

> ?>



ENGLISH FRANÇAIS ESPAÑOL РУССКИЙ عربي



International Freedom of Expression eXchange

SEARCH: **Advanced** **GO**

Home | Regional News | Americas | South America | Venezuela

IN THIS SECTION

- Entire site
- In Venezuela

- ▶ HOME

- ▶ REGIONAL NEWS

- ▶ CAMPAIGNS

- ▶ HOT TOPICS

- ▶ ASSISTANCE & AWARDS

- ▶ UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ IFEX MEMBERS

- ▶ ABOUT IFEX

- ▶ RELATED SITES

Update

[PRINT PAGE](#)

▶ **AMARC says automatic renewal of broadcasting licenses "inappropriate and unjust", that RCTV "violated citizens' right to information" during 2002 coup**

Español: **AMARC dice que renovación automática de concesiones es "injusta", que RCTV violó el "derecho a la información" durante golpe de 2002**

Country/Topic: **Venezuela**
 Date: **19 April 2007**
 Source: **World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)**
 Person(s):
 Target(s): **television station(s)**
 Type(s) of violation(s):
 Urgency: **Bulletin**

- ▶ Argentina

- ▶ Bolivia

- ▶ Brazil

- ▶ Chile

- ▶ Colombia

- ▶ Ecuador

- ▶ France (French Guiana)

- ▶ Paraguay

- ▶ Peru

- ▶ Uruguay

- ▶ Venezuela

COMMUNIQUE:
 Sign up now for your weekly bulletin of free expression news.
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

▶ **COMMUNIQUE ARCHIVE**

ALERTS:
 Get Alerts delivered to your inbox. Sign up here for news as it happens.
[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

▶ **IFEX DAILY HEADLINES**

▶ **MEMBERS ONLY**



(AMARC/IFEX) - The following is an abbreviated version of an 18 April 2007 AMARC statement:

Open letter from AMARC on the RCTV case

On 13 April 2007, AMARC-Latin America and the Caribbean (AMARC-ALC) sent the Venezuelan government an open letter with recommendations regarding the RCTV television station case, based on AMARC's "commitment to freedom of expression and information and its objective of promoting the democratisation of communications." As well, it announced its proposals to the IACHR for it to deepen its analysis on the manner in which governments in the Americas administer the granting of radio and television broadcasting frequencies, noting that in several countries the awarding of contracts is systematically used as an indirect censorship tool.

The letter highlights that Venezuela's regulatory framework sets a standard for the region, in terms of attaining greater diversity in broadcasting media, and assesses as positive the manner in which Venezuela's national guidelines recognise the government's obligation to promote community radio and television media outlets, and that these are different from and complementary to the state and commercial outlets.

The state, as administrator of its territory's radio-electric spectrum, has the authority to allocate broadcasting frequencies for radio and television, as well as to evaluate the renewal or non-renewal of these licences. In AMARC's opinion, the Venezuelan's government's decision regarding RCTV "falls within the faculties that states have and exercise in accordance with their internal body of norms."

Above and beyond this concrete case, AMARC asserts that states cannot administer the use of broadcasting frequencies in an arbitrary or discretionary manner. "The highest inter-American human rights standards stipulate that the granting of radio and television broadcasting frequencies must guarantee equal opportunity to all people and social sectors, and that the requirements, procedures and evaluation criteria must be transparent, clear and previously established, and promote equitable access to this resource." These principles are valid "for both the granting of use of the frequencies, and renewal of such." AMARC asked the "Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to review without delay the procedures for administering the frequencies established in its internal body of norms, in order to adjust them to ensure fulfilment" of these principles.

Disagreeing with the position taken by the Venezuelan business organisations, AMARC's letter states that "the automatic renewal [of frequency concessions] is inappropriate and unjust. (. . .) Broadcasters use this resource under certain conditions, which they have made a commitment to respect, and must be evaluated periodically by the appropriate authorities," including by their own public, among others, which should be taken into account when decisions whether or not to renew their licences are taken.

Regarding RCTV, AMARC "deplores the position this broadcaster and other media outlets took during the April 2002 [attempted] coup, which violated Venezuelans' right to information in moments crucial for democracy in their country," but it also recommends that the government, if it considers the media outlets guilty of collaborating with the coup, "implement an appropriate process to investigate and bring to trial those responsible, respecting the right to due process that all people have, even the coup organisers."

(. . .)

For the complete version in Spanish of the open letter, see:

<http://legislaciones.amarc.org/07-04-13-AmericaLatCartaAbierta.htm>

MORE INFORMATION:

For further information, contact Gustavo Gómez, Director, Communication Rights and Legislation Programme, AMARC Latin America and the Caribbean (AMARC-LAC), Carlos María Ramírez 894, 11900 Montevideo, Uruguay, tel: +598 2 309 2824, +598 99 660373, e-mail: gusgomez@chasque.apc.org, Internet: <http://alc.amarc.org/legislaciones>

Updates IFEX alerts of 12 April, 12 and 2 January 2007, 29 and 21 December 2006

OTHER RELEVANT ALERTS:

PREVIOUS ALERT(S):

- **Minister ratifies non-renewal of broadcasting license for RCTV television station**
- **JOINT ACTION: CPJ, IPYS cite "lack of transparency" in government's decision regarding renewal of RCTV, call for greater commitment to freedom of expression**
- **Government considering three options for privately-owned broadcaster RCTV**
- **IAPA condemns President Chávez's non-renewal of television network's license**
- **Future of private television network may be subject to referendum and its broadcast frequency offered to cooperatives**

MORE RECENT ALERT(S):

- **Non-renewal of RCTV license a threat to media pluralism, will cost 2,000 their jobs, says IFJ**
- **Other media outlets less critical in wake of "predetermined" non-renewal of RCTV licence, says CPJ report**