

[Home](#) [News](#) [Sport](#) [Radio](#) [TV](#) [Weather](#) [Languages](#) UK version  **International version** | [About the versions](#) [Low graphics](#) | [Accessibility help](#)**BBC NEWS** **The News in 2 minutes****News services**

Your news when you want it

**News Front Page**[Africa](#)[Americas](#)[Asia-Pacific](#)[Europe](#)[Middle East](#)[South Asia](#)[UK](#)[Business](#)[Health](#)[Science/Nature](#)[Technology](#)[Entertainment](#)[Also in the news](#)[Video and Audio](#)[Have Your Say](#)[In Pictures](#)[Country Profiles](#)[Special Reports](#)**RELATED BBC SITES**[SPORT](#)[WEATHER](#)[ON THIS DAY](#)[EDITORS' BLOG](#)**LANGUAGES**

Last Updated: Tuesday, 5 June 2007, 00:39 GMT 01:39 UK

## US condemns Venezuelan TV closure

### US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has criticised President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela for refusing to renew the licence of an opposition TV channel.

Ms Rice said the closure of Radio Caracas TV (RCTV) was "undemocratic" and called for the Organization of American States (OAS) to investigate.

Venezuela's foreign minister accused the US of meddling in its affairs.

Demonstrations against and in favour of the move have occurred almost daily in Venezuela since RCTV closed on 27 May.

The showdown between the US and Venezuela came at the OAS meeting in Panama, which was supposed to focus on environment and development issues.

"Freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of conscience are not a thorn in the side of government," Ms Rice told OAS officials.

"Disagreeing with your government is not unpatriotic and most certainly should not be a crime in any country, especially a democracy," she said.

### 'Meddling and hypocrisy'

In an angry reply, Venezuela's Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro accused Ms Rice of "unacceptable intervention" in his nation's affairs.

He also accused the US of hypocrisy, comparing the US imprisonment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay to the activities of Nazi Germany.

Mr Chavez has said private stations such as RCTV were involved in a coup that nearly toppled him five years ago



Some see the RCTV closure as an attack on freedom of speech

**“ Disagreeing with your government is not unpatriotic and most certainly should not be a crime in any country ”**

Condoleezza Rice

**VIDEO AND AUDIO NEWS****US Secretary of State criticises closure of TV station****VENEZUELA UNDER CHAVEZ****KEY STORIES**

[Venezuela takes over refineries](#)  
[Chavez bid for more state control](#)  
[Chavez wins re-election](#)

**FEATURES AND ANALYSIS**

**TV row widens rift**  
Venezuela's deep divisions on show as an opposition-aligned station goes off air

[Full steam ahead](#)[Viewpoints on Chavez](#)[A nation divided](#) [City of contrasts](#)[Photo journal: Barrio life](#)[Middle class feels the squeeze](#)[In pictures: Informal economy](#)**BACKGROUND**[Hugo Chavez: Life and career](#)[Profile: Hugo Chavez](#)[Venezuela guide: Key facts](#)[Timeline: From Columbus on](#)**HAVE YOUR SAY**[You asked President Chavez](#)**RELATED INTERNET LINKS**[Venezuelan presidency](#)

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

**TOP AMERICAS STORIES**[Bush seeks to calm Russian fears](#)[Guantanamo pair's charges](#)[dropped](#)[Colombia releases top Farc rebel](#) | [News feeds](#)**MOST POPULAR STORIES NOW**

[Bush criticises Russia on reform](#)  
[Chaos, rubbish and revolution](#)  
[Pakistanis executed for adultery](#)  
[Thousands flee Oman storm threat](#)

and that they have since tried to bring down his government.

[Australia rail crash toll rises](#)

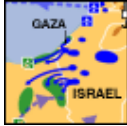
[Most popular now, in detail](#)

His government has provided \$4m (£2m) of funding for the launch of a new channel, TVES, which Mr Chavez said would better reflect society.

 [E-mail this to a friend](#)

 [Printable version](#)

**FEATURES, VIEWS, ANALYSIS**



**Six days of war**  
Day-by-day guide mapping events of the 1967 Middle East War



**Marr on the 70s**  
There was revolution in the air... how Britain was taken to the brink



**Foot soldiers**  
Grassroots activists ready for the long US election battle

**PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

[E-mail news](#)

[Mobiles](#)

[Alerts](#)

[News feeds](#)

[Podcasts](#)

Most Popular Now | Traffic to this site is currently 5% below normal

[Back to top](#) ^^

[Help](#) | [Privacy and cookies policy](#) | [News sources](#) | [About the BBC](#) | [Contact us](#)