

Threat to Democracy in Latin America

By [Harold Pinter](#), [John Pilger](#), and [Tony Benn](#)

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On September 10 President Evo Morales of Bolivia declared the US ambassador persona non grata. On September 11 (the 35th anniversary of the military overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile) the president of Venezuela asked the US ambassador there to leave the country. President Hugo Chávez believed he was facing the possibility of an imminent coup d'état in which he said the US administration were involved. President Morales believed that his government was facing serious destabilisation which was also being fomented by the US. A third country, Paraguay, announced 10 days previously that it had detected a conspiracy involving military officers and opposition politicians.

Latin America now faces its most serious crisis since the reintroduction of democracy at the end of the 20th century. The plot against democracy in Venezuela centred on a conspiracy, revealed in telephone conversations between senior military officers broadcast on national television, to assassinate the democratically elected head of state. In Bolivia, the separatist prefects of the five eastern and southern departments have begun a campaign of violence and economic sabotage designed to destabilise the democratic regime.

These events show unequivocally who defends democracy and who threatens it today. We are appalled by the failure of much of the international media to provide accurate and proportionate coverage of these events. All democrats throughout should rally to defend democracy in Latin America.

Signed:

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