

## Ministry of Justice and Security

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**Our reference**  
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Date 19 June 2019  
Concerning Decision on prosecution MH17

*Please quote date of letter  
and our ref. when replying. Do  
not raise more than one  
subject per letter.*

Also on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am writing to inform you about the decision by the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO) to prosecute suspects in the MH17 case, and the presentation of the JIT.

Today, 19 June 2019, the next of kin of the victims of the downing of flight MH17 were informed of the PPO's decision to prosecute four suspects. The PPO took this decision on the basis of the criminal investigation carried out by the Joint Investigation Team (JIT). The decision has the unanimous support of the investigative authorities of the JIT countries. The criminal investigation into the involvement of other persons continues. The next of kin were informed jointly by the JIT partners. After this meeting, the JIT held a press conference, during which they put out a call for witnesses.

In accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2166, the Netherlands will inform the UN Security Council on this important development. In addition, I can inform the House that, at the request of the PPO, diplomatic steps have been taken in respect of the Russian Federation because, according to the PPO, the response by the Russian authorities to requests for legal assistance has been insufficient, incorrect or indeed entirely non-existent.

On 17 July 2014, flight MH17 was downed over eastern Ukraine killing all 298 people on board, including 196 Dutch nationals. Immediately after the crash, the PPO started a criminal investigation with its JIT partners. In its presentation of 28 September 2016, the call for witnesses of 24 May 2018 and the presentation today (this presentation can be found on the website [www.om.nl](http://www.om.nl)), the JIT presented the results of the criminal investigation. All these presentations have shown that the JIT has carried out a high-quality, independent and thorough investigation, leading to the decision to prosecute these four suspects.

Immediately after the joint decision by the JIT countries in 2017 that prosecution could take place in the Netherlands, rooted in international support and cooperation, the practical preparations for a trial got underway. It has been decided that the Hague district court will hear the case, and that the hearings will take place at Justice Complex Schiphol. As I indicated during my meeting with a

House committee on 10 April 2019, everything is ready for the start of an MH17 criminal trial.

With this decision to prosecute, we are entering a new phase. The PPO will present the case to an independent court in public hearings under the Dutch legal system, which provides all the necessary safeguards for suspects and a solid legal position for the next of kin.

The government considers this decision by the PPO as an important step in establishing the truth and achieving justice for the victims and their next of kin.

The Minister of Justice and Security,

Ferd Grapperhaus

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