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Spanish court to investigate complaint against security forces

Madrid.—A Spanish court said yesterday it would investigate a criminal complaint against members of the Syrian security and intelligence forces related to alleged state terrorism and forced disappearance of people.

The complaint was brought by a Syrian-born woman of Spanish nationality who says her brother disappeared after being arrested and was tortured and executed in 2013 at a centre in Damascus under the control of the Syrian security forces.

It is the first criminal case against Syrian security forces to be investigated by a foreign court, said Toby Cadman, a lawyer for London-based chambers Guernica 37 which is representing the woman bringing the charge. Other cases have been filed in Germany and France, but have not yet been accepted by the courts, he said.

Although there would be formidable obstacles to bringing the Syrian security force members named in the complaint before a judge in Spain, Cadman said there was still an acceptable chance of them standing trial.

The woman identified the body of her brother from a cache of more than 50,000 images taken and smuggled out of the country by a Syrian forensic officer who defected from his position and fled Syria, Guernica 37 said.

Butane gas lorry crash causes concern in Soller

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