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## STATEMENT

**by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton in  
reference to the killing of Father Frans Van der Lugt, SJ in Homs, Syria**

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative has learned with great sadness about the death of Father Frans Van der Lugt, who was assassinated inside the besieged area of Homs, Syria on 7 April 2014. Father Frans chose to stay in the besieged part of the city to tend to the needs of Syrians trapped there.

Father Frans was known by his complete commitment to assisting all those who turned to him for help. His operation extended beyond the besieged center of the city and continues to help hundreds of Homs civilians with their everyday survival needs.

From providing food and shelter to helping women and children live in dignity, Father Frans has given the world the testimony of the most tragic situation that thousands of Syrians find themselves in at the moment.

The High Representative is deeply concerned about the continuation of the dire situation for the Syrian people with the increasing number of casualties and of persons in need of humanitarian aid.

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The High Representative reiterates that there is no other way to put an end to this tragedy than engaging in a political settlement of the conflict through negotiations."

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