

WORLD AGENDA

MARCH 2017

1 Mar 15, Netherlands: The first of a number of countries at the heart of the European Union to hold crucial elections this year, with the far-right Freedom Party of *Geert Wilders* ahead in the polls. Wilders says he will pull the Netherlands out of the EU if he wins

2 Mar 5, China: The National People's Congress meets in Beijing to approve plans outlined by the Communist Party leadership. Analysts will dissect the speeches of President *Xi Jinping* and others for clues to the country's military and economic ambitions

3 Mar 4, U.S.: President *Donald Trump* will be able to select his own security chief when Secret Service director *Joseph Clancy* (left) steps down. The Secret Service has 7,000 employees and is charged with protecting the president and his family

4 Mar 31, UK: Prime Minister *Theresa May* set this date as the start of the two-year process that will take Britain out of the EU. The nation voted to leave the bloc in Jun 2016

7 Mar 6, South Korea: Annual military drills between South Korea and the U.S. are expected to be the largest ever, with F-22 stealth fighters, an aircraft carrier and a nuclear submarine likely to be deployed

8 Mar 21, UK: *Pocahontas*, the famous daughter of a Native American Powhatan chief, died 400 years ago in England, an ocean away from her home in North America. Gravesend, the town where she was buried in 1617, plans a number of commemorative events

5 Mar 26, Hong Kong: A new Chief Executive will be chosen, not by popular vote but by electoral committee. Pro-democracy activists fear the leading candidates appear little inclined to fight for universal suffrage

6 March, Java Sea: Australia and Indonesia are to send divers to inspect the wreck of *HMAS Perth*, torpedoed off Java in 1942, to determine how best to protect the site from looters who have stripped numerous other World War II wrecks

