not aimed at apportioning blame or liability with regards to the incident. I would also like to note that the investigation will not include criminal aspects which are under the purview of the Royal Malaysian Police.

This investigation will be carried out in accordance with the Civil Aviation Regulation 1966 and the standards set under Annex 13 - Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation, the Chicago Convention, which requires each party to investigate air accidents independently with full powers in their respective countries.

The investigation team will include three groups:

- a. an airworthiness group, to look into issues such as maintenance records, structures and systems;
- b. an operational group, to examine flight recorders, operations and meteorology;
- c. a medical and human factors group, to investigate issues such as psychology, pathology and survival factors.

We are also discussing to appoint experts from other ASEAN countries in accordance with ASEAN MoU on Cooperation Relating to Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation that was signed in 2008.

2. Developments on the Ministerial Committees

As mentioned previously, the Malaysian government has established three ministerial committees. These three committees have started their respective tasks and I will now update on you on their progress.

The next of kin committee, led by Hamzah Zainuddin, Deputy Foreign Minister has looked into various issues related to the next of kin of passengers onboard MH370. They are now working closely with various Governments especially the countries whose nationals were on board.

The technical committee, led by Aziz Kaprawi, Deputy Transport Minister has developed the structure and drafted the terms of reference for the International Investigations Team which will be made known to the public in due course.

The asset deployment committee, led by Abdul Rahim Bakri, Deputy Defence Minister has directed the deployment of the existing assets involved in the current SAR operation. They will be consulting relevant partner countries through our defence cooperation mechanism to further assist JACC in the recovery process of MH370.

I have instructed leading members of the three sub committees to head to Perth to hold discussions with the JACC.

3. SAR Operation Updates

As mentioned by Angus Houston yesterday, the Bluefin-21 AUV (autonomous underwater vehicle) has been deployed. The search area is based on the identified location where the ping transmission was last detected and verified to be from an electronic device.

The Bluefin-21 which will be deployed daily to locate the black box, will take 24 hours to complete a full mission. It takes 2 hours for it to descend to the bottom level, 16 hours to search and photograph the seabed, 2 hours to ascend back to the surface and 4 hours to download the images.

We are still awaiting verification of the oil slick found and collected yesterday 5.5 kilometres away from the site where a ping was detected. This is consistent with our stand to only accept corroborated and verified evidence and therefore we appreciate JACC's effort in treating this new potential lead cautiously.

Concluding remarks on MH370

A Framework Agreement On Cooperation Between The Government Of Malaysia And The Government Of The Commonwealth Of Australia In

Relation To MH370 is currently being drafted. A first draft has been sent to the High Commission of Australia for their deliberation.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that the search for MH370 has entered yet another phase. The information released yesterday has provided new leads, and given new direction to the search process. When possible, we will keep the media fully briefed, but our priority remains with the search operations.