

# WORLD AGENDA

MAY 2008

**1** May 8-14, Jerusalem: Israel celebrates its 60th anniversary of independence with a series of events attended by world leaders and dignitaries. By contrast, Palestinians mourn the nakba (catastrophe) – the expulsion of around 700,000 Arabs during the 1948 Middle East war



**2** May 1-10, Kathmandu: The Nepalese capital is likely to become the focus for anti-Chinese rioting when the **Olympic torch** is taken up **Mount Everest**, which straddles the border between Chinese-controlled Tibet and Nepal, home to 20,000 Tibetans



**5** May 8, Tokyo: Ping-pong diplomacy returns when **Hu Jintao**, the first Chinese President to visit Japan in a decade, plays Prime Minister **Yasuo Fukuda** at table tennis. The game helped thaw relations between China and the United States in the 1970s



**6** May 25, Cape Canaveral: **NASA's** robotic spacecraft, the **Phoenix Mars Lander**, is due to touch down on the Red Planet



**3** May 7-8, Moscow: **Dmitry Medvedev** takes over as Russia's President with **Vladimir Putin**, at the helm for eight years, becoming Prime Minister. The former leader is widely expected to use his new role to retain his grip on power



**8** May 13, New York: A 1995 **Lucian Freud** painting is expected to become the most expensive work by a living artist sold at auction. Christie's estimates that "**Benefits Supervisor Sleeping**" will fetch between \$25m and \$35m



**4** May 10, Burma: Tension surrounds a referendum on a new constitution drafted by the country's military rulers. Critics say a "yes" vote will cement the junta's grip on power

**7** May 10, Sri Lanka: Provincial elections in four war-ravaged eastern districts take place for the first time in 20 years, part of a plan to devolve power in minority Tamil areas after 25 years of civil war

