

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/venezuela-globovision-and-vale-tv-barred-22-02-2013,44112.html>

Americas - Venezuela

Flagrant discrimination

Globovisión and Vale TV barred from new digital broadcasting system

22 February 2013

Globovisión, the only national TV station that is constantly critical of the government, has been excluded from a new system of Open Digital Television (TDA), which the government launched on 20 February in a televised announcement that all the broadcast media had to carry (see video below).

Under the TDA system, all TV stations currently broadcasting by means of an analogue signal will eventually have to switch to a digitally processed signal in order to continue operating. The first phase of the switchover includes the National Public Media System and the privately-owned TV stations *Venevisión*, *Televen*, *Meridiano* and *La Tele*.

Vale TV, a Catholic Church-run station broadcasting in the Caracas area, has also been excluded from the new digital system.

Vice-President Nicolás Maduro said the TDA would help to combat "commercial content that has promoted pornography, drugs, prostitution and the use of firearms to encourage crime."

Information minister Ernesto Villegas described it as part of a new Bolivarian Communication and Information System meant to "generate content that does not resemble capitalism's culture and meets the requirement of real independence."

"Intended to improve the TV broadcasting technology used in Venezuela, this project is praiseworthy in principle but in fact has been subordinated to the government's ideological goals," Reporters Without Borders said. "The elimination of *Globovisión* and *Vale TV* from the TDA has again shown that the government's approach to broadcasting threatens pluralism."

"This decision is discriminatory, violates Venezuelan's own constitutional guarantees and could condemn these two stations to disappear. It is one more example of the persecution of *Globovisión*, which has already been the target of [eight disciplinary procedures](#) under the Law of Social Responsibility in Radio, TV and Electronic Media (*Ley Resortemec*)."

Reporters Without Borders is also concerned about the fate of certain regional TV stations in the TDA's subsequent phases.

Globovisión described its exclusion from the TDA as a "death sentence" in a [press release](#) issued on the same day as the announcement.

If confined to analogue broadcasting, *Globovisión* could disappear altogether – before its current concession expires in 2015 – when the authorities declare that the switchover to digital broadcasting is complete.

When it no longer has an over-the-air broadcasting licence, it would no longer be legally able to broadcast on cable or satellite either. The same applies to *Vale TV* and any other TV station excluded from the TDA.

TDA launch

