

Sarkozy criticized for Gadhafi deal

by UPI

PARIS -- French President Nicolas Sarkozy faced criticism and boycotts for offering Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi billions in deals despite Libya's human rights record. Critics accused Sarkozy of ignoring Libya's poor human rights records in a \$14.7 billion contract for jetliners, fighter jets, armored vehicles and a civilian nuclear reactor, The Washington Post reported Friday. "Some say that Gadhafi's attitude in his country has not changed, that he does not respect human rights and still supports terrorism," Khadija Mohsen-Finan, a North Africa specialist at the French Institute for International Relations in Paris, told the Post. Others noted that France was following German, Italy and other nations seeking to re-establish ties with an emerging Libya after Gadhafi opened his weapons program to international scrutiny. Nearly half of the 80 lawmakers invited to diplomatic ceremonies in Gadhafi's honor Tuesday boycotted the event. Sarkozy faced similar criticism for signing a \$30 billion deal with China despite its alleged human right shortcomings and for congratulating Russian President Putin for his party's victory in the state Duma elections widely seen as undemocratic.

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