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**MH370 PRESS BRIEFING BY HISHAMMUDDIN HUSSEIN
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Introductory statement

It has been 31 days since MH370 went missing. As we enter this new week of the search operations, there has been a significant lead in the search for the missing aircraft. As stated by the Joint Agency Coordinating Centre in Perth earlier today, the towed pinger locator deployed from HMAS Ocean Shield has detected signals consistent with those emitted by aircraft black boxes. While this may be a step closer towards finding MH370, there are still many steps to be taken before we can positively verify that these signals are from MH370.

1. Developments from Australia

This morning, Prime Minister Najib Razak had a call with Prime Minister Tony Abbott who updated him on the latest findings regarding the signals detected.

According to the Joint Agency Coordination Centre in Perth, two separate signal detections have occurred 1,650 kilometres northwest of Perth within the northern part of the defined search area. The first detection was held for approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes. HMAS Ocean Shield then lost contact before conducting a turn and attempting to re-acquire the signal.

The second detection on the return leg was held for approximately 13 minutes. On this occasion, two distinct pinger returns were audible. Significantly as stated by Angus Houston, this would be consistent with transmissions from both the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder.

Separately, the Chinese Ship Haixun 01 has also detected similar signals twice.

In line with Malaysia's consistent stand of verifying and corroborating new evidence since Day 1 of the search operations, I would strongly urge all the parties concerned to treat this information responsibly and to give time and space for the authorities to conduct further verification. Malaysia also concurs with the statement by Prime Minister Abbott that all parties must be cautious about unconfirmed findings and making conclusions.

I have also personally spoken to Air Chief Marshal (ret) Angus Houston earlier today, who has confirmed the above and has briefed me on the

ongoing operations based on information received from all parties involved.

Despite all this, We are cautiously hopeful that there will be positive developments in the next few days.

2. Way forward for committees

As I have elaborated last Saturday, the Government - in order to streamline and strengthen our on-going efforts - has established three ministerial committees namely,

1. the Next of Kin committee, led by Hamzah Zainuddin, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.
2. the Technical committee, led by Abdul Aziz Kaprawi, the Deputy Minister of Transport
3. the Deployment of Assets committee, led by Abdul Rahim Bakri, the Deputy Minister of Defence

These three committees have started their respective tasks and we will be reporting to the public on their findings in due course.

I would also like to confirm that efforts to appoint an independent investigator in charge based on ICAO standards to lead an investigation team is underway. Three groups have been established, namely –

- an airworthiness group, to look at issues such as maintenance records, structures and systems

- an operations group, to examine things such as flight recorders, operations and meteorology;
- and a medical and human factors group, to investigate issues such as psychology, pathology and survival factors

We are in the process of identifying to include accredited countries into this investigation team.

Concluding remarks

The new developments over the last few hours have been the most promising lead we have had so I urge all Malaysians and the international community to unite in their prayers and not give up hope. We will continue with all our efforts to find MH370.