

ElBaradei: N. Korea has nuke weapons

by UPI

BEIJING -- North Korea has nuclear weapons and the ability to deliver them, says International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei.

Speaking in Beijing, Elbaradei told reporters, "North Korea has nuclear weapons, which is a matter of fact. I don't like to accept any country as a nuclear weapon state but we have to face reality," The Times of London reported Friday.

ElBaradei said the addition of North Korea as a "fully fledged nuclear power" makes nine countries in the world that have the capability of launching a nuclear missile. They include the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel.

His comments came as Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned after meeting with North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun that there would be no easy road to persuading Pyongyang to return to negotiations aimed at brokering a nuclear disarmament.

"We do not foresee any breakthroughs," Lavrov told Russia's Interfax news agency. "This is a complicated process and we must not give in to emotions."

North Korea has said it would end all negotiations and would restart its nuclear weapons program after it was censured by the U.N. Security Council for testing a missile earlier this month.

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