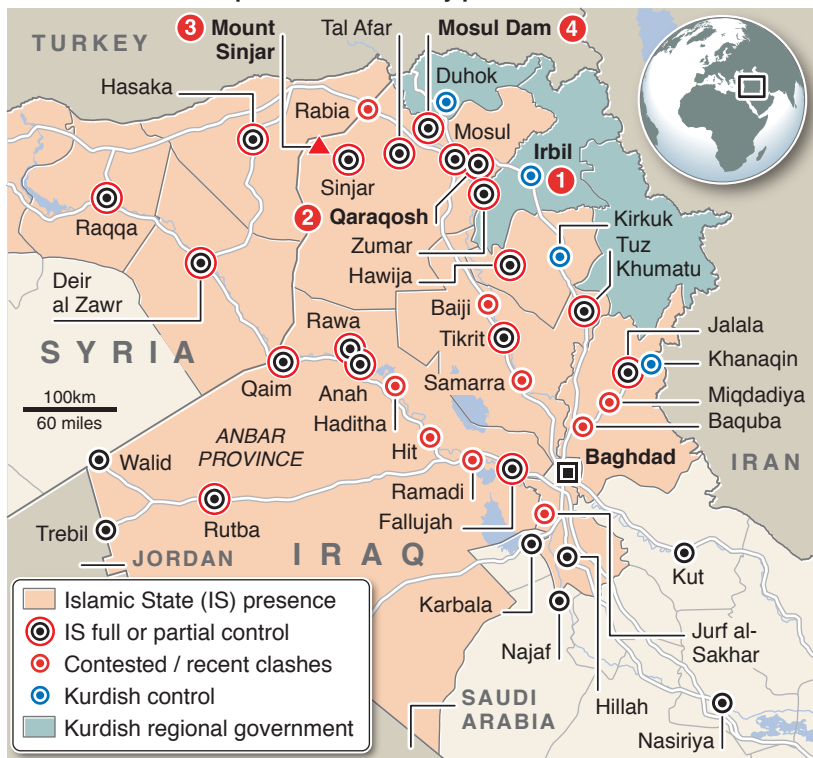


U.S. mounts air strikes against Iraq militants

The U.S. military has launched targeted air strikes against Islamic State militants in Iraq close to the northern city of Irbil, where dozens of American diplomats and military personnel are stationed



1 Irbil: Two U.S. fighter jets bomb Islamic militants towing artillery near Kurdish capital. Strikes authorized to protect U.S. interests and to prevent slaughter of religious minorities

2 Qaraqosh: Iraq's largest Christian town and surrounding areas overrun by Islamic State militants following withdrawal of Kurdish forces. Tens of thousands of Christians forced to flee to Iraqi Kurdistan

3 Mount Sinjar: U.S. military aircraft drop food and water for around 40,000 people – mostly from Yazidi religious minority – trapped on mountain and surrounded after militants captured town of Sinjar

4 Mosul Dam: Jihadists reportedly in control of Iraq's largest dam – key source of water and electricity – raising concerns that Iraqi cities down-river could be flooded