

# WORLD AGENDA

MARCH 2012

**1** Mar 4, Russia: Prime Minister **Vladimir Putin** is set to return to the presidency, winning a six-year term, despite a decline in his popularity and the biggest opposition protests over his 12 years at the heart of power. He was president from 2000-2008

**2** Mar 6, United States: Super Tuesday sees Republican primary elections in 10 states with **Rick Santorum**, **Mitt Romney**, **Newt Gingrich** and **Ron Paul** the four men still in the running for the right to take on **Barack Obama** in November's presidential election

**3** Mar 2, Tehran: Iran goes to the polls in parliamentary elections that are being seen as a test of **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's** popularity. It is the first vote since the president's disputed re-election in 2009 which ignited the worst unrest in three decades

**4** Mar 26-28, Havana: **Pope Benedict** hopes to meet the ailing revolutionary leader **Fidel Castro**, now rarely seen in public, when he visits Cuba. The trip is a sign of warming relations between the communist country and the Catholic Church

**7** Mar 15, Italy: **Silvio Berlusconi**, who resigned as prime minister in November amid a string of scandals, stands trial accused of revealing confidential information

**8** March, Jakarta: Indonesia hopes to pull in investors when it creates one of the largest palm oil and rubber firms in the world by combining 15 state firms. The new company will have assets totalling \$5.6bn and cover one million hectares

**5** Mar 13-14, Washington: British Prime Minister **David Cameron**, accompanied by wife **Samantha**, visits the White House for talks with **Barack Obama** on Afghanistan, the Middle East and the global economic crisis

**6** Mar 15, Syria: First anniversary of the civil uprising against **Bashar al-Assad** as violence increases along with international pressure on the president to resign. Assad came to power in 2000 following his father **Hafez al-Assad's** 30-year rule

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