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Assad warns Turkey over Takfiris

10/4/2013

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has warned that Turkey will ‘pay very dearly’ for fanning the flames of violence in Syria by supporting the extremist groups in the Arab country.

“In the near future these terrorists will have an impact on Turkey. And Turkey will pay very dearly for its contribution,” Assad told Turkey’s opposition Halk TV in an interview aired on Friday.

President Assad also stated, “It is not possible to use terrorism as a card and put it in your pocket. Because it is like a scorpion which won’t hesitate to sting you at any moment.”

The interview focused on the presence of al-Qaeda-affiliated militants near the Syrian border with Turkey, which forced Ankara to close one of its border crossings with Syria last month following the clashes between al-Qaeda-linked groups and the so-called Free Syrian Army in the northern Syrian town of Azaz.

On September 23, Turkish President Abdullah Gul said his country is not able to prevent infiltration of militants from neighboring Syria into its territory despite tight security measures along the border.

The Syrian president also accused Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of lying about

the situation in the Syria. “All that he says about Syria and its people is a heap of lies, that is all... Erdogan is doing nothing but supporting the terrorists.”

Turkey has been a key supporter of militants fighting against the Syrian government since the outbreak of unrest in the country in March 2011.

On Thursday, the Turkish parliament extended by another year a mandate authorizing the deployment of troops to Syria if the need arises.

President Assad also acknowledged that the Syrian helicopter which was downed by the Turkish military on September 16 had violated the Turkish airspace, but he said the move was meant to prevent “the infiltration of a large number of terrorists.”

According to the Syrian president, two pilots had been “savagely decapitated” by the Takfiri agents after the helicopter fell on the Syrian soil.