

Former French President Sarkozy Taken Into Custody Over Suspected Gaddafi Financing

By [The New Arab](#)

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Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy has been taken into custody as part of an investigation into [alleged funding](#) in elections by ex-Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi.

Sarkozy is being questioned by magistrates regarding claims his campaign team accepted a 50 million euro (\$62 million) donation from Gaddafi during the 2007 French elections, according to news reports.

His former associate, Alexandre Djouhri, was arrested in London and released on bail as part of the investigation weeks earlier.

Sarkozy had previously refused to respond to a summons for questioning in the case, *AFP* reported.

Former minister former minister Brice Hortefeux is also in custody and being questioned by investigators, Reuters reported.

The probe opened in 2013 following claims by Gaddafi and his son Saif that provided funds to Sarkozy's election team.

France has a 21 million euro spending limit for elections strict rules on foreign donations.

"Sarkozy has to give back the money he accepted from Libya to finance his electoral campaign. We financed his campaign and we have the proof," Saif told Euronews at the time.

"The first thing we're demanding is that this clown gives back the money to the Libyan people."

Franco-Lebanese businessman Ziad Takieddine also said he made three trips to Paris from Tripoli with [suitcases stuffed with cash](#) between 2006 and 2007.

The former French president has rejected the claims saying the Gaddafis are bitter about being overthrown by rebels with French assistance in 2011.

Sarkozy was [French president](#) at the time and played a lead role in mobilising the NATO force to provide air support to the Libyan rebels, when Gaddafi's military appeared set to wipe out the resistance.

Sarkozy can be held for 48 hours and brought before a magistrates in police press charges.

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