FLIGHT MH17: RUSSIA COULD FACE LEGAL ACTION OVER DOWNING OF JET OVER UKRAINE

News / Airlines

Russia could **face** a barrage of **legal action** over the downing of flight **MH17** as affected countries gather in New York to discuss their options.

Australia's foreign minister, Julie Bishop, will meet with her counterparts from Belgium, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Ukraine on Tuesday during the annual United Nations general assembly meeting.

One of the proposals is for a tribunal similar to that established to prosecute Libyan suspects over the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am flight over Scotland.

Nations that lost some of the 298 passengers and crew in the Malaysia Airlines disaster over eastern Ukraine in July 2014 are also looking at launching separate prosecutions.

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Archive news report: Witnesses describe the scene of MH17 in July 2014

A report by the Dutch led-investigation team, set to be published on 13 October, is understood to include evidence the plane was brought down by a Russian-made Buk missile fired from separatist territory in eastern Ukraine.

Russia has denied any involvement but in July used its veto power at the UN to block a resolution that would have formed a tribunal to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The tribunal would not require UN approval, and could be established through a treaty by all of the countries that lost citizens and residents.

A further option could be a fresh attempt at a UN security council resolution. However, this is unlikely until after the investigation report is concluded.

It is understood several international lawyers are working on the options.

A draft report on the disaster has ruled out mechanical failure.

Bishop said at the time of the resolution debate that Russia's UNSC motion veto "compounded the atrocity", but she remained determined to bring the perpetrators to justice.

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