

# WORLD AGENDA

JULY 2011

**1** July, Kabul: The U.S. begins withdrawing its 97,000 troops from Afghanistan amid criticism of the war's annual \$110bn cost, a decade after it began. Washington aims to hand over all combat operations to Afghan security forces by 2014

**2** Jul 8, Cape Canaveral: Nasa launches its last ever shuttle flight, firing *Atlantis* and four astronauts into space on a 12-day supply mission to the International Space Station. The programme's three-ship fleet is being retired after three decades because of high operating costs

**3** Jul 1, Rabat: Morocco holds a referendum on transforming its political system into a constitutional monarchy, but critics say **King Mohammed VI's** reforms, devolving some of his powers to parliament, do not go far enough

**5** Jul 3, Bangkok: **Yingluck Shinawatra**, the frontrunner in Thailand's closely fought elections, could face a coup if she wins. Her brother, former premier **Thaksin Shinawatra**, lives in self-exile after being ousted by the army five years ago

**7** Jul 1-2, Monaco: **Prince Albert** ends the principality's 30-year wait for a monarch's wedding when he ties the knot with former Olympic swimmer **Charlene Wittstock**, from South Africa

**4** July, Greece: A €12bn international bailout is released to debt-struck Greece. The fifth installment in a €110bn package is made in return for economic reforms as premier **George Papandreou** faces mass protests over austerity measures

**6** Jul 9, Khartoum: Southern Sudan becomes independent from the North while fighting rumbles on in the disputed Abyei border region. The secession is the outcome of a referendum in January following the 20-year civil war that ended in 2005

**8** July, Paris: A report is due on the causes of Air France's worst ever air disaster, the 2009 crash over the Atlantic which killed all 228 people on board. Salvage teams finished retrieving bodies and wreckage 12,800 feet beneath the surface in June