
ElBaradei says nuclear Israel number one threat to Mideast: report

TEHRAN, Oct. 4 (Xinhua) -- Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohamed ElBaradei said Sunday that "Israel is number one threat to Middle East" with its nuclear arms, the official IRNA news agency reported.

At a joint press conference with Iran's Atomic Energy Organization chief Ali Akbar Salehi in Tehran, ElBaradei brought Israel under spotlight and said that the Tel Aviv regime has refused to allow inspections into its nuclear installations for 30years, the report said.

"Israel is the number one threat to the Middle East given the nuclear arms it possesses," ElBaradei was quoted as saying.

Israel is widely assumed to have nuclear capabilities, although it refuses to confirm or deny the allegation.

"This (possession of nuclear arms) was the cause for some proper measures to gain access to its (Israel's) power plants ... and the U.S. president has done some positive measures for the inspections to happen," said ElBaradei.

ElBaradei arrived in Iran Saturday for talks with Iranian officials over Tehran's nuclear program.

Leaders of the United States, France and Britain have condemned Iran's alleged deception to the international community involving covert activities in its new underground nuclear site.

Last month, Iran confirmed that it is building a new nuclear fuel enrichment plant near its northwestern city of Qom. In reaction, the IAEA asked Tehran to provide detailed information and access to the new nuclear facility as soon as possible.

On Sunday, ElBaradei said the UN nuclear watchdog would inspect Iran's new uranium plant near Qom on Oct. 25.