

# WORLD AGENDA

## DECEMBER 2012

**1** Dec 31, United States: President **Barack Obama** and Congress have until the end of the month to remove the threat of \$600bn of tax increases and spending cuts set to begin in 2013 that could push the economy over the "fiscal cliff" and into recession



**3** Dec 6, United States: Owning an ounce of marijuana becomes legal in Washington state, despite a federal law banning the drug. The move is designed to legalise recreational use, though selling it remains unlawful



**5** Early December, Algiers: French President **François Hollande** visits Algeria in a bid to improve relations. He hopes the country will back an African-led military intervention against Islamic militants in northern Mali, as Paris fears extremists there may launch attacks on France

**7** Dec 9, Bucharest: Romanians go to the polls after months of in-fighting between the right-wing president, **Traian Basescu** (right), and leftist prime minister **Victor Ponta** who tried to impeach him. The EU's second-poorest country faces austerity measures to comply with an IMF aid deal



**2** Early-mid December, Washington: Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton** testifies before Congress on the handling of the September 11 attack this year that killed four Americans, including U.S. ambassador **Chris Stevens**, in Benghazi, Libya. Critics say the administration should have heeded warnings



**4** Dec 16, Japan: The Liberal Democratic party, rulers almost continuously for over half a century until 2009, are expected to regain power, but without a majority, in a general election. Leader **Shinzo Abe**, prime minister from 2006-07, would return to the helm

**6** Dec 1, Kuwait City: Kuwait holds its second parliamentary election this year amid escalating protests against new voting rules which opposition parties say favour pro-government candidates. The emir-led state has so far avoided the mass pro-democracy unrest seen in other Arab countries



**8** Dec 15-16, Los Angeles: Photo stills from **The Mountain Eagle**, one of the British Film Institute's most searched for lost movies, are expected to fetch over \$25,000 at auction. The film was the second of 50 by director **Alfred Hitchcock**

