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## Syria facing major extremist offensive: Assad

12/23/2015

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad says his country is being confronted by a major offensive led by Takfiri extremists.

"This is terrorism without limits, an international scourge that could strike anywhere and anytime," The Syrian president said in a meeting with a delegation of academics, researchers and activists from Australia, who had come to express their solidarity with the Syrian government.

*The president also slammed Western countries, who "behave with duplicity and act according to their selfish interests, without understanding the reality or nature" of the Syrian conflict.*

Syria's official SANA news agency reported that the delegation was led by Tim Anderson, a Sydney academic opposed to foreign intervention in Syria.

Syria has been gripped by deadly unrest since March 2011. According to reports, Western powers and their regional allies -- especially Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey -- are supporting the militants operating inside Syria.

According to the United Nations, more than 100,000 people have been killed and millions displaced due to the turmoil that has gripped Syria for over two years.

Two million more Syrians are expected to take refuge outside the country while another 2.25 million are predicted to be internally displaced next year.

Several international human rights organizations have said that the militants operating in Syria are committing war crimes.