

Syrian Coalition Condemns Assassination of Father Francis Van Der Lugt

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The Syrian Coalition said that it “was shocked and deeply saddened by news of the assassination of Father Francis Van Der Lugt, patriarch of the Jesuit monastery in Bustan al Diwan neighborhood, Old Homs.” The Coalition condemns, in the strongest possible terms, such a cowardly act and pledges to bring its perpetrators to justice. Father Francis has lived in Syria for more than 35 years, and refused to leave the besieged district of Old Homs, even when Assad’s forces launched a campaign against the area more than two years ago. He was a man of courage, who despite all difficulties, tried to highlight the plight of the Syrian people. In many video recordings, he appeared to call on the international community to provide humanitarian aid to men, women, and children facing starvation and constant bombardment. The Assad regime has always threatened and indeed targeted anyone who expressed sympathy with the Syrian people or displayed even a hint of opposition to Assad’s brutal practices against innocent civilians in Syria. Father Francis will be missed. He will always be remembered as a respectable priest and a man of noble character, who along with millions of Syrians, fell victim to regime oppression. (Source: Syrian Coalition)