

## **Obama must step up action against secret nuclear trade**

By Lalit K. Jha

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Washington— The new US administration of President Barack Obama must step up action to stop clandestine nuclear trade involving Pakistan and take further action against A Q Khan network of nuclear proliferators, an influential American Congressman has demanded.

In comments, hours after the Bush administration slapped sanctions on the A Q Khan network, Congressman Howard L. Berman, Chairman of the powerful House Foreign Affairs Committee, said: "These sanctions, though belated, are welcome.

"But this is not enough," he argued. The Congressman also wanted action against Iran and North Korea.

Berman spoke as the US State Department slapped sanctions against the disgraced Pakistani atomic scientist Abdul Qadir Khan, now under house arrest, his 13 associates and three firms linked to his nuclear proliferation network.

Those involved in the A Q Khan nuclear black market are party to the worst proliferation of nuclear equipment and technology in history, he said.

"But the sanctions do not put an end to the matter; equipment and technology from this network may still be circulating, and new suppliers could well spring up to take Khan's place," Berman argued.

Berman said President Obama, who inherits a complex situation, must redouble US efforts against international black markets in weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.

"Congress should be ready to provide new funds and the legal authorities that he may need to end the activities of these merchants of mass destruction," Berman said.