

## Chavez Condemns Coup Plot in Venezuela

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CARACAS — Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez ruled out on Thursday the possibility of a coup in his country and condemned the opposition's support for street protests against his government.

During a national TV-radio address, Chavez accused the right-win groups of supporting the students, who had demonstrated for the fifth consecutive day in the capital.

"The youngsters are used by the groups seeking violence and attempting to mount a coup like the one of April 2002," Chavez said.

All these demonstrations have aims similar to those in 2002, when opposition staged a coup against him, he said, noting this time his government is not weak.

Chavez challenged the opposition to call a referendum, saying his government has the support of most Venezuelans.

He also urged the government institutions and the Venezuelans "to neutralize the craziness flows of the opposition, which only seeks to turn the country into fire."

Thousands of university students took to the streets in Caracas since Sunday, in protest of the closure of RCTV International, an opposition TV channel.

The government officials said RCTV was shut down for refusing to comply with a new regulation that obliges local cable and satellite channels to televise mandatory programs.

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