

# Clinton faces tough task to mend Russia ties

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hopes to close a troubled chapter in U.S.-Russia relations when she meets Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, but analysts think that a major breakthrough on a number of contentious issues, will take time

## ARMS REDUCTION

Russia welcomes U.S. intention to start talks on replacement for **START I** strategic weapons deal, which expires in December

Clinton to seek further cuts than those agreed by former presidents *George W. Bush* and *Vladimir Putin* to reduce deployed warheads to 1,700-2,200 each by 2012

## RUSSIAN INFLUENCE

U.S. rejects Russian sphere of influence in former Soviet bloc, insists such states have right to seek NATO membership,

and refuses to recognise independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia

Washington faces closure of key military air base in Kyrgyzstan and needs Russia's aid to diversify supply routes for U.S. and NATO troops fighting in Afghanistan

## MISSILE SHIELD

U.S. is to deploy Patriot missiles in Poland irrespective of whether or not missile defence shield goes ahead

According to U.S. officials, Obama administration is willing to slow plans for shield in eastern Europe if Russia agrees to help stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons

## TRADE

Russia hopes new administration will revive bilateral civilian nuclear pact, which was withdrawn from U.S. Congress after Russia's war with Georgia

Pact would open U.S. nuclear fuel market and Russia's vast uranium fields to companies from both countries by removing Cold War restrictions and is potentially worth billions of dollars in trade