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Nuclear Disarmament

Why in news?

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The United States, Britain and France are among almost 40 countries boycotting talks on a nuclear weapons ban treaty at the United Nations.

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What the participants say?

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- Leaders of the effort to ban the nuclear weapons include Austria, Ireland, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa and Sweden, supported by hundreds of NGOs.

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- They say the threat of nuclear disaster is growing thanks to tensions fanned by North Korea's nuclear weapons programme and an unpredictable new administration in Washington.

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Whether the meet was successful?

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- With none of the participants - more than 100 countries - at the recent talks belonging to the group of states that possess nuclear weapons, the discussions were doomed to failure.

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- According to US, the countries skipping the talks "would love to have a ban on nuclear weapons, but in this day and time we can't honestly say we can protect our people by allowing bad actors to have them and those of

us that are good trying to keep peace and safety not to have them."

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- The ambassadors of Russia and China were notably absent, but both major nuclear powers are also sitting out the talks.

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Whether any UN General Assembly resolution was passed?

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- The UN General Assembly in December adopted a resolution - 113 in favour to 35 against, with 13 abstentions - that decided to "negotiate a **legally binding instrument** to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination" and encouraged all member states to participate.

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- But Britain, France, Israel, Russia and the US all voted no, while China, India and Pakistan abstained.

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- Even **Japan - the only country to have suffered atomic attacks, in 1945 - voted against the talks**, saying a lack of consensus over the negotiations could undermine progress on effective nuclear disarmament.

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Source: Aljazeera

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