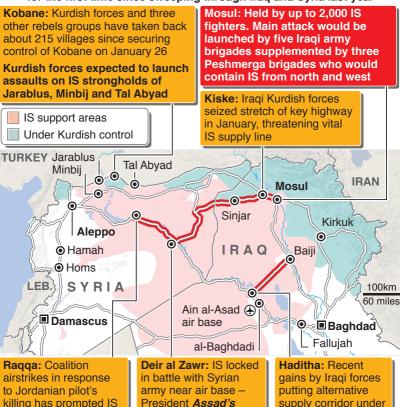
## **U.S.** plans large-scale operation to take Mosul

A joint Iraqi-Kurdish force of up to 25,000 troops is preparing to retake the city of Mosul from Islamic State fighters in April or May. IS remains a formidable force, but appears to be on the defensive for the first time since sweeping through Iraq and Syria last year



last stronghold in

eastern province

to set up roadblocks

to curb desertions

pressure, further

isolating Mosul