

## Decision on MH17 prosecution only after probe completed

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THE government will decide on how best to ensure justice for the victims of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 after international investigators have completed their probe, Parliament heard yesterday.

Transport Deputy Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Kaprawi said Malaysia could choose to proceed with "national prosecution" to try those responsible for bringing down the aircraft. Or, he said, the other option was prosecution by an international tribunal which was set up by the Joint Investigation Team (JIT), of which Malaysia was a member.

"Deciding which option to take will depend on the findings by the investigators to ascertain who were responsible for shooting down the plane," he said in reply to a question by Datuk Johari Abdul (Sungai Petani-PCR), who wanted to know the follow-up action regarding the incident.

MH17, a Boeing 777 plane, was on its way from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, with 283 passengers and 15 crew on board when it was shot down with a BUK missile over Ukraine in July 2014, killing all.

Aziz said there was a need to establish the background of the suspected criminals involved in the shooting such as their country of residence and citizenship before prosecuting them.

"Interim investigations report by JIT issued last month did not lay blame on any party for downing the plane," he said.

He said JIT was continuing with its investigations so that more concrete evidence could be collected for use in the prosecution of suspects later.

"The prosecution against the perpetrators will hinge on sufficient evidence that is accepted by the court," he said.

He said Malaysia would not proceed on the prosecution process on its own as the government was committed to working with other JIT member countries including the Netherlands, Ukraine, Australia and Belgium.

"This will be our commitment to providing justice to the victims and their families," he said.