

《弗朗索瓦·奥朗德胜出法国总统选举》

PARIS - French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Sunday conceded defeat to his Socialist challenger Francois Hollande in Sunday's presidential runoff, adding that he had called his rival and wished him "good luck."

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"The new French president needs to be respected," Sarkozy said on Sunday night to thousands of supporters as exit polls and partial official results all show a victory for Hollande.

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"I am responsible for my failure in the election," the outgoing president expressed his thankfulness to his supporters, many of whom were crying.

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National TV channel France 24 said Hollande won the election with 51.9 percent of votes. Official result will come out soon and is expected to be largely in line with the exit polls despite possibly slight difference in terms of percentage.

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As Europe's second largest economy, France has 46 million registered voters, about 82 percent of whom were estimated to have cast their ballots on Sunday.

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