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Obama Authorizes Airstrikes Against ISIS in Iraq

By Jason Ditz

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In the middle of a speech vowing the US wouldn't be dragged into another war in Iraq, President Obama laid out exactly how the US indeed will be dragged into the ongoing ISIS war in Iraq, revealing that he has authorized airstrikes in northern Iraq and other operations to "prevent genocide" in the region.

Presenting the new US offensive as entirely humanitarian in nature, Obama vowed to see the US save the Yazidi civilians who fled into the mountains, declaring "today, America is coming to help."

Obama claimed to have a "mandate" for such operations from the Iraqi government, and cited US diplomats and civilians' stations in Arbil as part of the justification for the new US military involvement, adding that the troops already sent weeks ago would support the Iraqi and Kurdish military in their ongoing fighting.

The Pentagon denied reports earlier Thursday of US airstrikes against ISIS targets, and recent reports have suggested that Turkish warplanes have carried out bombing strikes against ISIS, and those may have been mistaken for US airstrikes. The US air campaign is coming, but exactly when it will begin is thus far unclear.