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China to launch Venezuela's first satellite: Chavez

by Staff Writers
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China is to launch Venezuela's first satellite in November which will serve to relay telecommunications data and television signals over Latin America, President Hugo Chavez said.



Hugo Chavez.

The orbiter, named "Simon Bolivar" after a 19th century Venezuelan independence hero, was built under contract by a Chinese firm and will be sent into space on November 1, Chavez said in his weekly radio program on Sunday.

He added that his country planned to have China put a second, reconnaissance satellite above Earth in 2013.

Chavez, Latin America's leftwing firebrand and a fierce critic of the United States, has recently embarked on a spending spree of Russian weapons and military aircraft.

Uruguay, which ceded the geostationary orbit position above Ecuador to Venezuela for the November launch, will have a 10-percent share in the Simon Bolivar satellite and use of its functions, Venezuelan [Science](#) Minister Hector Navarro said in April.

"This launch is a further step towards sovereignty. The Simon Bolivar satellite implies a transfer of technology and the use of communications for the people," Chavez said.

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