

Sarkozy charged with corruption and illegal campaign financing



Paris, March 22 (RHC)-- Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy has been charged with corruption and illegal campaign financing over allegations that Muammar Gaddafi, the slain Libyan leader, helped fund his 2007 election campaign.

After five years of investigation and two days of questioning Sarkozy, 63, in police custody, judges looking into the scandal decided they had enough evidence to charge the one-term president who served from 2007 to 2012.

He was first taken into custody in the Nanterre suburb, west of Paris, on Tuesday morning before returning for another interrogation session on Wednesday morning.

He will have six months to appeal to have the charges overturned and the judges will have to make a further decision about whether they have sufficient evidence to take the case to trial.

The case is connected to accusations that Sarkozy received money from former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi to fund his successful election bid in 2007, allegations he denies and has dismissed as "grotesque".

The prosecution claims Sarkozy spent nearly double the legal limit of 24 million dollars on his campaign, using false billing from a public-relations firm called Bygmalion.

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