

Besieged Iraqi Town of Amerli Desperately Needs U.S. Help

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Coordinated U.S. airstrikes with a joint Baghdad-Kurdish offensive could quickly open a humanitarian corridor without pulling American forces into deeper involvement.

This weekend, the international community appeared to finally wake to the looming humanitarian crisis in Amerli, a town of 12,000 Shiite Turkmen in northern Iraq that has been under attack by the Islamic State for more than 60 days. On Saturday, Nickolay Mladenov, head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Iraq, urged the international community in a tweet "to relieve the #Amerli siege and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance." Having worked in Iraq for more than a decade, I would not lightly advocate any use of force by the U.S. military. But Amerli represents an unusually clear-cut opportunity to reduce human suffering, weaken the Islamic State and neutralize a key risk to Iraq's fundamental stability. It is not the top of a slippery slope to unintended escalation: In fact, Amerli is a uniquely dreadful situation with a simple, achievable solution -- coordinated U.S. airstrikes with a joint Baghdad-KRG offensive to open a humanitarian corridor...

[Read the full article on the *Washington Post* website. \(http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/michael-knights-besieged-iraqi-town-of-amerli-desperately-needs-us-help/2014/08/25/93a32398-2c50-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html\)](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/michael-knights-besieged-iraqi-town-of-amerli-desperately-needs-us-help/2014/08/25/93a32398-2c50-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html) ❖

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