

Former French President Sarkozy arrested



Paris, March 20 (RHC)-- Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy was taken into police custody Tuesday and questioned over allegations that slain Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi financed his 2007 election campaign, a source close to the inquiry told AFP.

Sarkozy was detained early on Tuesday morning and was being questioned by prosecutors specializing in corruption, money laundering and tax evasion at their office in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre. The 63-year-old had until now refused to respond to a summons for questioning in the case, one of several legal probes that have dogged the right-winger since he left office after one term in 2012.

Sarkozy has been a focus of a inquiry opened in 2013 by magistrates investigating earlier claims by late Libyan ruler Muammar Gadhafi and his son Seif al-Islam that they provided funds for Sarkozy's election effort. Sarkozy has dismissed the allegations.

The prosecution claims Sarkozy spent nearly double the legal limit of 22.5 million euros (\$24 million) on his lavish campaign, using false billing from a public relations firm called Bygmalion.

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