

WORLD AGENDA

DECEMBER 2014

1 Dec 14, Tokyo: Japan goes to the polls after prime minister *Shinzo Abe* called a snap election following figures showing the nation had slipped back into recession. He also delayed the introduction of an unpopular tax rise

2 Dec 19-20, Cairo: A deal creating a 27-nation free-trade zone in Africa is signed, uniting 58% of the continent's economic activity. The initiative will allow foreign investors to reach 260 million consumers more easily

3 Dec 11, Paris: The French Senate holds a symbolic vote on recognising Palestine as a state, a move likely to anger Israel. Sweden and Britain recently agreed to recognition and similar moves are proposed in Spain and Ireland

4 Dec 1-12, Lima: UN environment talks in Peru are likely to be upbeat after nearly \$10bn in pledges to the *Green Climate Fund* to help poorer countries address the effects of climate change. The meeting is an important step towards a new agreement, due in December 2015

7 Dec 4, Cape Canaveral: NASA is to launch its next-generation *Orion* spacecraft on an unmanned test flight. The capsule is designed to carry astronauts deeper into space than ever before, to an asteroid or even to Mars

5 Dec 8-9, Monaco: The *International Olympic Committee* votes on the most significant changes to the Games in decades. Making the bidding process easier and including new sports more quickly will, it is hoped, make the Olympics more attractive to fans and sponsors

6 Dec 22, Managua: Construction is due to begin on Nicaragua's \$50 billion inter-oceanic canal amid increasing concerns over the environmental impact of the 278km waterway – wider, deeper and 3.5 times the length of the Panama Canal

8 December, UK: Filming begins on the 24th *James Bond* movie in Mexico, Morocco, Austria, Italy and London. Double Oscar winner *Christoph Waltz* (left) stars opposite *Daniel Craig*, making his fourth appearance as Bond

Research: Kate Edgley
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