

WORLD AGENDA



AUGUST 2006

1 Aug 1: Efforts to reach a ceasefire in Lebanon look unlikely to succeed while *Hezbollah* rockets continue to target Israeli cities and Israel steps up its attacks with the green light of the Bush administration

2 Aug 8, Australia: The 2006 Census will reveal the impact of Prime Minister John Howard's drive to massively increase immigration of skilled workers. Australia welcomed 123,424 new immigrants in 2004-05, the highest number in more than 15 years

4 Aug 6, UK: *The Edinburgh Festival* – the world's largest arts festival – raises the curtain on its 60th year, with 28,000 performances of 1,867 shows scheduled at 261 venues during the three-week entertainment extravaganza

6 Aug 22, Iran: Tehran says it will respond to a package of incentives that have been offered by western governments in a bid to resolve the crisis over its nuclear programme

8 Aug 13-19, Toronto: Canada hosts the *XVI International AIDS Conference*. The government has taken a lead in the fight against the disease, recently deciding to amend the patent act to allow the production and export of generic HIV/AIDS medications to developing nations

3 Aug 13, Cuba: President Fidel Castro, the world's longest-serving leader, celebrates his 80th birthday with the help of visiting VIPs and four days of street parties in *Havana*

5 Aug 6, Bolivia: Work begins on rewriting a new constitution – by which left-wing *President Evo Morales* (left) intends to give a better deal to indigenous people who make up two-thirds of Bolivia's population

7 Aug 1, Afghanistan: *Nato* forces take command of security operations in the highly dangerous south. The opium crop – which is fuelling a *Taliban* resurgence – has grown 20% since 2005 to a record 104,000 hectares