

# WORLD AGENDA

## DECEMBER 2019

**1** Dec 3-4, UK: NATO leaders meet in London for the 70th birthday of the Alliance and for a summit likely to be marked by tensions over the U.S. troop withdrawal from Syria, and NATO-member Turkey's subsequent incursion

**2** Dec 12, UK: Prime Minister **Boris Johnson** called a snap election hoping to win a majority in parliament to break the political paralysis over Brexit, but it is far from clear that the vote will end the deadlock

**3** Dec 2-13, Spain: Madrid hosts the **COP25** summit on the urgency of the need to tackle climate change, a change of venue after unrest forced Chile to pull out of hosting duties

**4** Dec 5, Saudi Arabia: The world's most profitable company, **Aramco**, releases its share price ahead of its first public stock offering. **Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** aims to diversify the economy away from oil but investors face risks due to high geopolitical and military tensions in the region

**6** Dec 7, U.S.: The Navy christens its latest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the **USS John F. Kennedy**. Expensive lessons learned while building the first so-called supercarrier, the **USS Gerald R. Ford**, should smooth Kennedy's path to deployment

**5** Dec 20, Russia & China: **Gazprom** begins supplying gas from Siberia to China via the 3,000km **Power of Siberia** pipeline – described as the most ambitious, costly and geopolitically-critical energy project since the fall of the Soviet Union

**7** Dec 3, Space: **NASA's OSIRIS-REx** spacecraft arrived at asteroid **Bennu** a year ago, and it now begins rehearsing for its all-important sample collection phase in mid-2020. Analysis of the samples could help devise ways to divert the carbonaceous near-Earth asteroid from slamming into Earth late in the 22nd century

**8** Dec 18, U.S.: **Star Wars: Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker**, the conclusion to the series, is released. Stars include **Daisy Ridley** (left), and the late **Carrie Fisher** as Princess Leia. Disney rejected computer-generated images of Fisher, instead using unseen material recorded for **Star Wars: The Force Awakens**, in 2015

