

French Prime Minister Admits Far-right Leader Marine Le Pen Could Win 2017 Presidential Election



Paris, November 18 (RHC)-- French Prime Minister Manuel Valls has admitted that far-right politician Marine Le Pen and her allies could win the next presidential election in the country, saying Donald Trump's shock victory in the United States has greatly boosted her chances for a rise in the French power system.

"All the opinion polls have the candidate Marine Le Pen making it to the second round," Valls said of the France's presidential race in May, warning that a victory for the leader of France's National Front is "possible."

The Socialist premier, who was speaking at an economic conference in the German capital of Berlin, said that a change in France's politics would surface even if the far-right anti-refugee politician loses the election.

"If she does make it to the second round, she will face either a candidate of the left or the right. This means that the balance of politics will change completely," he said. Valls warned, however, that "the danger presented by the extreme right" seriously threatens France as the factions on that end of the political spectrum are largely benefiting from the outcome of the U.S. presidential election, which saw the unexpected rise of Trump to power.

"Of course there are risks in France, I am struck by the tone of the public debate," he said, adding that Le Pen, unlike Trump, does not represent a mainstream party. Reports have indicated that Valls is herself eager to contest the presidential election in 2017 although falling approval rates for socialist leader and head of state Francois Hollande could be a major blow to Valls' dreams for going into the Élysée Palace.

France has a two-round electoral system and it would be practically very difficult for lesser-known candidates to become president, a post that has great executive powers, like sending the army into war without waiting for parliament's approval.

The first-round vote of France's presidential election will be held in April. Polls show that Le Pen could make it to the May 7 run-off and may there face a conservative rival. The eccentric French politician has hailed Trump's victory in the November 8th U.S. presidential election, saying the American billionaire "made possible what had previously been presented as impossible."

Le Pen has also capitalized on the results of a June referendum in Britain, which resulted in the nation's yes vote to the country's exit from the European Union.

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