Resolution on the Radio Caracas TV channel case in Venezuela

2007/2564(RSP) - 24/05/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a joint resolution on the Radio Caracas TV channel case in Venezuela, and condemed the decision by the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, not to renew the broadcasting licence of one of the country's leading television and radio stations, Radio Caracas Televisión (RCTV). The current licence expires on 27 May 2007.

MEPs were divided over some aspects of this issue, with rival resolutions coming from the EPP-ED, ALDE and UEN groups on the one hand, and the PES, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL on the other. The former was adopted by 43 votes to 22 with 0 abstentions.

The adopted resolution states that non-renewal of the licence will deprive a large section of the public of a pluralist source of information, thus undermining the right of the press to criticise the authorities. According to the Venezuelan government itself, Radio Caracas Televisión is the only media organ whose licence is not being renewed. Parliament pointed out that Venezuela's Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, communication and information and that Venezuela is a signatory to various international pacts which underpin civil and political rights. MEPs believe that if there is any substance to accusations which have been made by the authorities against the RCTV management, these could be tested through ordinary legal proceedings.

Parliament called on the Government of Venezuela, in the name of the principle of the impartiality of the State, to ensure equal treatment under the law for all media, whether private or public, irrespective of all political or ideological considerations. It also called for a dialogue between the Venezuelan Government and the country's private media, while strongly deploring the Government's total unwillingness to engage in dialogue in general, and in the case of RCTV in particular.

Lastly, it asked the relevant delegations and committees of Parliament to examine this issue.