

WORLD AGENDA

JULY 2006

1 Mid-July: A Palestinian unity government is set to be installed after the Fatah party of President *Mahmoud Abbas* and the ruling Hamas movement of Prime Minister *Ismail Haniyeh* reached agreement in late June over a manifesto that implicitly recognises Israel's right to exist

2 Jul 15, St Petersburg: Leaders of the world's major industrial powers head for Russia as it hosts its first **G8 summit**. Among key items on the agenda at the **Konstantin Palace** (above), will be devising a strategy to deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions

3 Jul 2, Mexico: Conservative *Felipe Calderon* (left) is neck-and-neck in the polls with leftist *Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador* (right) in the race to replace *Vicente Fox* as president. Fox is standing down at the end of his single six-year term

4 Jul 1, Strasbourg: The gruelling **Tour de France** – guaranteed a new champion following the retirement last year of seven-time winner *Lance Armstrong* – gets underway

5 Jul 13, London: A rare copy of *Shakespeare's First Folio* of plays, described as the most important book in English literature, is likely to fetch up to £3.5m at auction at *Sotheby's*

6 Jul 1, Helsinki: Finland assumes the presidency of the **European Union**, vowing to use its six-month term to make the workings of the **Council** – the EU's decision-making body – more open to the public

7 Jul 1, Florida: After extensive safety modifications, the space shuttle **Discovery** is due to blast off on only the second mission since the **Columbia** disaster in 2003

8 Jul 9-19, Tasmania: Global warming and shrinking polar ice sheets look set to dominate a joint scientific conference on **Antarctica**

9 Jul 9, Germany: One billion viewers worldwide are expected to tune in for the Final of **World Cup 2006** at *Berlin's* revamped **Olympiastadion**

