

## **IAB demands restitution of signal to RCTV**

The International Association of Broadcasting (IAB) demanded President Hugo Chávez' government to restore the radio-frequency private television channel RCTV operated under license on open signal until last May 27, as well as return of the network's antennas, transmitters and microwave equipment.

In the Ecuadorian town of Manta, where it held its general assembly this week, the association grouping hundreds of private television networks and radio stations in the Americas and Europe issued three resolutions rebutting the Venezuelan Executive Branch's move not to renew the broadcast license to the TV channel owned by Grupo 1BC.

In declaration 27, IAB insisted that the Venezuelan government resolution against RCTV "runs counter to the democratic principles" and "infringes all Venezuelans' right to freedom of expression, as they have been prevented from choosing freely the television channel they like." Further, the organization said it would closely monitor the situation facing RCTV "until its signal is back on the air."

In resolution 28, IAB said the move against RCTV involved "a serious precedent for all broadcasters in the three Americas, Europe, and Asia." IAB called upon its members to stage "demonstrations, declarations or actions" on the 27th day of every month to reject the Venezuelan government's action, until it allows the oldest private television station in Venezuela to restart broadcasts on open signal.

IAB also condemned the ruling the Constitution Court, Supreme Tribunal of Justice, issued last May 25, under which it allowed the newly created Venezuelan Social Television -which replaced RCTV- to use the private TV network's broadcast equipment for an indefinite period and with no compensation.

In resolution 26, IAB demanded the Venezuelan authorities to return such equipment "in the same operating order and conditions they had when they were seized."

The association reminded that property rights "are one of the fundamentals underlying every truly democratic, free, and fair society."