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Abstrak

<i>French people celebrate the reawakening of French interest in national politics following the high voter turnout for the first round of the presidential election on 22 April 2007. The near record turnout as erasing the memory of 2002 when huge numbers abstained and a high vote for extremists led to National Front leader jean-Marie Le Pen qualifying for the second round. Centre-right candidate Nicolas Sarkozy faced Socialist Segolene Royal in the run-off of France's presidential election. The battle between these two very different visions for the future of France has commenced in earnest, ahead of the final and decisive round on 6 May. For the first time, one of the top candidates is a woman. Segolene Royal's bid has ignited a debate about the place of women in a country traditionally dominated by men. Nicolas Sarkozy is the youngest president since Valery Giscard d'Estaing won in 1974 at the age of 48 - Jacques Chirac and Francois Mitterrand were both in their 60s when they entered the Elysee Palace. French praise their country's democratic performance in second round presidential election and express the hope that the victor, Nicolas Sarkozy, can unite a divided France. The election of Nicolas Sarkozy was based on the desire to turn the page, the wish for renewal. It creates a new order. The victory of 6 May is a victory of progress for the France.