

《澳大利亚总理：搜寻马航进入新阶段》

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Close to two months since Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 vanished with 239 people on board on March the 8th, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has said the hunt for the missing flight has entered a new phase. He said the search operation will now focus on an increased area underwater.

"What we are doing now is looking to an intensified underwater search involving different technology, in particular, using specialized side-scan sonar equipment tied behind the ships to scan the seabed for evidence of aircraft wreckage. We are very grateful for the contribution that we've had from China and from other country as well. The Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force, and ships of the Chinese Navy and other maritime agencies have been our vital and valuable partners at every step of the way," he said.

Abbott said the new phase of search may take six to eight months if weather conditions permit. Private equipment to scan the seabed is expected to be deployed within weeks and in the interim, the Bluefin-21 will continue on its underwater mission. In addition, an Australian aircraft will be on standby in case possible wreckage is identified.

Australia has been in charge of the search in the southern Indian Ocean for the past 41 days. Around 19 military aircraft, 8 civilian aircraft, and 14 vessels from eight countries have so far searched an area of 4.5 million square kilometers.

On Monday, Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Ma Zhaoxu, said in Canberra that China will continue to provide adequate resources for the next phase of search operation.