

Russia's Rosneft Exits Venezuela

State-backed oil giant to halt activities in Venezuela after being hit by U.S. sanctions, but Russian government remains key partner.

By [AFP](#)

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Rosneft will transfer its Venezuelan assets to a new company, also owned by the Russian government.
Alexander Demianchuk / TASS

Russian oil giant Rosneft announced Saturday it is halting its activities in Venezuela and selling its assets there, a country that has been hit by U.S. trade sanctions.

“Rosneft announces the termination of its operations in Venezuela and the disposal of its assets, related to operating in Venezuela,” the company said in a statement.

Russia however remains a key partner to Caracas. State oil giant Rosneft said it had sold its Venezuelan assets to a company 100%-owned by the Russian government.

The interests sold by Rosneft include joint ventures of Petromonagas, Petroperija, Boqueron,

Petromiranda and Petrovictoria, “as well as oil-field services companies, commercial and trading operations,” the company said.

All Rosneft shares and operations linked to Venezuela will be “disposed of, terminated or liquidated,” the company stressed.

Russia, with China and Cuba, is one of the main allies of Venezuela’s leader President Nicolas Maduro, but U.S. sanctions against his regime had put Rosneft under increasing pressure.

In February, Washington [announced](#) sanctions against a Rosneft subsidiary because of its presence in Venezuela.

Rosneft spokesman Mikhail Leontiev said the company had fulfilled its obligations and now had a right to expect the lifting of sanctions, Russian news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Last August, Russia and Venezuela were collaborating on developing two new gas fields on the east coast, in the Caribbean Sea.

Rosneft boss Igor Sechin, a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was one of the main investors.

Maduro has ruled Venezuela since 2013. He was re-elected for a second term in 2018, a vote boycotted by the opposition which rejected the results.

The U.S. and a large part of the international community has also refused to recognise Maduro’s victory and Washington has applied economic pressure with sanctions against the government there.

The United States in 2014 already imposed sanctions on Rosneft, one of Russia’s largest companies, over Moscow’s backing of separatists in Ukraine and takeover of Crimea. But the measures were limited to curbing U.S. financing for the oil giant.

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